

DAILY MCQs COMPILATION

with

EXPLANATIONS

March 2024

NEXT IAS

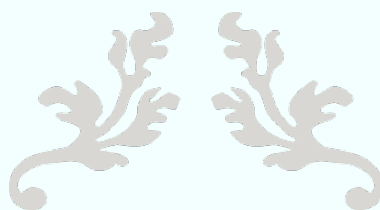


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HISTORY & CULTURE

1. The dancers move around the center in a counter-clockwise circle, using simple movements while singing and clapping their hands in unison. Both men and women take part in the dance.

Which of the following dances has been described above?

- (a) Kalbeliya
- (b) Mohiniyattam
- (c) Garba
- (d) Lavani

2. The festival marks the beginning of the Kannad New Year, along with the advent of the spring season. It is also believed that Lord Brahma created the world on this day only.

Which of the following festivals has been described above?

- (a) Bali Jatra
- (b) Pongal
- (c) Kambala
- (d) Ugadi

3. The term '*Maharadia Lawana*' is related to:

- (a) Silappatikaram
- (b) Mahabharata
- (c) Ramayana
- (d) Buddhacarita

4. It originated in the state of Kerala and is performed by women in honor of the Hindu god Vishnu in his incarnation as the enchantress.

The dance form is characterized by graceful, swaying body movements with no abrupt jerks or sudden leaps. It lays emphasis on acting and the dancer identifies herself with the character and sentiments existing in the compositions. The prince Swati Tirunal of Travancore, was one of the chief architects of the dance in the nineteenth century.

Which of the following dance forms have been described above?

- (a) Kutiyattam
- (b) Mohiniyattam
- (c) Bharatnatyam
- (d) Kuchipudi

5. With reference to the Khooni Bhandara, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. It is an ancient underground water management system in Madhya Pradesh.
- 2. It was built by Satvahan rulers in the 1st century A.D.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

6. Who among the following personalities is well known for organizing the Congress Radio during Quit India Movement?

- (a) Sarojini Naidu
- (b) Madam Bhikaji Cama
- (c) Usha Mehta

- (d) Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
7. With reference to Gwalior Fort, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. The fort was built by the Tomar Rajput ruler Man Singh Tomar in the 14th century.
 2. It is located on the basalt rock hills.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Which one of the following personalities is revered as “Amarajeevi” for his self-sacrifice in the cause of Andhra Pradesh?
- (a) Pattabhi Sitaramayya
 - (b) Potti Sriramulu
 - (c) Mahatma Gandhi
 - (d) Yerneni Subrahmanyam
9. Pandavula Gutta, recognised as the Geo-heritage site, belongs to which of the following regions of India?
- (a) Gujarat
 - (b) Maharashtra
 - (c) Telangana
 - (d) Odisha
10. “Chausath Khamba”, a structure recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) A rock cut architecture in Karnataka, built during the Vijayanagara period.
 - (b) It is one of the major rock edicts built by the emperor Ashoka in Bihar.
 - (c) It is a mausoleum built during the Mughal period near the Nizamuddin dargah in Delhi.
 - (d) It is a Yogini temple from Madhya Pradesh built during the Chahamana period.
11. With reference to the Ahilyabai Holkar, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. She established Maheshwar, a town on the bank of Narmada river.
 2. She rebuilt Somanath Temple in Gujarat and led the restoration of Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
12. Which of the following operations is associated with the Hyderabad Liberation Movement?
- (a) Operation Cactus
 - (b) Operation Polo
 - (c) Operation Chutney
 - (d) Operation Meghdoot
13. With reference to the *Operation Polo* in history of India, consider the following statements:
1. It was the codename for the police action against the Princely State of Hyderabad.
 2. Mir Osman Ali Khan was the ruler of Hyderabad during the operation.
- 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. 'Majuli Mask' that recently got 'Geographical Indication tag', is related to which of the following states?
- West Bengal
 - Assam
 - Bihar
 - Uttar Pradesh
15. Which of the following personalities are related to the Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha ('Home for the Prevention of Infanticide'), Kavya Phule ('Poetry's Blossoms'), and Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar ('The Ocean of Pure Gems')?
- Savitribai Phule
 - Pandita Ramabai Chaudhary
 - Margaret Cousins
 - Annie Besant
16. With reference to the Sabarmati Ashram, consider the following statements:
- Mahatma Gandhi founded the Ashram in 1917 at the bank of the Sabarmati River.
 - The first act under the civil disobedience movement was initiated from the Sabarmati Ashram in 1930.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
17. With reference to the *Majuli Masks*, consider the following statements:
- It depicts devotional messages under the neo-Vaishnavite tradition.
 - It was introduced by Srimanta Sankardeva in the 15th-16th century.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
18. *Gorsam Kora Festival*, sometimes appeared in the media, was celebrated by which of the following Indian states?
- Sikkim
 - Arunachal Pradesh
 - West Bengal
 - Himachal Pradesh
19. With reference to the Majuli Masks, consider the following statements:
- They were introduced by the 15th-16th century reformer saint Srimanta Sankardeva.
 - It finds its roots in the river island district of Majuli, which is the largest river island in the world.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
20. With reference to Ayya Vaikundar, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- He is the 15th-century social reformer and the founder of the Ayyavazhi sect.
 - He initiated the digging of common wells, called Muthirikinarus.

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

21. 'Narasapur Crochet Lace Craft' recently seen in the news, belongs to which of the following states?

- (a) Telangana
- (b) Orissa
- (c) Rajasthan
- (d) Andhra Pradesh

22. Consider the following pairs:

<i>GI Tag</i>	<i>State</i>
1. Rupa Tarakasi	Rajasthan
2. Banglar muslin	West Bengal
3. Narasapur Crochet Lace Products	Karnataka

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

23. With reference to the *Lahore or Pakistan Resolution* in the history of India, consider the following statements:

- 1. It was written and prepared by Muhammad Ali Jinnah.
- 2. It does not include the word 'Pakistan' anywhere.

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. (c)

Garba is a ritualistic and devotional dance that is performed on the occasion of the Hindu festival of Navaratri, which is dedicated to the worship of the feminine energy or 'Shakti'.

About

- The name Garba derived from the Sanskrit term Garbha (womb) and Deep (small lamp). It is a popular dance of Gujarat.
- Traditionally Garba is performed around a centrally lit lamp or around the statue of the goddess Shakti. Both men and women take part in the dance.
- The dancers move around the centre in a counter-clockwise circle, using simple movements while singing and clapping their hands in unison.

2. (d)
Ugadi festival: The festival marks the beginning of the **Kannad New Year**, along with the advent of the spring season.
- It is believed that **Lord Brahma** created the world on this day only.
 - Another popular belief related to Ugadi is that on this day, Lord Vishnu took an incarnation in the form of Matsya.
3. (c)
In News : Recently, India's External Affairs Minister firmly supported the Philippines in upholding its national sovereignty during his visit to Manila.
- Historically, Indian influences reached the Philippines through the **Srivijaya and Majapahit empires**, contributing to the early Philippine **culture, religion, and language**.
 - The presence of numerous words with Sanskrit roots in **Tagalog (the local language)** and objects such as the **Laguna Copper Plate inscription**, the oldest artefact discovered in the Philippines derived from Pallava script; the golden statue of **Agusan Tara**; and the localised version of **Indian epic Ramayana (Maharadia Lawana)** testify to the historical links between the two countries.
4. (b)
Mohiniyattam
Mohiniyattam: A Classical Dance Form of India
- The **Sangeet Natak Academy** recognizes **eight** classical dance forms, including **Mohiniyattam**.
 - Other seven are: Bharata Natyam, Kathakali,, Kathak, Manipuri, Kuchipudi, Odissi, and Sattriya.
 - **Mohiniattam belongs to Kerala in southern India** and takes its name from the mythic enchantress Mohini. It is performed by women in honor of the Hindu god Vishnu in his incarnation as the enchantress Mohini.
 - It is a **dance of feminine grace**, and has grown out of performances connected with Kerala's temples.
- Features:**
- The dance form is characterized by **graceful, swaying body movements with no abrupt jerks or sudden leaps**.
 - Mohiniyattam **lays emphasis on acting** and the dancer identifies herself with the character and **sentiments** existing in the compositions.
 - The prince **Swati Tirunal of Travancore**, was one of the chief architects of the dance in the nineteenth century.
 - The main percussion instruments in the performance are the **Edakka**.
5. (a)
Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.
Khooni Bhandara
- It is an underground water management system comprising eight waterworks built in Burhanpur (City in Madhya Pradesh).
 - It is the Mughal period water work following the persian qanat approach.
 - It was built by erstwhile ruler **Abdurrahim Khankhana** in 1615.
6. (c)
The historical biography that tells the story of Usha Mehta came out on Amazon Prime
- Dr. Usha Mehta, popularly known as Ushaben.
 - She began participating in the freedom struggle at the young age of 8.
 - She is well known for organizing the Congress Radio.
 - An underground radio station which operated during the Quit India Movement in 1942.

7. (c)
Both the Statements are correct.
Gwalior Fort
- It is located on the **basalt rock hills**.
 - It was initiated by Raja Sourya Sena who finished the fortification system around the plateau in 773CE.
 - The modern-day fort, embodying a defensive structure and two palaces was built by the **Tomar Rajput ruler Man Singh Tomar in 1398**.
8. (b)
Sri Potti Sriramulu
About
- **Indian revolutionary**, Potti Sriramulu was **born in 1901 to Guravayya and Mahalakshamma in Padamatapalli**, in a district that was once a region within Nellore district of **Andhra Pradesh**.
 - He was a **devout follower, avid supporter and devotee of Mahatma Gandhi**. Helso joined the Gandhi Ashram established by Yerneni Subrahmanyam, in Komaravolu.
- Major Contributions
- **Indian Independence Movement**: Sriramulu was imprisoned for participating in the **1930 Salt Satyagraha**.
 - Between 1941 and 1942, he **participated in the individual satyagraha and the Quit India movement** and was imprisoned on three occasions.
9. (c)
Telangana
Context
- Pandavula Gutta, has been recognised as the sole Geo-heritage site in Telangana.
- About
- Pandavula Gutta is a **rock art site** which is **older than the Himalayan hills**, and has been inhabited by humans since prehistoric times.
 - There are natural paintings on these rocks, depicting the lifestyle and hunting methods of earlier people.
 - The paintings on the hills are of peacocks, lizards, tigers, frogs, fishes, deer etc. There are also **geometrical designs** and impressions in green, red, yellow and white pigment colors.
 - Rock paintings, inscriptions of **Rastrakutan times** and **fresco paintings** of the late medieval period were also discovered in these hillocks.
10. (c)
It is a mausoleum built during the Mughal period near the Nizamuddin dargah in Delhi.
About the Chausath Khamba:
- **Built in 1623-24 AD**, the structure houses the **tomb of Mirza Aziz Koka**, foster brother of Mughal Emperor Akbar.
 - The structure also finds mention in **Sir Gordon Risley Hearn's book The Seven Cities of Delhi**.
 - "The mausoleum was erected by Mirza Aziz Kokaltash, governor of several provinces under Akbar and is said to be **as old as the shrine itself**."
 - As per the official conservation document by **Aga Khan Trust for Culture**:
 - The tomb enclosure is entered through a lofty **arched gateway** and has a large sunken forecourt.
 - The mausoleum is unique on account of it being **built entirely of marble**, with 25 marble domes supporting the flat roof of the structure.

- The plan for Chausath Khamba could have been inspired from the wooden garden pavilions from Persia — such as the Chihil Sutun, and in turn, the Chausath Khamba seems to have inspired the architectural design for Emperor Shahjahan's Diwan-i-Aam, Hall of Audience.
- According to author and historian Sam Dalrymple, the structure is basically a piece of Gujarati/Ahmedabad style architecture in Delhi. It is the Urs Mahal, where festivals would be held during the anniversary of Nizamuddin's death. It shows how regional architecture travelled across India centuries ago.

11. (c)

Both the Statements are correct.

Ahilyabai Holkar

- Ahilya Bai Holkar was the noble queen of the Maratha Empire, in early modern India.
- She was born in Chondi village of Ahmednagar to the village head, in 1725.
- She was married to Khande Rao (son of Malhar Rao Holkar, the army commander to Peshwa Bajirao).

Role in administration

- After the death of his husband, Ahilyabai excelled at administrative and military strategies.
- She established **Maheshwar (Madhya Pradesh)** a town on the bank of Narmada river the Capital of the Holkar dynasty.
- **Temple construction:** Ahilya Bai was a great pioneer and builder of Hindu temples and constructed hundreds of temples throughout India. She rebuilt Somanath Temple in Gujarat and led the restoration of Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi.

12. (b)

News: The Union government has decided to celebrate the 17th of September every year as Hyderabad Liberation Day to honour the martyrs of the **Hyderabad Liberation Movement**.

Background

- In 1947, when the British left India, they gave the princely states the choice to either join India or Pakistan or remain independent.
- While most princely states on the Indian side acceded, some decided to remain independent and one among them was Hyderabad in the south.

Hyderabad Liberation Day

- Hyderabad did not get independence for 13 months after the Independence of India on August 15, 1947, and was under Nizam's rule.
- The Razakars, a private militia of Mir Osman Ali Khan, called for Hyderabad state to either join Pakistan or to become a Muslim dominion while resisting its merger with the Union of India.
- Therefore, **Operation Polo**, the military action launched by the Indian Army on September 13, 1948, to integrate the princely state of Hyderabad.

13. (c)

Hyderabad Liberation Day: It commemorates the integration of the princely State of Hyderabad, encompassing **Telangana, Marathwada, and Hyderabad-Karnataka** into the Indian Union on September 17, 1948.

- The region was under the **rule of the Nizam** and did not gain independence for 13 months after India's Independence.

Statement 1 is correct:

- The liberation of Hyderabad was possible **due to the swift and timely action** by the first Minister of Home Affairs of India, Shri Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, under **Operation Polo**.
 - It was the **codename for the police action** against the Princely State of Hyderabad.

Statement 2 is correct:

- **Mir Osman Ali Khan** was the ruler and **last Nizam** of the Princely State of Hyderabad during the operation.

14. (b)

News: Majuli masks of **Assam** got the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

What are Majuli masks?

- The handmade masks are traditionally used to depict characters in bhaonas, or theatrical performances with devotional messages under the neo-Vaishnavite tradition, introduced by the 15th-16th century reformer saint Srimanta Sankardeva.
- The masks can depict gods, goddesses, demons, animals and birds — Ravana, Garuda, Narasimha, Hanuman, Varaha Surpanakha all feature among the masks.
- The masks are made of bamboo, clay, dung, cloth, cotton, wood etc.

15. (a)

About Savitribai Phule

- A **Dalit woman from the Mali community**, Savitribai was born on January 3, 1831, in **Maharashtra's** Naigaon village. Married off at the tender age of 10, **her husband Jyotirao Phule** is said to have educated her at home.
- Later, **Jyotirao admitted Savitribai to a teachers' training institution** in Pune. Throughout their life, the couple supported each other and in doing so, **broke many social barriers**.

Major Contributions

- **Country's first girls' school:** 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**.
- **Protectors of women and children:** Along with Jyotirao, Savitribai started the **Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha** ('Home for the Prevention of Infanticide') for pregnant widows facing discrimination.
- **Satyashodhak Samaj:** In 1873, the Phule couple 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.
- **Rejection of patriarchal traditions:** At her husband's funeral procession on November 28, 1890, Savitribai again defied convention and carried the **titve** (earthen pot).
 - Walking ahead of the procession, Savitribai was the one who consigned his body to the flames, a ritual which is still predominantly carried out by men.
- **Literary works:** Savitribai Phule published her first collection of poems, called **Kavya Phule** ('Poetry's Blossoms'), at the age of 23 in 1854. She published **Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar** ('The Ocean of Pure Gems'), in 1892.
- Besides these works, **Matushri Savitribai Phlenchi Bhashane va Gaani** (Savitribai Phule's speeches and songs'), and her letters to her husband have also been published.

16. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Sabarmati Ashram: In 1917, Gandhiji founded the ashram at **Sabarmati** — his fourth ashram — on the **western bank of the Sabarmati River**.

- The location was to the **north of the village of Juna Vadaj**, beyond the Chandrabhaga rivulet, a tributary of the Sabarmati.

- **Movements Launched:** Apart from the Dandi March (act of nonviolent civil disobedience in colonial India) that Gandhiji began from here on March 12, 1930, he also launched the Champaran Satyagraha (1917), the Ahmedabad mills strike and Kheda Satyagraha (1918), the Khadi movement (1918), the Rowlatt Act and Khilafat Movements (1919), and the Non-Cooperation movement (1920) while living in Sabarmati.

17. (c)

In News : Recently, Majuli Masks of Assam and Famed Silver Filigree Work (Chandi Tarakasi) of Cuttack received GI tag.

Statement 1 is correct:

- **Majuli Masks of Assam** These are **handmade masks** traditionally used to depict **characters in 'Bhaonas', or theatrical performances** with devotional messages under the **neo-Vaishnavite tradition**.
 - These are made of *bamboo, clay, dung, cloth, cotton, wood*, and other materials available in the riverine surroundings of their makers.
 - It depicts gods, goddesses, demons, animals, and birds etc.

Statement 2 is correct:

- It was introduced by the **15th-16th century** reformer saint **Srimanta Sankardeva**.
- **Categories:**
 - **Mukha Bhaona:** It covers the face;
 - **Lotokoi:** Bigger in size extends to the chest; and,
 - **Cho Mukha:** It is a head and body mask.

18. (b)

In News : Recently, the **Gorsam Kora Festival** was celebrated as '*India-Bhutan Friendship & Shared Cultural Heritage of Himalayan Buddhism*' in **Tawang of Arunachal Pradesh**.

- **About the Festival:** It is an annual festival, celebrated in the scenic **Zemithang Valley** along the **Nyanmjang Chu River** of Tawang district in Arunachal Pradesh, India.
- It is held at the **Gorsam Chorten**, a 93-foot-tall Stupa built during the **13th century AD** by a local monk, **Lama Pradhar**.
 - This landmark is **older than the Tawang Monastery**, and is an icon for **Himalayan Buddhism**.
- It is observed during the last day of the first month of the Lunar calendar.
- It symbolises the enduring **friendship between India and Bhutan**.

19. (c)

Both the Statements are correct: Both Majuli Mask of Assam & Assam Majuli Manuscript Painting find its root in the **river island district of Majuli of the state**.

- Majuli is the **largest river island in the world** and the seat of Assam's neo-Vaishnavite tradition.
- **Background:** It was introduced by the **15th-16th century** reformer saint **Srimanta Sankardeva**.
- **Art work:** These are **handmade masks** and are traditionally used to **depict characters in bhaonas, or theatrical performances** with devotional messages under the **neo-Vaishnavite tradition**.
 - The masks can depict **gods, goddesses, demons, animals and birds**.
 - The masks are made of **bamboo, clay, dung, cloth, cotton, and wood**.

20. (b)

Statements 1 is not correct and Statements 2 is correct.

About

- He was born in **1809** and is the founder of the **Ayyavazhi sect**, primarily in southern **Tamil Nadu**.
- **His teachings** focused on equality, fraternity, and the eradication of caste-based discrimination, challenging the established religious and social hierarchies of the time.

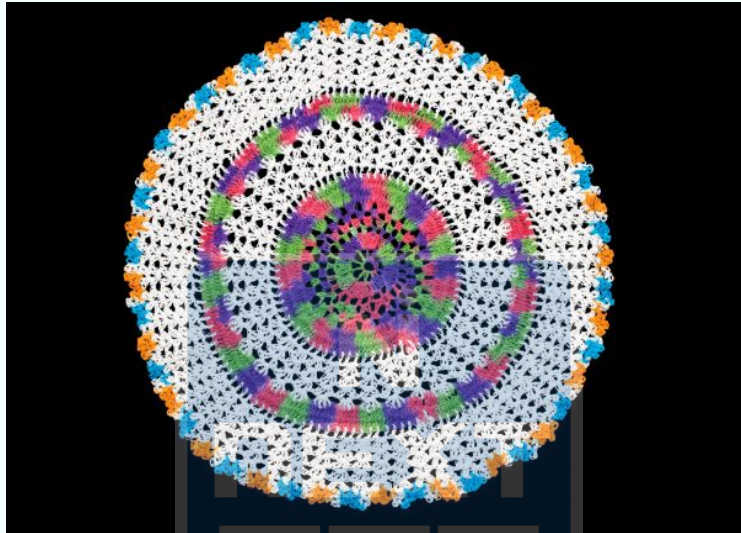
Upliftment of lower caste

- He organized Samapanthi-bhojana or community eateries for people from all backgrounds. He would send his disciples to the homes of lower castes to eat with them.
- When lower castes were not allowed to fetch water from wells used by upper caste Hindus, Vaikundar initiated the digging of common wells, called Muthirikinarus.
- Vaikundar also encouraged all devotees to wear turbans and dhotis, promoting equality.

21. (d)

Narasapur Crochet Lace Craft is geographically limited to **19 mandals** in West Godavari in the **Godavari region of Andhra Pradesh**.

- The lace work is done using **thin threads** and these are again **woven with thin crochet needles** of varying sizes.
 - The products are available in **vibrant colors like orange, green, blue, whitered, and beige**.
 - The crochet lace products are also exported to countries like the UK, USA, France, etc.



22. (a)

News: Odisha's famed Rupa Tarakasi has been given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai.

- The other products to join the GI league are **Banglar muslin (West Bengal)**, **Narasapur crochet lace products (Andhra Pradesh)**, and **Kutch rogan craft (Gujarat)**.

Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

- It is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- The tag is valid for a period of 10 years following which it can be renewed.

Benefits

- Prevents unauthorised use of a Registered Geographical Indication by others.
- It helps in promoting the exports of the product.

23. (b)

In News : It is observed that the **Pakistan National Day**, the **day the Lahore Resolution was adopted** by the Muslim League to be celebrated in New Delhi.

Lahore Resolution (aka the Pakistan Resolution):

- It is a landmark document in the history of Pakistan, and was a formal political statement **adopted by the All-India Muslim League** during its three-day general session in Lahore from **March 22 to March 24, 1940**.

Statement 1 is not correct:

- It was written and prepared by **Muhammad Zafarullah Khan**. He sounded for **an independent state for India's Muslims**.
- It was the moment when **Muhammad Ali Jinnah**, once a proponent of Hindu-Muslim unity, **irrevocably transformed himself** for the cause of a separate Muslim homeland called Pakistan.



ECONOMY

- 1. With reference to the 'T+0 Settlement Cycle' that was recently introduced in Indian Stock Market, consider the following statements:**
1. The shares are transferred to the buyer's account and funds are deposited in the seller's account on the same day of the trade.
 2. It is applicable only for trades executed before 05:00 p.m.
- 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. Consider the following statements:**
1. Credit bureaus are organizations that collect, analyze, and maintain credit data on borrowers, businesses, and organizations.
 2. They are licensed by the Securities and Exchange Board of India.
 3. Credit reports can only be provided to borrowers and government agencies.
- How many statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
- 3. With reference to the 'Coffee Board' in India, consider the following statements:**
1. It is a statutory body functioning under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
 2. Its head office is situated in Bengaluru.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 4. With reference to the Self-Regulatory Organisations (SROs), consider the following statements:**
1. An SRO is a non-governmental organisation that sets and enforces rules and standards relating to the conduct of entities in the industry.
 2. An SRO is expected to address concerns beyond the narrow self-interests of the industry, such as to protect workers, customers or other participants in the ecosystem.
 3. Those entities who are interested in being recognised as SROs will have to issue a declaration in that respect in the print media.
- 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
- 5. With reference to the Tea Board of India, consider the following statements:**
1. The Board promotes domestic trade as well as the export of tea from India.
 2. The Tea Board consists of the Members of Parliament and is reconstituted every five years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. *Gini index or Gini Coefficient* is used to measure which of the following?

- (a) Deflation
- (b) Inflation
- (c) Income Inequality
- (d) Rate of Unemployment

7. Which of the following is NOT the implication of having negative interest rates in a country?

- (a) Encouraging Saving
- (b) Encourage inflation
- (c) Weakening Currency
- (d) Stimulating Borrowing and Spending

8. Which of the following statements best describes the term Gig economy?

- (a) An economy with long term contract arrangements.
- (b) Labor market with lenders and borrowers engaging in financial transactions outside the regulatory mechanisms.
- (c) An economy based on elaborate social security measures.
- (d) Labor market characterized by short-term, flexible work arrangements.

9. With reference to the Indian space sector, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. India constitutes 20% of the global space economy.
- 2. In India 100% FDI is allowed under Automatic route in all the fields.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

10. With reference to the recently launched 'Lab Network To Test Food', consider the following statements:

- 1. It was launched under the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- 2. It aims to test food products for microbial contamination like E. coli, salmonella, and listeria.

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 the Minimum Support Price (MSP), consider the following statements:

- 1. The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices recommends the MSP.
- 2. The MSPs of toria and de-husked coconut are fixed on the basis of the MSPs of rapeseed/mustard and copra, respectively.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. The Balance of Payments of a country is a systematic record of :
- Goods exported from a country during a year.
 - The economic transaction between the government and private entities.
 - Capital movements from one country to another.
 - Record of all economic transactions between a country and the rest of the world.
13. Which of the following Sustainable Development Goals is related to the goal of eliminating child mortality ?
- SDG 1
 - SDG 2
 - SDG 3
 - SDG 4
14. Which of the following are the obstacles in India's growth trajectory towards upper middle income country status?
- Young Population
 - Digitalization
 - Rising Disposable Income
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - None of the above
15. With reference to the Indian economy, 'Open Market Operations' are:
- Borrowing by scheduled banks from the RBI
 - Lending by commercial banks to industry and trade
 - Purchase and sale of government securities by the RBI
 - None of the above
16. With reference to the Indian Pharmaceutical Industry, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- The Indian pharmaceutical industry is the largest industry in the world by volume.
 - The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority monitors and regulates the prices of pharmaceutical products in India.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
17. With reference to the *Geographical Indication (GI)*, consider the following statements:
- These are covered as a component of Intellectual Property Rights under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.
 - These are governed by the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
 - It serves as a trademark in the international market.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All three
 - None

- 18. With reference to the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag, consider the following statements:**
1. It is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act of 1999.
 2. It is valid for a period of 10 years and cannot be renewed.
- 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
- 19. What is the main concern associated with the supply of critical minerals?**
- (a) Oversaturation in the market leading to low prices
 - (b) Dependence on a limited number of suppliers, posing geopolitical risks
 - (c) Environmental hazards associated with their extraction
 - (d) Lack of interest from industries in utilizing these minerals
- 20. With reference to Mineral Security Partnership (MSP), consider the following statements:**
1. It is a US-led collaboration which focuses on catalysing public and private investment in critical mineral supply chains globally.
 2. Citing security concerns India has stayed away from the partnership.
- 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
- 21. With reference to the White Revolution in India, consider the following statements:**
1. It is also known as the Operation Flood.
 2. It was launched in 1970 under the leadership of Dr. Verghese Kurien.
- 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
- 22. With reference to the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES), consider the following statements:**
1. It is conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO).
 2. It is designed to collect information on the consumption of goods and services by households.
- 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
- 23. With reference to the *National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)*, consider the following statements:**
1. It was established by the Statute of Indian Parliament.
 2. It is a Development Finance Institution that supports the development of long-term non-recourse infrastructure financing 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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

In News : The Indian Stock Market recently introduced the T+0 settlement cycle, marking a significant shift from the existing T+1 settlement cycle.

Statement 1 is correct:

- **T+0 Settlement Cycle:** The trades involving shares are **settled on the same day** they occur in the T+0 system. It means shares are transferred to the buyer's account and funds are deposited in the seller's account on the same day of the trade.
 - It is a departure from the current T+1 cycle, where trades are settled by the next day.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- The T+0 settlement cycle will be executed in **two phases**.
 - **First Phase:** Trades executed up to 1:30 pm will be considered for settlement, which must be completed by 4:30 pm.
 - **Second Phase:** It extends trading time till 3:30 pm, discontinuing the first phase.
- The T+0 settlement will be **optional for 25 stocks** and will be applicable **only** for trades executed between 9:15 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

2. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Credit Information Companies, also called **credit bureaus**, are organizations that collect, analyze, and maintain credit data on borrowers, businesses, and organizations.

- **CIBIL** is the **oldest and most well-known credit information company in India**. The top four credit information companies in India are:
 - Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited (CIBIL)
 - Equifax
 - Experian
 - CRIF Highmark

Statement 2 and 3 are not correct: They are licensed by the **Reserve Bank of India**.

- Credit reports can **only** be provided to the following people or authorities upon request:
 - Borrower's employer
 - Borrower's landlords
 - Utility service providers
 - Government of India
 - Lenders, banks, financial institutions
 - Any third party (only after the written request from the borrower).

3. (c)

In News : Recently, it was found that the **Price of Robusta coffee** has spiked due to drastic fall in traditional growing regions like Vietnam and Indonesia.

Statement 1 is correct:

- **Coffee Board of India:** It was established through **Coffee Act VII of 1942**.

○ Thus It is a **statutory body**.

- **Administrative Control:** The **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.

Statement 2 is correct:

- Its **head office** is situated in **Bengaluru** in Karnataka
- The Board has a **Market Intelligence Unit (MIU)** functioning from its head office at Bangalore.
 - It undertakes various activities related to market information & intelligence, market research studies, crop forecasting and coffee economics aspects.

4. (a)

Statement 1 and 2 are correct, Statement 3 is incorrect.

About the Self-Regulatory Organisations (SROs):

- An SRO is a **non-governmental organisation** that **sets and enforces rules and standards** relating to the conduct of entities in the industry (members) with the **aim of protecting the customer and promoting ethics, equality, and professionalism**.
- An SRO is **expected to address concerns beyond the narrow self-interests of the industry**, such as to protect workers, customers or other participants in the ecosystem.
- Regulations, standards, and dispute resolution by an SRO **do not replace but supplement existing laws or regulations**.
- The recognised SRO serves as a **two-way communication channel** between its members and the RBI.
- Those entities who are interested in being recognised as SROs **will have to apply to the RBI**, which issues a letter of recognition.

5. (a)

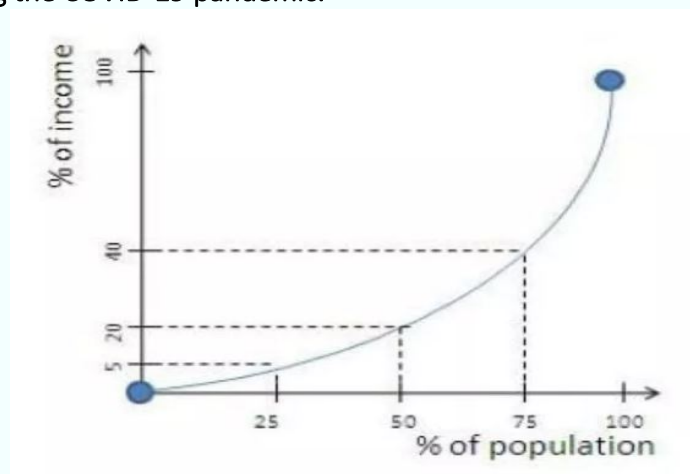
Statement 1 is correct: The present Tea Board is functioning as a statutory body of the Central Government under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry. The present Tea Board set up under **Section 4 of the Tea Act 1953** was constituted on 1st April 1954. It was established to promote the cultivation, processing, and domestic trade as well as the export of tea from India.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Tea Board is constituted of 31 members (including the Chairman) drawn from Members of Parliament, tea producers, tea traders, tea brokers, consumers, and representatives of Governments from the principal tea-producing states, and trade unions. The Board is reconstituted every three years.

6. (c)

The **Gini index** is a measure of the **distribution of income across a population**.

- A **higher Gini index** indicates **greater inequality**, with high-income individuals receiving much larger percentages of the population's total income.
- Global inequality, as measured by the Gini index, has **steadily increased** over the **past few centuries** and **spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic**.



7. (a)

Encouraging Saving

Negative interest rates:

- The term negative interest rate refers to **interest paid to borrowers rather than to lenders**. Negative interest rates are when **central banks make their commercial counterparts pay to park their excess cash** at the institution.

Negative interest rates in a country can have several implications:

- **Discourage Saving:** Negative interest rates discourage saving. When interest rates are negative, depositing money in a bank becomes less attractive because it erodes the value of savings over time. People may seek alternative investments or spend their money rather than saving.
- **Stimulating Borrowing and Spending:** Negative rates incentivize borrowing by making loans cheaper. Consumers and businesses are more likely to take out loans for investments, consumption, or capital projects.
- **Weakening Currency:** Negative rates can lead to a weaker national currency. Investors seek higher returns elsewhere, causing capital outflows and depreciation of the currency.
- **Challenging Bank Profitability:** Banks struggle to maintain profitability when interest rates are negative. They may pass on costs to customers or reduce lending.
- **Distorting Financial Markets:** Negative rates can distort bond markets, affecting yields and investor behavior.

8. (d)

Labor market characterized by short-term, flexible work arrangements.

Gig Economy

- The Gig economy, also known as the **freelance economy or on-demand economy**, refers to a labor market characterized by short-term, flexible work arrangements.
- The **gig economy** is about individual workers carrying out tasks for clients through the intermediation of a platform on a **task-by-task basis**.
- **Gig workers:** NITI Aayog defines 'gig workers' as those engaged in work outside of the traditional employer-employee arrangement.
 - NITI Aayog's report titled 'India's Booming Gig and Platform Economy' defines a gig worker as
 - "someone who engages in income-earning activities outside of a traditional employer-employee relationship, as well as in the informal sector".
 - Additionally, it defines those working with platforms such as **Ola, Uber, Dunzo, Swiggy, Zomato and Urban Company** as **platform workers**.

9. (d)

Both the Statements are not correct.

India's share in Space Industry

- India constitutes **2-3%** of the global space economy and is expected to enhance its share to more than **10% by 2030**.
- With over **400** private space companies, India ranks **fifth globally** in no. of space companies.

FDI in space sector

- Under the amended FDI policy, **100% FDI is allowed** in the space sector. The entry route for the various activities are as follows:
 - **Up to 74% under Automatic route:** Satellites-Manufacturing & Operation, Satellite Data Products and Ground Segment & User Segment.
 - **Up to 49% under Automatic route:** Launch Vehicles and associated systems or subsystems, Creation of Spaceports for launching and receiving Spacecraft.

- **Up to 100% under Automatic route:** Manufacturing of components and systems/ sub-systems for satellites, ground segment and user segment.

10. (b)

In News : Recently, the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has taken an initiative to ensure food safety in the country.

Statement 1 is not correct:

- The '**Lab Network To Test Food**' an initiative by FSSAI, an autonomous body under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, is a network of 34 microbiology labs across the country **to test food products for microbial contamination**.
- It aims to help in the **early detection of microbial contamination** in food products, thereby preventing foodborne illnesses and ensuring the health and well-being of the public.

Statement 2 is correct:

- The labs are equipped to test food products for 10 pathogens, **including E. coli, salmonella, and listeria**. These labs test food samples collected during routine surveillance for microbes.
- These pathogens can lead to **spoilage of food and potential health risks**.

11. (c)

The **Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP)** makes recommendations for the MSPs. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) takes these decisions. MSP is announced for 22 mandated crops and fair and remunerative price (FRP) for sugarcane. The mandated crops are 14 crops of the kharif season, 6 rabi crops and two other commercial crops. In addition, the MSPs of **toria and de-husked coconut** are fixed on the basis of the MSPs of rapeseed/mustard and copra, respectively. The list of crops are as follows:

- Cereals (7) - paddy, wheat, barley, jowar, bajra, maize and ragi
- Pulses (5) - gram, arhar/tur, moong, urad and lentil
- Oilseeds (8) - groundnut, rapeseed/mustard, toria, soyabean, sunflower seed, sesamum, safflower seed and niger seed
- Raw cotton
- Raw jute
- Copra
- De-husked coconut
- Sugarcane (Fair and remunerative price)
- Virginia flue cured (VFC) tobacco

12. (d)

The balance of payments (BOP) is a statement of all transactions made between entities in one country and the rest of the world over a defined period of time, such as a quarter or a year. The balance of payments includes both the current account and capital account. The current account includes a nation's net trade in goods and services, its net earnings on cross-border investments, and its net transfer payments. The capital account consists of a nation's imports and exports of capital and foreign aid.

13. (c)

SDG 3

Sustainable Development Goals

- **SDG Target 3.2 Newborn and child mortality:**
 - By 2030, end preventable deaths of **newborns and children under 5 years of age**, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality and under-5 mortality.

- According to the latest estimates by the **United Nations Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation**, globally,
 - **neonatal deaths**, or the death of a baby within 28 days of birth, happened every 14 seconds;
 - **a child aged under five** died every six seconds and
 - **an adolescent (ages 10 to 19)** died every 35 seconds in 2022, the report found.

14. (d)

None of the above.

Drivers for the growth of India towards upper middle country status

Traditional Growth Engines:

- **Young Population:** India boasts a large and young population, contributing to a growing workforce and a vibrant domestic market for consumer goods.
- **Rising Disposable Income:** As the economy expands, people have more money to spend, which stimulates businesses and drives economic activity.
- **Agriculture:** Though its share of GDP is decreasing, agriculture remains a significant employer and contributes to food security, enabling growth in other sectors.

Emerging Growth Drivers:

- **Digitalization:** India is experiencing a rapid digital transformation. This includes the growth of e-commerce, digital payments, and a booming startup scene.
- **Manufacturing Push:** India's manufacturing sector is at a sweet spot due to high capacity utilisation across key sectors and the initiatives like "Make in India" aim to boost domestic manufacturing, creating jobs and reducing dependence on imports.
- **Services Sector:** India has a strong services sector, particularly in IT and business process outsourcing (BPO). This sector is a major source of foreign investment and exports.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Investments in infrastructure like roads, bridges, and ports are crucial for connecting markets, improving logistics, and attracting businesses.

15. (c)

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

16. (b)

Statements 1 is not correct and Statements 2 is correct.

Indian Pharmaceutical Industry

- Indian pharmaceutical industry is the **3rd largest** pharmaceutical industry in the world by volume with current market size of around **USD 50 Billions**.
- India, the **world's largest provider of generic drugs** exported pharmaceuticals worth over 25 billion U.S. dollars in the financial year 2023.
- According to the **Indian Economic Survey 2021**, the pharmaceutical industry in India is expected to reach **USD 120-130 Billion by 2030**.
- **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA):** The NPPA monitors and regulates the prices of pharmaceutical products in India. While its primary focus is on pricing, it also plays a role in ensuring fair trade practices within the pharmaceutical industry.

17. (c)

Statement 1 is correct:

- **Approving and Regulating GI Tag:** GIs are covered as a component of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

Statement 2 is correct:

- At the **International level**, GI is governed by the **World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)**.

Statement 3 is correct:

- A GI tag is conferred upon products originating from a specific geographical region, signifying unique characteristics and qualities.
 - Essentially, it serves as a **trademark** in the **international market**.
- In India, GIs registration is administered by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**.
- The **first product in India** to be accorded with GI tag was **Darjeeling tea** in the year 2004-05.

18. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: A geographical indication (GI) is a **sign used on products** that have a **specific geographical origin** and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.

- In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act of 1999**.

Statement 2 is not correct: The registration of a geographical indication is **valid for a period of 10 years**, it **can be renewed** from time to time for a further period of 10 years each.

19. (b)

Critical minerals are elements that are the building blocks of **essential modern-day technologies**, and are at risk of supply chain disruptions. These minerals are now used everywhere from **making mobile phones, computers to batteries, electric vehicles and green technologies like solar panels and wind turbines**. China, the most dominant player in the critical mineral supply chains. There are available supply risks due to rare availability due to less suppliers, growing demand and complex processing value chain. Many times the complex supply chain can be disrupted by hostile regimes, or due to politically unstable regions.

20. (a)

Statement 2 is not correct and Statement 1 is correct.

Mineral Security Partnership (MSP):

- It is a **US-led collaboration of 14 countries** that would focus on the **supply chains of minerals** such as Cobalt, Nickel, Lithium, and also the 17 'rare earth' minerals.
- **Members:** Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Norway, Sweden, the UK, U.S., and the EU.
 - **India has recently been inducted** into the Mineral Security Partnership (MSP).
 - **Mandate:** To catalyse public and private investment in critical mineral supply chains globally.

21. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The White Revolution in India, also known as **Operation Flood**, was a significant dairy development program implemented to enhance milk production and address the country's milk scarcity issues.

- It was launched in **1970** by the **National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)** under the leadership of **Dr. Verghese Kurien**, often referred to as the "**Father of the White Revolution**."

22. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The **National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)** under Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has been conducting household surveys on consumption/consumer expenditure at regular intervals as part of its rounds, normally of one year duration.

- Since 1972, NSSO has been conducting the Consumer Expenditure Survey.
- It is designed to collect information on the consumption of goods and services by households.

23. (c)

In News : Recently, the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs reviewed the performance of National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) w.r.t. business, resource raising, developmental initiatives, human resources, information technology and financials.

Statement 1 is correct:

- NaBFID was established under the **National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Act, 2021.**

Statement 2 is correct:

- It is a **Development Finance Institution (DFI)** that supports the development of long-term non-recourse infrastructure financing in India.
- It aims to bridge the financing gap in the infrastructure sector, enabling credit flow through innovative instruments such as longer tenor loans, blended finance, partial credit enhancement, takeout financing, and facilitating crowding-in of infrastructure finance.

■■■■



INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. With reference to the Law Commission of India, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a statutory body constituted by the Government of India from time to time.
 2. The commission is an advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice.
 3. The retired Supreme Court judge or chief justice of a high court heads the Commission.Which of the given above statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
2. With reference to the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, consider the following statements:
 1. The Act seeks to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children as ratified by India in 1992.
 2. It defines “child” as a person who has not completed 16 years of age.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. ‘Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India’ case is related to which of the following?
 - (a) Electoral Bonds Scheme
 - (b) Internet shutdown
 - (c) Surrogacy Regulation
 - (d) Uniform Civil Code
4. Consider the following statements
 1. The Lokpal consists of a Chairperson and eight Members out of whom 75% are Judicial Members.
 2. The Lokpal has jurisdiction to inquire into allegations of corruption against the Prime Minister as well as officials of the Union Government.
 3. Lokpal will have power of superintendence and direction over any central investigation agency including CBI.How many statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
5. With reference to the Parliamentary Committees, consider the following statements:
 1. Ad hoc Committees are appointed for a specific purpose and they cease to exist when they finish the task.
 2. Parliament is bound by the recommendations of committees.
 3. They act as a mechanism that helps in improving the effectiveness of Parliament.

How many statements given above are correct?

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

6. Consider the following statements:

1. The Constitution of India does not prescribe a timeline for the Governor to provide assent to Bills sent by the Legislative Assembly.
2. If the Governor reserves a Bill for President's consideration, the enactment of the Bill then depends on the assent or refusal of assent by 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

7. Consider the following pairs:

Supreme Court Cases	Concerned Provisions
1. Mahabir Prasad Judgement	Nature of the governor's pleasure
2. Nabam Rebia Judgement	Discretionary Power of governor
3. Minerva Mills case	Basic Structure doctrine
4. MC Mehta	Scope of Article 32

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

8. With reference to the Fact Check Unit, consider the following statements:

1. It was established under the Press Information Bureau (PIB) and started its operations in 2019.
2. It was constituted to flag fake, false or misleading online content related to the government.

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. Consider the following statements:

1. The CBI is a statutory body established through the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.
2. The CBI is a nodal body for all matters related to INTERPOL.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

10. With reference to the Fact Check Unit (FCU) of Press Information Bureau, consider the following statements:

1. It was notified under the IT Rules of 2021 to monitor online content.
2. It is tasked with identifying 'fake news' published online and offline related to the government.

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. Kovind committee, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Appointment of Judges
- (b) Uniform Civil Code
- (c) Functioning of DRDO
- (d) Simultaneous Elections

12. With reference to the Indian Polity, consider the following statements:

- 1. Adjournment motion is introduced in both the houses of the Parliament.
- 2. Adjournment motion needs the support of 50 members to be admitted.
- 3. A no-confidence motion can be moved only in Lok Sabha.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

13. With reference to Model Code of Conduct (MCC), which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. It is a set of guidelines to regulate the campaigning of political parties.
- 2. The MCC is legally binding on political parties.

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

14. 'Anoop Baranwal vs Union of India' case is related to which of the following?

- (a) One Nation One Election
- (b) Electoral Bonds Scheme
- (c) Surrogacy Regulations
- (d) Appointment of Election Commissioner

15. Consider the following statements regarding Euthanasia:

- 1. Active Euthanasia refers to death by not providing essential, necessary and ordinary care or food and water.
- 2. Passive Euthanasia refers to causing intentional death of a human being by direct intervention.

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

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

16. With reference to the Chief Minister, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. The Chief Minister advises the governor to summon and prorogue the sessions of the state legislature.
- 2. The CM can recommend the dissolution of the legislative assembly to the governor.

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

17. With reference to Inner Line Permit (ILP), consider the following statements:

- 1. The ILP is in force in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur.
- 2. Recently notified Citizenship Amendment Rules are not going to be implemented in all Northeastern states where ILP is required.

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 National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. NCSC is a Statutory body established under an act of Parliament in 1992.
- 2. While inquiring into any complaint, NCSC has the powers of a Civil Court.

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

19. 'SR Bommai v Union of India' case is related to which of the following Articles of the Constitution of India?

- (a) Article 370
- (b) Article 356
- (c) Article 52
- (d) Article 246

20. With reference to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), consider the following statements:

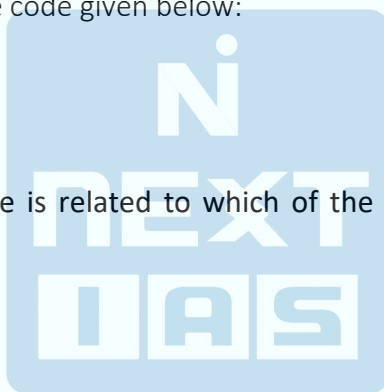
- 1. It was established in 1945 as part of the UN Charter after the World War Second.
- 2. It has ten non-permanent members elected for five-year terms.

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

21. 'Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India case' is related to which of the following?

- (a) Right to Privacy
- (b) Right to Education
- (c) Right to be Forgotten
- (d) Right to choose Partner



22. Which of the following states are entitled for “special” provisions under Article 371?

1. Nagaland
2. Maharashtra
3. Karnataka
4. Kerala

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

23. Which among the following countries, recently granted abortion as a constitutional right?

- (a) India
- (b) United States
- (c) Poland
- (d) France

24. Recently, a seven-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court of India unanimously overruled its *Judgement in P.V Narasimha Rao v. State (1998)*, which is related to:

- (a) Parliamentary Immunity
- (b) Anti-Defection Law
- (c) Reservation For Socio-economic Backward Class
- (d) Medical Termination of Pregnancy

25. With reference to the term ‘*Election Integrity*’, consider the following statements:

1. It is a fundamental aspect of democratic governance.
2. The Election Commission of India is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the electoral process.

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

26. With reference to star campaigners, consider the following statements:

1. Political party leaders are designated as "star campaigners" under Representation of the People Act, 1950.
2. Only recognised political parties can have the star campaigners.

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

27. The ‘*Project 39A*’ sometimes appeared in the news, is related to:

- (a) Building Submarines in India
- (b) Equal Justice and Opportunity
- (c) Safeguarding Snow Leopards in India
- (d) Protecting Historical Monuments in India

28. Consider the following:

1. Prevention of Plant Diseases
2. Relief of Agricultural Indebtedness
3. Taxes on Agricultural Income

How many of the above come under the *List I—Union List* of Schedule VII in Indian Constitution?

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

29. With reference to the Lokayukta in India, consider the following statements:

- 1. The concept of Lokayukta was inspired by the Scandinavian Countries Ombudsman system.
- 2. Rajasthan was the first state to establish Lokayukta.

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: The Law Commission of India is neither a constitutional body nor a statutory body. It is an executive body, the Government of India established the First Law Commission of Independent India in 1955 for a three-year term. The first Law Commission was established during the British Raj era in 1834 by the Charter Act of 1833 and was chaired by Lord Macaulay.

Statements 2 & 3 are correct: The commission is an advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice. Usually, a retired Supreme Court judge or chief justice of a high court heads the Commission.

2. (a)

News: The Kerala High Court has held that a child charged under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, is to be prosecuted as per the provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) (JJ) Act.

About

- **The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015** has come into force in 2016 and repeals the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000.
 - The Act seeks to achieve the objectives of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children** as ratified by India in 1992.
 - It specifies procedural safeguards in cases of children in conflict with law.
 - Section 2(12) of the JJ Act, defines “child” as a person who has not completed **18 years** of age.

3. (b)

News: India has consistently topped the global list of countries imposing internet bans, with approximately 60% of all recorded blackouts worldwide.

About

- Shutdowns have been implemented citing reasons such as national security and threats to public order, with notable instances during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, the abrogation of Article 370, and the introduction of Farm Bills.
- Indian States and Union Territories can impose shutdowns only in cases of a ‘public emergency’ or in the interest of ‘public safety,’ as per the Indian Telegraph Act.
 - However, the law lacks clear definitions for what constitutes an emergency or safety issue.

- The Supreme Court, in the landmark *Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India* case, reiterated that internet shutdowns violate fundamental rights to freedom of expression and shutdowns lasting indefinitely are unconstitutional.

4. (b)

In News : Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi sworn in as judicial member, Lokpal .

Statement 1 is not correct : The Lokpal is the first institution of its kind in independent India, established under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act 2013 to inquire and investigate allegations of corruption against public functionaries who fall within the scope and ambit of the above Act.

- The Lokpal consists of a Chairperson and eight Members out of whom 50% are Judicial Members.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct : The Chairperson and the Members are appointed by the President of India by warrant under his hand and seal and hold office for a term of five years from the date on which they enter upon the office or until they attain the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.

- The Lokpal has **jurisdiction to inquire into allegations of corruption against anyone who is or has been Prime Minister**, or a Minister in the Union government, or a Member of Parliament, as well as officials of the Union Government under Groups A, B, C and D.
- Lokpal will have power of superintendence and direction over any central **investigation agency including CBI** for cases referred to them by the Lokpal.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: A Parliamentary Committee is a **panel of MPs** that is appointed or elected by the House or nominated by the Speaker, and which works under the **direction of the Speaker**.

- **Ad hoc Committees:** They are appointed for a **specific purpose** and they cease to exist when they finish the task assigned to them and submit a report.

Statement 2 is not correct: Bills that are referred to committees are returned to the House with significant value addition.

- Parliament is **not bound** by the recommendations of committees.

Statement 3 is correct: Parliamentary Committees act as a mechanism that helps in improving the effectiveness of Parliament.

- They also examine petitions from the public, check whether rules framed by the government are in consonance with Acts of Parliament, and **help manage the administration of Parliament**.

6. (c)

Both the statements are correct.

Constitutional silences

- When the Constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly, the founders left deliberate gaps in it to enable a future Parliament to modify and amend the Constitution that was in accordance with the aspirations and the will of the people.
- This ostensibly gave birth to a Constitution with glaring misses.
 - One of the silences in the Constitution is in Article 200 which **does not prescribe a timeline** for the Governor to provide assent to Bills sent by the Legislative Assembly.

Role of President in State's Bill

- When a Bill has been passed by the Legislative Assembly of a State, it shall be presented to the Governor, who may either assent, withhold assent or reserve the Bill for consideration by the President.
- If the **Governor reserves a Bill for President's consideration**, the enactment of the Bill then depends on the assent or refusal of assent by the President.

7. (d)

- **Pair 1 is correctly matched Mahabir Prasad Judgement:** The case revolved around the question of the nature of the governor's pleasure under article 164(1).
 - The withdrawal of the governor's pleasure must coincide with the withdrawal of support to the ministry by the assembly.
- **Pair 2 is correctly matched Nabam Rebia Judgement:** SC ruled that Article 163 of the Constitution does not give the Governor a general discretionary power to act against or without the advice of his Council of Ministers.
- **Minerva Mills case:** The judgement struck down 2 changes made to the Constitution by the 42nd Amendment Act 1976, declaring them to be violative of the basic structure hence, **Pair 3 is correctly matched**
- **Pair 4 is correctly matched MC Mehta:** SC held that its power under Article 32 is not restricted to preventive measures, but also remedial measures when rights are violated.

8. (c)

Both the statements are correct: It was established under the Press Information Bureau (PIB) and started its operations in 2019.

- It was constituted to flag "fake, false or misleading online content related to the government.
- The FCU would flag off the fake, false, and misleading facts about the business of the government to social media intermediaries.
- Once such a post is flagged off, the intermediary has the option of either taking down the post or putting a disclaimer on the same.
- In taking the second option, the intermediary loses its safe harbour/immunity and stands liable for legal action.

9. (b)

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

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

10. (a)

Statement 1 is correct:

- The Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology notified the Fact Check Unit (FCU) under IT Rules of 2021 to monitor online content.
- The FCU was established under the Press Information Bureau (PIB) and started its operations in 2019.
- It aims to act as a deterrent to creators and disseminators of fake news and misinformation.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- The FCU is tasked with identifying 'fake news' published online (*not offline*) related to the government.
- Content marked by the FCU as 'fake or misleading' will have to be taken down by online intermediaries if they wish to enjoy legal immunity against third-party content.
 - However, it raises **concerns** about potential impacts on **press freedom** and the **government's role as an arbiter of truth**.

11. (d)

News: The high-level committee headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind has recommended simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies as the first step and hold municipal and panchayat polls within 100 days of the general election in the next phase.

About

- The panel has recommended amendments to Article 83 (duration of Houses of Parliament) and Article 172 (duration of State legislatures) of the Constitution.
- This constitutional amendment will not need ratification by the States.

Ratification by States

- The panel recommended suitable amendments to the; Article 324A of the Constitution to allow simultaneous elections in panchayats and municipalities; and
- Article 325 to allow the Election Commission of India (ECI), in consultation with State election authorities, to prepare a common electoral roll and voter ID cards.
- Both these constitutional amendments would require ratification by the States.

12. (d)

Statement 2 and 3 are correct: Adjournment motion is regarded as an extraordinary device because it interrupts the normal business of the House and needs the support of 50 members to be admitted in the Parliament. It is adopted to draw the attention of the House to a recent matter of urgent public importance having serious consequences. As it involves the element of censure against the government hence Rajya Sabha is not allowed to make use of this option. A no-confidence motion demonstrates to the head of state that the elected Parliament no longer has confidence in the government. In India, the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to Lok Sabha and it remains in office till it enjoys the confidence of majority of the members in the Lok Sabha. Thus, a motion of no-confidence is moved to remove the council of ministers and oust the government from office.

13. (a)

Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.

What is the Model Code of Conduct (MCC)?

- MCC was first introduced in the 1960 Assembly elections in Kerala.
- It is a set of guidelines issued by the Election Commission to regulate the campaigning of political parties and candidates during elections.
- Its main aim is to conduct free and fair elections by preventing any activities that could influence voters or disrupt the poll process.

Is MCC legally binding?

- The MCC is not legally binding.
- However, certain provisions of the MCC may be enforced through invoking corresponding provisions in other statutes such as the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and Representation of the People Act, 1951.

14. (d)

News: The Supreme Court will hear a plea on CJI's inclusion in the Selection Committee for the appointment of EC.

About

- The plea says that the Centre could take an “unfair advantage” while filling the two vacancies of Election Commissioners (ECs) and therefore the new law on the appointments of ECs should be put on hold.
 - It also added that the Chief Justice of India (CJI) should be brought back in the selection committee headed by the Prime Minister for appointments of ECs as directed by a landmark Supreme Court judgment in the **Anoop Baranwal case**.
- In **Anoop Baranwal versus Union of India (2023)**, SC held that the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and two ECs shall be appointed by the President on the advice of a committee comprising of Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha or the leader of the single largest party in Opposition and the CJI.
- The government enacted a new law — The Chief Election Commission and other Election Commissions (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023.
- The law had replaced the CJI with a Cabinet Minister on the selection committee, giving the Centre a dominant role in the appointment process.

15. (d)

Statement 1 is not correct: Active Euthanasia: It is also known as ‘Positive Euthanasia’ or ‘Aggressive Euthanasia’. It refers to causing intentional death of a human being by direct intervention. It is a direct action performed to end useless life and a meaningless existence.

Statement 2 is not correct: Passive Euthanasia: It is also known as ‘Negative Euthanasia’ or ‘Non-Aggressive Euthanasia’. It is intentionally causing death by not providing essential, necessary and ordinary care or food and water.

16. (c)

Both the Statements are correct.

Context

- Nayab Singh Saini took oath as the new chief minister of Haryana.

Constitutional Provisions

- The Constitution does not contain any specific procedure for the selection and appointment of the Chief Minister.
- **Article 163(1)** of the Constitution says “there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister (CM) at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions”.
- **Article 164(1)** says “the Chief Minister (CM) shall be appointed by the Governor and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the Governor on the advice of the CM”.

Powers and functions of the Chief Minister

- The Chief Minister advises the governor with regard to the **summoning and proroguing of the sessions** of the state legislature.
- CM is the **main link between the Governor and the Ministers** and is the head of the State Legislative Assembly.
- The CM can **recommend the dissolution of the legislative assembly** to the governor at any time.
- CM acts as a **vice-chairman of the concerned zonal council** by rotation, holding office for a period of one year at a time.

17. (c)

News: The Ministry of Home Affairs notified the Citizenship Amendment Rules under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) which was enacted in December 2019.

CAA 2019

- The 2019 CAA amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 allowing Indian citizenship for Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian religious minorities who fled from the neighboring Muslim majority countries of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan before December 2014 due to "religious persecution."

Exemptions

- It is **not going to be implemented** in all Northeastern states where **Inner Line Permit (ILP)** is required for a visit by people of other parts of the country. The ILP is in force in **Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur**.
- The tribal areas, where autonomous councils were created under the 6th Schedule of the Constitution.

Citizenship Act, 1955

- The Act specifies that citizenship may be acquired in India through five methods: birth, descent, registration, naturalisation or by incorporation of territory.

18. (b)

Statements 1 is not correct and Statements 2 is correct.

Context

- Kishor Makwana assumed the charge of Chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC).

About

- NCSC is a **constitutional body** established with a view to provide safeguards against the exploitation of Scheduled Castes and Anglo-Indian communities as well as to promote and protect their social, educational, economic and cultural interests.
- **Article 338** of the Indian constitution deals with the National Commission for Scheduled Castes.

Composition of NCSC

- It consists of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and three other members.
- They are **appointed by the President** by warrant under his hand and seal.
- Their conditions of service and tenure of office are also determined by the President.

Powers of the NCSC

- While investigating any matter or inquiring into any complaint, it has all the **powers of a Civil Court**.
- The Central Government and the State Governments are required to consult the Commission on all major policy matters affecting the Scheduled Castes.

19. (b)

'**SR Bommai v Union of India**', the Supreme Court interpreted **Article 356** of the Constitution, which contains **provisions for the imposition of President's rule** in a state.

- **SC Verdict:** The SC unanimously held that the President's proclamation can be **subject to judicial review on grounds** of illegality, malafide, extraneous considerations, abuse of power, or fraud.
- While the President's subjective appraisal of the issue cannot be examined, the **material relied** on for making the decision can be reviewed.

20. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is **one of the principal organs** of the United Nations, responsible for **maintaining international peace and security**.

- It was established in **1945** as part of the UN Charter.

Statement 2 is not correct: It is composed of **15 member states**, including **five permanent members** with veto power—China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—and **ten non-permanent members** elected for **two-year terms** by the General Assembly.

21. (a)

In 2017, the Supreme Court delivered a historic judgment in the case of **Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India**, affirming that the **right to privacy** is indeed a **fundamental right** under the **Article 21** of the **Constitution**.

- This judgment laid down the foundation for **assessing the constitutionality of Aadhaar** in light of **privacy concerns**.
 - Following the Supreme Court's ruling, there was **increased scrutiny** of the **Aadhaar project's compliance with privacy principles**.
 - The Supreme Court, in its subsequent judgments, imposed **limitations on the mandatory use of Aadhaar** for various services.
 - The court emphasized the **importance of protecting biometric data**, stating that any unauthorized use or storage of biometric information would **violate privacy rights**.
 - While the government initially pushed for Aadhaar to be mandatory for numerous services, the Supreme Court reaffirmed that **Aadhaar enrollment must be voluntary**.

22. (c)

Special provisions U/A 371

- While Article 370 has been classified as a “temporary” provision in the Constitution, Article 371 enumerates “special” provisions for various states.
- **Clauses A to J** under Article 371 incorporate a bundle of **special provisions for the northeastern states**, including **Manipur, Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Mizoram**, as well some other states, including **Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh**.
- Article 371 includes a **wide range of specific safeguards**, including protection of **customary rights, land and boundaries, that are deemed important for these states**.

23. (d)

News: Recently, **France** became the **first country** in the world to explicitly include the **right to abortion** in its constitution.

About

- Abortion enjoys wide support in France across most of the political spectrum, and has been **legal since 1975**.

Global Scenario

- Each year, around seventy-three million abortions take place worldwide, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Since the early 1990s, nearly 60 countries across the world have eased abortion laws to expand the grounds under which abortion is legal.

Indian Scenario

- According to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Amendment Act 2021, the opinion of only one registered medical practitioner is required for the abortion of a foetus up to 20 weeks of gestation and of two for the termination of pregnancy from 20 to 24 weeks of gestation.
- The opinion of a state-level medical board is required for abortions over 24 weeks, in case of suspected foetal abnormalities.

24. (a)

In News : Recently, the Supreme Court of India ruled that MPs or MLAs **cannot claim any immunity** under **Articles 105 (2) and 194 (2)** for acts of bribery to cast a vote or make a speech in the House.

- A seven-judge Constitution Bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) **unanimously overruled its Judgement in P.V Narasimha Rao v. State (1998)**.

P.V Narasimha Rao v. State (1998):

- A five-member Constitution Bench had held that **parliamentarians and legislators enjoyed immunity** for their actions on the floor of the House, **even if they had taken bribes** to vote in a particular manner.
- It **allowed legislators to claim immunity** from prosecution in bribery cases under the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**.

25. (c)

In News : Recently, the **IT Ministry** has sent an advisory to **Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)** companies like Google and OpenAI to follow election integrity in India.

Statement 1 is correct:

- **Election Integrity:** It refers to the assurance that the processes of an election are conducted in a fair and impartial manner. It is a **fundamental aspect of democratic governance** and involves various elements such as:
 - *Free and Fair Election; Transparency; Voter's Right to Information; Protection Against Misuse of Technology; Regulatory Framework; and Independence of Election Commission.*

Statement 2 is correct:

- The **Election Commission of India** is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the electoral process.
- The Supreme Court of India has emphasised that **free and fair elections** are a part of the **basic structure** of the Constitution.

26. (d)

Both the Statements are not correct.

News: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has directed political parties, especially star campaigners, to refrain from making appeals on the basis of caste or communal politics or make false statements, which can mislead voters.

Who are star campaigners?

Political party leaders designated as "star campaigners" under Section 77 of the **Representation of the People Act, 1951**, deliver speeches during significant political rallies.

A **recognised political party** can have **40 star campaigners** and an **unrecognized (but registered) political party** can have **20**.

The expenditure incurred on campaigning by such notified star campaigners is exempt from being added to the election expenditure of a candidate.

27. (b)

Project 39A:

It is inspired by **Article 39-A of the Indian Constitution**, a provision that furthers the intertwined values of **equal justice and equal opportunity** by removing economic and social barriers.

These are constitutional values of immense importance, given the manner in which multiple disparities intersect to exclude vast sections of our society from effectively accessing justice.

Data from **Project 39A's 2023 annual statistics** on the death penalty show that the Court's attempts to reform sentencing through its directions in **Manoj vs The State Of Madhya Pradesh** have failed to trickle down to trial courts for the second year in a row.

28. (d)

All the three come under the **List II — State List of Schedule VII** of Indian Constitution.

Agriculture and Constitution of India:

- **Taxes on income other than agricultural income** comes under the **List I—Union List**, but **Taxes on agricultural income** come under the **List II — State List**.

State List (List II):

- Agriculture, including agricultural education and research, protection against pests, and **prevention of plant diseases**.

- Markets and Fairs.
- Money-lending and money-lenders; **relief of agricultural indebtedness.**
- Land revenue, including the assessment and collection of revenue, the maintenance of land records, survey for revenue purposes, and records of rights, and alienation of revenues.
- **Offences against laws** with respect to any of the matters in this List.

29. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Lokayukta are anti-corruption ombudsman institutions in India, established in states.

- The concept of Lokayukta was **inspired by the Scandinavian Countries** Ombudsman system.

Statement 2 is not correct: The establishment of Lokayukta institutions in India began with the first Lokayukta being constituted in **Maharashtra in 1971.**



Health

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

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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

1. It is an infectious disease, caused by a virus.
2. It spreads through the air when infected people cough, sneeze or spit.

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. With reference to sickle cell anaemia, consider the following statements:

1. It is transmitted by parents carrying a defective 'beta globin' gene.
2. Under the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission India aims to eliminate sickle cell genetic transmission by the year 2047.
3. The first description of sickle haemoglobin in India was found in the tribal populations in the Nilgiri hills in south India.

How many 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

4. Consider the following statements with reference to Sickle cell disease (SCD)

1. It is an inherited haemoglobin disorder in which red blood cells (RBCs) become crescent shaped due to a genetic mutation.
2. India has the third highest number of SCD births, after Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Which of the following statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. With reference to the Tuberculosis, consider the following statements:

1. It is a viral disease that most often affects the lungs.
2. Tuberculosis is preventable and curable.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. With reference to Snakebite Envenoming, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified it as a high-priority neglected tropical disease.
- 2. India accounts for almost **90%** of global snakebite deaths.

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

7. HbA1C Test recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Diabetes
- (b) Cancer
- (c) Cholera
- (d) Malaria

8. With reference to Lyme disease, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi*.
- 2. It is most commonly found in the US, Europe & some parts of Asia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. 'Yaounde Declaration' recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) To end malaria related deaths
- (b) Artificial Intelligence
- (c) Fighting Hunger and Poverty
- (d) Cybersecurity

10. With reference to Rubella disease, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is also known as German measles.
- 2. Its symptoms include fever, red rash blotchy and swollen lymph glands.

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 Human Papillomavirus (HPV), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is an Tropical viral disease affecting neural cells.
- 2. The HPV vaccine was introduced in India in 2008.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- (d) Neither 1 nor 2
12. With reference to obesity, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. A body mass index (BMI) over 25 is considered overweight and over 30 is obese.
 2. Obesity has become the most common form of malnutrition in most countries.
- 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. (c)
Both statements are correct: Avian Influenza is a **highly infectious and severe respiratory disease in birds** caused by the **H5N1 influenza virus, Type A strain** of influenza virus. In total, **16 types of bird flu** are there, of which **H5N1 strain is considered the deadliest**.
- H5N1 consists of **two types of proteins**:
 - **H5** stands for the fifth of several known types of the protein hemagglutinin.
 - **N1** stands for the first of several known types of the protein neuraminidase.
 - It is **carried by** and **infects birds** including farmed poultry such as chicken, ducks, turkey, etc.
 - Mostly via bodily secretions, faeces, same feed or water bowl of birds.
 - Human cases of Avian influenza occur **occasionally** with close contact with infected live or dead birds, or H5N1-contaminated environments.
2. (b)
News: The gap between the estimated number and actual cases of tuberculosis (TB) is closing, according to the **India TB Report 2024** released by the Union Health Ministry.
- There were only 2.3 lakh missing cases in 2023, as compared to 3.2 lakh the year before.
- About**
- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease that most often affects the lungs. It is caused by infection with **Mycobacterium tuberculosis (Mtb) bacteria**.
 - It spreads through the air **when infected people cough, sneeze or spit**.
3. (d)
All three statements are correct: Sickle cell disease is a **hereditary disease** caused by mutations in one of the genes that encode the **hemoglobin protein**, the disease is inherited as an autosomal recessive trait.
- **Causes:** It is transmitted by parents carrying a defective **'beta globin' gene**. For a child to be affected, both mother and father must carry one copy of the sickle cell gene — also known as **sickle cell trait** — and pass both copies of the altered form to the child.
- National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission**
- The programme was first announced in the Union Budget 2023.
 - It will be implemented in **17 high-focus states** across namely Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Bihar, and Uttarakhand.
 - It aims to **eliminate sickle cell genetic transmission by the year 2047** (i.e. before India celebrates Amrit Kaal in 2047).

- The Union Ministry of Health tribal health expert committee report has listed sickle cell disease as **one of the 10 special problems in tribal health** that affect the tribal people disproportionately.
- The **first description of sickle haemoglobin in India** was by **Lehman and Cutbush in 1952** in the tribal populations in the **Nilgiri hills in south India**.

4. (c)

In News : Marginalised tribal communities face difficulties in accessing basic healthcare and diagnostics of Sickle cell disease (SCD).

Statements 1 and 2 are correct: Sickle cell disease (SCD) is an **inherited haemoglobin disorder** in which red blood cells (RBCs) become crescent or sickle-shaped due to a genetic mutation.

These RBCs are rigid and impair circulation, often leading to anaemia, organ damage, severe and episodic pain, and premature death.

- **India** has the **third highest number** of SCD births, after Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Regional studies suggest approximately 15,000-25,000 babies with SCD are born in India every year, mostly in tribal communities.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Tuberculosis (TB) is an **infectious disease** that most often affects the lungs and is caused by the **bacteria Mycobacterium tuberculosis**.

- It spreads through the air when infected people **cough, sneeze or spit**.

Statement 2 is correct: Treatment: Tuberculosis is **preventable and curable**.

- Tuberculosis disease is treated with antibiotics.
- **The Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine** remains the only licensed vaccine against TB; it provides moderate protection against severe forms of TB (TB meningitis) in infants and young children.

6. (a)

Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.

Context

- The Union Health Ministry launched a National Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Snakebite Envenoming (NAP-SE) in India.

Snakebite Envenoming

- The snakebite envenoming (poisoning from snake bites) was classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a high-priority **neglected tropical disease**.
- An estimated **1.8 – 2.7 million** people worldwide are envenomed annually.

Snake bites in India

- In India, around 90% of snake bites are caused by the '**big four**' among the crawlers - **common krait, Indian cobra, Russell's viper and saw scaled viper**.
- In India, around **50,000 deaths** occur of an estimated **3-4 million** snake bites annually which accounts for half of all snakebite deaths globally.
- India accounts for almost **50%** of global snakebite deaths.

7. (a)

Diabetes

Context

- To diagnose pre-diabetes and diabetes (both type 1 and type 2), the hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) test, also known as the glycated hemoglobin or glycosylated hemoglobin test is used.

How does the test work?

- Sugar or glucose enters the bloodstream from the food it attaches to the hemoglobin in the red blood cells.
 - **Hemoglobin is a protein** that transports oxygen to all the cells of your body.

- Everybody has some sugar attached to their hemoglobin. Those with pre-diabetes and diabetes, however, have more.
- The **HbA1C test measures the percentage of the red blood cells that have sugar-coated**, or glycated, hemoglobin.

Test Results

- The HbA1C levels are provided as either a percentage or in **mmol/mol** (which stands for millimoles per mole).
- An HbA1C **below 5.7% is considered normal**; between 5.7 and 6.4% may indicate you are pre-diabetic; and 6.5% or higher can indicate diabetes.

8. (c)

News : A case of Lyme disease was reported in Kerala's Ernakulam.

About

- It is caused by the **bacterium Borrelia burgdorferi**.
- It is transmitted by infected ticks of the genus Ixodes.
- Erythema migrans rash is the most characteristic symptom and others are headache, fatigue, and muscle aches.
- It is mostly common in the **US, Europe & some parts of Asia**.

9. (a)

Health ministers of **11 African countries** signed the **Yaounde Declaration** to end **malaria deaths**.

- Globally, the number of malaria cases in 2022 surged significantly compared to the pre-COVID-19 era.
- **Africa remains the epicentre** of the malaria crisis, bearing an immense burden.
 - It accounts for **94 percent** of all global malaria cases and a staggering 95 percent of global malaria-related deaths.
- **The 11 African countries in the Yaoundé conference are**— Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania.

10. (c)

Both the Statements are correct.

In Context

- India received the **Measles and Rubella Champion Award** for its exemplary efforts in combating these Diseases.

About

- **Awarded by:** Measles and Rubella Partnership at the American Red Cross Headquarters in Washington D.C., USA.
- Measles and Rubella are **vaccine preventable diseases** (VPDs) and MR Vaccine is part of India's **Universal Immunization Programme** since 2017.
- **Rubella:** It is also known as **German measles** or three-day measles, is an infection caused by the **rubella virus**.
- Symptoms include fever, red rash blotchy and swollen lymph glands.

11. (b)

News: Every year, March 4 is observed as International HPV Awareness Day.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

- Human papillomavirus (HPV) is the **most common sexually transmitted infection** (STI).
- It is a small, non-enveloped deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) virus that infects **skin or mucosal cells**.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine

- The HPV vaccine was introduced in India in 2008. After sufficient country-level studies and successful State-level roll-outs, it was recommended for inclusion in the Universal Immunization Programme in 2023.

12. (c)

Both the statements are correct.

What is Obesity?

- Obesity, as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO), is an abnormal or excessive accumulation of fat that poses health risks.
- A body mass index (BMI) over 25 is considered overweight and over 30 is obese.
 - The BMI is a ratio of a person's weight to their height measured in kilograms per meter square of height.
- Obesity has become the most common form of malnutrition in most countries.

■■■■



Geography

1. Consider the following statements:

1. India is the 2nd largest importer, consumer and producer of coal.
2. The highest coal reserves in India are located in Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh.

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 Open Seas, consider the following statements:

1. Open Seas are those oceans where no country can claim sovereignty over the air, surface and seabed.
2. For any actual extraction to happen in open oceans, countries must apply first for an exploration licence to the International Seabed Authority (ISBA).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

3. The 'Luna Structure' was sometimes appeared in the news, is located in which of the following Indian states:

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) Madhya Pradesh
- (c) Karnataka
- (d) Gujarat

4. India recently supported the Philippines amid rising tensions in the South China Sea.

In context of the above statement, which of the following countries shares borders with the South China Sea?

1. Malaysia
2. Indonesia
3. Philippines
4. China
5. Brunei Darussalam

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

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

5. Consider the following statements:

1. If a region isn't formally classified as being part of a country's continental shelf, then it is considered as high sea.
2. No country can apply for the permission for exploration in the high seas.

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. Which of the following is surrounded by Egypt to the southwest, the Mediterranean Sea to the west, and Israel to the north and east?
(a) Gaza Strip
(b) Haiti
(c) Red Sea
(d) Yemen
7. Consider the following statements:
1. El Niño is often associated with weak monsoons and drought-like conditions in India.
2. La Niña is often associated with better monsoon rains that can lead to a good agricultural yield, benefiting the economy.
3. Both El Niño and La Niña are part of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle.
How many of the statements given above are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
8. Which of the following rifts has a widening crack that has recently triggered the formation of a new sea?
(a) Mediterranean Rift
(b) Australian Rift
(c) East African Rift
(d) Siberian Rift
9. Popocatepetl volcano, recently seen in the news, is situated in:
(a) Portugal
(b) Mexico
(c) Spain
(d) Chile
10. Consider the following statements:
1. Contiguous Zone is upto 12 Nautical Miles from the baseline of a country.
2. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) extends up to 200 nautical miles from the baseline.
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 Volcanoes, Consider the following pairs :
- | volcanoes | Place |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. Mount Etna | : Italy |
| 2. Popocatepetl | : Mexico |
| 3. Mount Merapi | : Indonesia |
- How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
(a) Only one pair
(b) Only two pairs
(c) All three pairs
(d) None of the pairs

12. With reference to the Nilgiris, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. They are located at the tri-junction of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala.
2. The highest peak of the Nilgiri Mountains is Mahendragiri.

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

13. With reference to the oceanic plates, consider the following:

1. The Cocos Plate lies between Central America and the Pacific plate.
2. The Nazca Plate lies between South America and the Pacific plate.

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. Which one of the following regions was identified as 'Ring of Fire Subduction Zone'?

- (a) Strait of Sunda
- (b) Strait of Gibraltar
- (c) Strait of Magellan
- (d) Strait of Tartary

15. With reference to the *Asbestos*, a naturally occurring mineral, consider the following statements:

1. Its exposure can lead to serious health issues like mesothelioma.
2. There is no law in India that prevents its use in construction, import, or trade.

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 Iceland, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Iceland is located on Mid-Atlantic Ridge, between the Eurasian and the North American tectonic plates.
2. The Fagradalsfjall volcano is located in Iceland.

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

17. Which among the following are the consequences of the Forest fires?

1. Loss of valuable timber resources
2. Global warming
3. Loss of biodiversity and extinction of plants and animals

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 18. Which of the following countries shares borders with Somalia ?**
1. Ethiopia
 2. Djibouti
 3. Kenya
 4. Tanzania
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1, 2 and 3
(b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 4 only
(d) 1, 3 and 4
- 19. 'Darien Gap' recently seen in the news passes through which of the following countries?**
1. Columbia
 2. Panama
 3. Brazil
 4. Venezuela
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1, 2 and 4 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- 20. Which of the following Indian states does NOT border Bhutan?**
- (a) Sikkim
 - (b) Arunachal Pradesh
 - (c) West Bengal
 - (d) Meghalaya
- 21. With reference to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, consider the following statements:**
1. It is located in Antarctica in the southern hemisphere.
 2. It is built to preserve global crops from extinction.
- 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
- 22. The Kazhuveli Watershed Region, sometimes appeared in the news, is located in:**
- (a) Kerala
 - (b) Andhra Pradesh
 - (c) Tamil Nadu
 - (d) Karnataka
- 23. Consider the following statements:**
1. Arunachal Pradesh shares International borders with 2 Countries.
 2. Tawang Monastery is the second largest monastery of Tibetan Buddhism in the world.
- 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

24. With reference to Passes, Consider the following pairs :

Pass	State
1. Sela Pass	: Arunachal Pradesh
2. Mana pass	: Uttarakhand
3. Rohtang Pass	: Himachal Pradesh

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

25. With reference to hills, Consider the following pairs :

Hills	Place
1. Shankaracharya hill	: Jammu & Kashmir
2. Mahadeo hills	: Madhya Pradesh
3. Javadi hills	: Tamil Nadu

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

26. With reference to *Geologic Time Scale of Earth*, consider the following statements:

- 1. The Holocene is part of the Quaternary Period.
- 2. Meghalayan Age is part of the Holocene Epoch.

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

27. Shankaracharya Hill, where renowned Hindu seer Adi Shakaracharya attained enlightenment, lies in which of the following States/UT?

- (a) Uttarakhand
- (b) Himachal Pradesh
- (c) Punjab
- (d) Jammu and Kashmir

28. With reference to Hooghly river, consider the following statements:

- 1. Recently, India's first under-river metro tunnel has been built under it.
- 2. It is the western distributary of the Ganges.

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

29. With reference to the Lakshadweep islands, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. Lakshadweep is an archipelago of 400 islands, to the west of Kerala.
- 2. It is divided into Laccadive Islands, Amindivi Islands and atoll of Minicoy.

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

30. Shanan Hydropower Project is located in which of the following states?

- (a) Himachal Pradesh
- (b) Punjab
- (c) Uttarakhand
- (d) Kerala

31. Arrange the following places from the West to East direction

- 1. Kalapani
- 2. Limpiyadhura
- 3. Lipulekh

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

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

32. With reference to seamount, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. A seamount is an underwater mountain with steep sides rising from the seafloor.
- 2. Guyot is an isolated underwater volcanic mountain with a flat top.

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

33. Consider the following statements:

- 1. During the El Nino, warm water is pushed toward Asia through the Pacific Ocean.
- 2. La Nina usually results in good rainfall during the monsoon season 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

34. With reference to Agaléga Island, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. The island group is located in the Pacific Ocean.
- 2. Recently, India inaugurated an airstrip on the island.

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. (c)

Both the statements are correct.

News: The upcoming hot weather across India will increase the electricity demand and coal is the major source of electricity generation.

About

- Coal accounts for over 70% of India's electricity output.
- India is the **2nd largest importer, consumer and producer of coal**.
- India mainly imports from Indonesia, Australia, and South Africa.
- The Highest Coal reserves in India are located in **Jharkhand, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh**.

Roadblocks in meeting the energy demands

- India is a fast-growing economy that has led to a big increase in electricity demand.
- India's coal quality is poor and has high ash content which makes for lower energy value.
- Logistics challenges are there, for example, coal transported by railways in open coaches is prone to rain & theft.

2. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Open ocean, meaning ocean — whose air, surface and sea-bed — where no countries can claim sovereignty.

- Around **60% of the world's seas** are open ocean and though believed to be rich in a variety of mineral wealth, **the costs and challenges of extraction are prohibitive**.
- For any actual extraction to happen in open oceans, **countries must apply first for an exploration licence to the ISBA**.
- Currently **no country has commercially extracted resources from open oceans**.

3. (d)

Luna Structure: It is a 1.8-kilometer-wide crater that has been linked to the **ancient Harappan Civilization** and is believed to be the outcome of one of the most monumental **asteroid crashes** ever witnessed on Earth.

- It remains submerged and inaccessible for a significant part of the year due to its location in the **low-lying Banni Plains of Gujarat's Kutch Basin in Gujarat**.
- Further scrutiny of the rocks surrounding the Luna structure unearthed the **presence of elements synonymous with extraterrestrial origins**, including *Rhodium, Palladium, Osmium, Iridium, and Platinum*.

4. (d)

News: India supported the Philippines amid rising tensions in the South China Sea.

South China Sea

- The South China Sea is a strategic body of water bordering **Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines**, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and **China**.
- As one of the busiest trade routes in the world and home to a wealth of marine and mineral resources, the South China Sea holds great economic and geostrategic importance.

5. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: If a region isn't formally classified as being part of a country's continental shelf, then it is considered '**high sea**'.

Statement 2 is not correct: Any country can approach the International Seabed Authority (ISBA) and ask for permission to explore into the high seas.

6. (a)

The Gaza Strip is a small sliver of land to the northeast of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula— which connects Asia and Africa— in the eastern basin of the Mediterranean Sea.

Surrounded by Egypt to the southwest, the Mediterranean Sea to the west, and Israel to the north and east, the Strip is mostly flat coastal plain.

7. (c)

In News : Recently, the **southern African nations like Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe** declared a state of disaster due to severe drought conditions because of the impact of the ongoing El Nino weather phenomenon.

Statement 1 is correct:

- In India, El Niño is often associated with **weak monsoons and drought-like conditions**.
- It can lead to **reduced rainfall, dry spells, and heatwaves**, resulting in crop failures and water scarcity.
- It is due to extreme weather decimating agricultural production, manufacturing, and helping spread disease.

Statement 2 is correct:

- In India, **La Niña** is often associated with **better monsoon rains that can lead to a good agricultural yield, benefiting the economy**.
- However, the heavy floods in Australia can lead to loss of life and property, negatively impacting the economy.

Statement 3 is correct:

- El Niño, La Niña, and the Neutral State are climate patterns that are part of the **El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)** cycle.
- ENSO is a recurring climate pattern involving changes in the temperature of waters in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

8. (c)

East African Rift:

- The division of the continent is **connected to the East African Rift, a crack that stretches 56 kilometres and appeared in the desert of Ethiopia in 2005**.
- The crack has triggered the formation of a new sea.
- **Division of the continents:**
 - This geological process will **inevitably divide the continent**, resulting in currently landlocked countries, such as **Uganda and Zambia**, obtaining their own coastlines in due time, which would take five to 10 million years according to the study.
 - As the **Somali and Nubian tectonic plates** continue to pull apart from each other, a smaller continent will be created from the rift, which will include present-day **Somalia** and parts of **Kenya, Ethiopia, and Tanzania**.
 - The **Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea** will eventually **flood into the Afar region** in Ethiopia and the East African Rift Valley, **leading to the formation of a new ocean**.

11. (c)
All three pairs are correctly matched.
Popocatépetl volcano
- Popocatépetl volcano erupted in Mexico, which is located just 50 miles from the country's capital.
- Mount Merapi
- Mount Merapi, is an active stratovolcano located on the border between the province of Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
 - It is the most active volcano in Indonesia and has erupted regularly since 1548.
- Mount Etna
- Mount Etna, or simply Etna, is an active stratovolcano on the east coast of Sicily, Italy.
 - It is Europe's most active volcano and one of the largest in the world.
12. (a)
Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.
Context
- For almost a week, forest fires have been raging in the Coonoor forest range in the Nilgiris in Tamil Nadu.
- Key Facts
- The Mountains form part of the Western Ghats and connect it with the eastern ghat.
 - They are located at the **tri-junction** of three states, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala in India.
 - The highest peak of the Nilgiri Mountains is **Doddabetta**, at 2,637 meters.
 - The Nilgiri Hills are part of the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
13. (c)
Subduction Zones and the Plates:
- The Earth's lithosphere is divided into **two types of plates: continental and oceanic**, and is divided into seven major and some minor plates.
 - The **oceanic plates are comparatively heavier**, so when these collide with the continental plates, they subduct downwards, **forming a subduction zone**.
- Statement 1 is correct:** Cocos Plate is minor oceanic plate lies in between Central America and Pacific plate;
- Statement 2 is correct:** Nazca Plate is minor oceanic plate lies in between South America and Pacific plate;
- Arabian plate : Mostly the Saudi Arabian landmass;
 - Philippine plate : Between the Asiatic and Pacific plate;
14. (b)
In News: Recently, scientists predicted the 'Ring of Fire' Subduction Zone beneath the Gibraltar Strait.
- It was identified as **a subduction zone, known as the 'Ring of Fire'**, that could potentially **swallow the Atlantic Ocean** near the **Strait of Gibraltar**.
 - It is predicted to expand westwards over the next 20 million years.
15. (c)
In News : Recently, the United States' Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a comprehensive ban on all forms of the deadly carcinogen asbestos.
- Statement 1 is correct:**
- **Asbestos** is a **naturally occurring mineral**, has been widely used in various industries due to its heat and **chemical resistance, tensile strength, and insulating properties**.
 - However, it is a known **carcinogen**, and exposure to it can lead to serious health issues, including **lung cancer, mesothelioma, and asbestosis**, and it is linked to more than 40,000 deaths in the US each year.

Statement 2 is correct:

- India **banned asbestos mining in 1993**. However, there is **no law** in the country that prevents its use in **construction, import, or trade**.
- As a result, asbestos is widely used in everything from cement to brake parts.
- In fact, **India accounted for nearly half of global asbestos imports in 2021**.

16. (c)

Both the Statements are correct.

Context

- A state of emergency has been declared in Southern Iceland after a volcano erupted in Reykjanes Peninsula In Iceland.

Reykjanes peninsula in Iceland

- **Iceland** is located on Mid-Atlantic Ridge, between the **Eurasian and the North American tectonic plates**. It is a seismic and volcanic hot spot as the two plates move in opposite directions.
- The **Reykjanes peninsula** is in South West Iceland, characterized by immense lava fields, volcanoes, and heightened geothermal activity.
- The **main geothermal areas** of Reykjanes are **Gunnahver, Krysuvik, and Svartsengi**.
- The Fagradalsfjall volcano is located in Iceland.

17. (d)

A forest fire, or wildfire, is an **uncontrolled fire that rapidly spreads across vegetation and forest areas** fueled by dry conditions, strong winds, and an excess of combustible material.

Impacts

- loss of valuable timber resources
- degradation of catchment areas
- loss of biodiversity and extinction of plants and animals
- loss of wildlife habitat and depletion of wildlife
- loss of natural regeneration and reduction in forest cover
- global warming
- loss of carbon sink resource and increase in percentage of CO₂ in atmosphere
- change in the microclimate of the area with unhealthy living conditions
- soil erosion affecting productivity of soils and production
- ozone layer depletion
- health problems leading to diseases
- loss of livelihood for tribal people and the rural population.

18. (a)

Somali police and international navies were preparing to attack a commercial ship that was hijacked by pirates .

Somalia is located in the Horn of Africa.

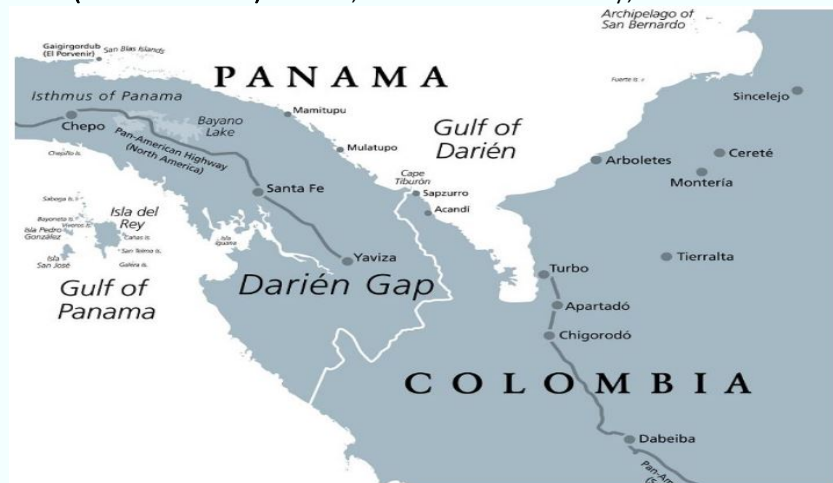
- It is bordered by **Ethiopia** to the West, **Djibouti** to the Northwest, the Gulf of Aden to the North, the Indian Ocean to the East, and **Kenya** to the Southwest.



19. (a)

The Darien Gap is a stretch of **densely forested jungle** across northern Colombia located in South America and southern Panama located in North America.

- Roughly 60 miles (97 kilometres) across, the terrain is muddy, wet and unstable.



20. (d)

Meghalaya

India-Bhutan border:



- There are **four Indian states** that share their borders with Bhutan.
 - These include the North Eastern states of **Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and West Bengal**.
 - The Indo-Bhutan border extends to **699 km** and was established on November 11, 1865, by the **Treaty of Sinchula**.

21. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Svalbard Global Seed Vault is situated in permafrost caverns on an island located within the **European mainland and the North Pole**.

Statement 2 is correct: It is built to **preserve global crops** from extinction.

- It was designed to **store over 2 billion seeds** and guarantee their availability for future generations.
- It houses over **930,000 varieties** of food crops.

22. (c)

In News : Recently, **Kazhuveli watershed region** in Tamil Nadu was proposed for nomination to **World Monuments Fund Watch 2025**.

- **Kazhuveli Watershed Region:** It is a significant ecological area known for its **ancient 'Eri' network**, an incredible network of tanks created thousands of years ago.

- It is located in **Villupuram district** and stretches from Gingee to Marakkanam all the way up to the **Auroville plateau in Tamil Nadu**.
- If the nomination comes through, pilot projects will be run in Munnur village to develop a heritage toolkit that could be replicated through the watershed and beyond.

23. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Arunachal Pradesh is located in northeast India, bordering Bhutan, Tibet (China) and Myanmar internationally.

Statement 2 is correct: Tawang hosts the **Tawang Gaden Namgyal Lhatse (Tawang Monastery)**, which is the **second largest monastery of Tibetan Buddhism in the world**.

24. (c)

All three pairs are correctly matched.

About

- **Sela Pass:** The Sela Pass is a high-altitude mountain pass located on the border between the Tawang and West Kameng districts in **Arunachal Pradesh**.
- **Mana pass:** Mana Pass is located within the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve, in Uttarakhand.
- **Rohtang Pass:** Rohtang Pass is a high mountain pass on the eastern end of the Pir Panjal Range of the Himalayas in Himachal Pradesh. It connects the Kullu Valley with the Lahaul and Spiti Valleys of Himachal Pradesh.

25. (c)

All three pairs are correctly matched.

About

- **Shankaracharya hill:** It is located in **Jammu & Kashmir** and shrines Kashmir's oldest temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva.
- **The Javadhu Hills** are an extension of the Eastern Ghats spread across parts of Tirupattur and Tiruvannamalai districts in the northern part of the state of **Tamil Nadu** in southeastern India.
- **The Mahadeo Hills** are a range of hills in **Madhya Pradesh** state of central India. The hills are situated in the northern section of the **Satpura Range**.

26. (c)

In News : Recently, a committee of scientists voted down a proposal to declare the start of the **Anthropocene (or the Human Epoch)** in geologic time.

- **The Earth's Geologic Time Scale:** The geologic time scale provides the official framework for our understanding of **Earth's 4.5 billion-year history**.
- Geoscientists use the **Geologic Time Scale (GTS)** to measure the history of the planet. The GTS (since the formation of Earth, roughly 4.54 billion years ago) is divided, in descending order of duration, into **Eons, Eras, Periods, Epochs and Ages**.

Statement 1 is correct:

- The **Holocene is part of the Quaternary Period**, the most recent division of the **Cenozoic Era**, which in turn is part of **Phanerozoic Eon** — which spans from 539 million years ago to the present.

Statement 2 is correct:

- Humans currently live in the **Meghalayan Age**. It's **part of the Holocene Epoch**, which began at the end of the last ice age 11,700 years ago, when ice caps and glaciers began retreating.

27. (d)

Jammu and Kashmir.

About Shankaracharya Hills:

- The **ancient Shankaracharya Temple**, constructed with **grey stones**, stands on **Shankaracharya Hill**, on the **Zabarwan Range** in Srinagar, **Jammu and Kashmir**.

- Initially known as **Takht-i-Sulaiman**, which means Throne of Solomon, it was later renamed after a saint who preached enlightenment here in **AD 750**.
- The temple, dedicated to **Lord Shiva**, is situated at a height of **1000 feet** and can be reached in 10-15 minutes via stairs.
- This ancient temple holds significance as the place where the **renowned seer Adi Shakaracharya attained enlightenment**.

28. (c)

Both the statements are correct.

News

- Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated **India's first under-river metro tunnel in Kolkata**.

About

- The **metro tunnel** is part of the **East-West Metro corridor** and **passes under the Hooghly River**, between Howrah Maidan and Esplanade.
- The stretch also has the deepest metro station in the country -- the Howrah metro station at around 32 metres below the ground.
- The first underground metro operation in India was started in **Kolkata in 1984**.
- The metro network in India is currently the third biggest in the world after the USA and China.

Hooghly river

- It is the **western tributary** of the Ganges and the vast majority of the water that flows into the Hooghly River is provided by the man-made Farakka Feeder Canal.
- The upper riparian zone of the river is called the Bhagirathi while the lower riparian zone is called the Hooghly.

29. (b)

Statements 1 is not correct and statement 2 is correct.

Lakshadweep Archipelago

- Lakshadweep is an archipelago of **36 islands** that are located some **400 km** to the west of Kerala.
- It is a uni-district Union Territory and comprises **12 atolls**, three reefs, five submerged banks and **11 inhabited islands**.
- It is divided into three island subgroups: Laccadive Islands, Amindivi Islands and atoll of Minicoy.
 - The **Laccadive Islands** in the middle with the **Amindivi Islands** in the north separated by the **11th parallel north** and
 - The **atoll of Minicoy** to the south separated to **Laccadive Islands** by the **Nine Degree Channel**.

30. (a)

Shanan Hydropower Project is a **British-era 110-MW hydel project**, situated at **Jogindernagar in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh**, which was **leased to Punjab in 1925**.

- The lease agreement was signed between the **then ruler of Mandi, Raja Joginder Bahadur**, and a British representative and Chief Engineer of Punjab. **The 99-year-old lease came to an end on March 2**.
- In the past few years, **Himachal has contended** that the **project should stay with it once the lease ends**.

31. (b)

Correct order from West to East direction is:

Limpiyadhura->kalapani->Lipulekh



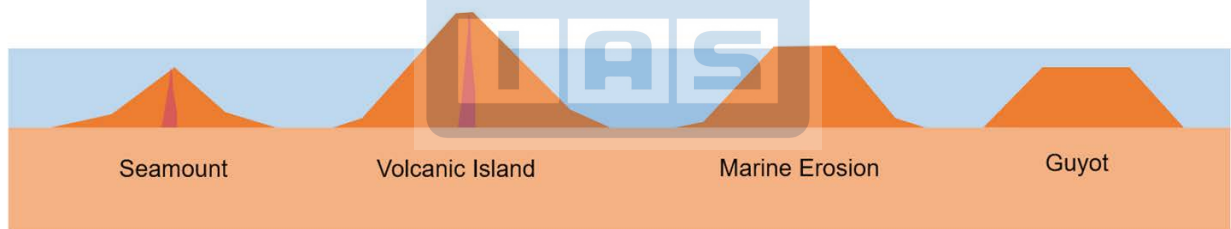
32. (c)
Both the statements are correct.

What is a seamount?

- A seamount is an **underwater mountain** with steep sides rising from the seafloor.
- When volcanoes form on the seafloor, they build up over time as they erupt volcanic lava that cools to become basalt.
- If a volcano grows in height and volume enough to reach the ocean's surface, it becomes a volcanic island.
 - **Example:** Islands of Hawaii

Guyot

- When a seamount breaches the sea surface, waves and other sub-aerial processes (wind, rainfall, weathering) will cause erosion of the volcano.
- Over time, these processes will erode the flanks and top of the seamount/island, eventually forming a **flat shelf** to form a guyot.



33. (b)
Statement 1 is not correct:

- El Niño means Little Boy in Spanish. South American fishermen first noticed periods of unusually warm water in the Pacific Ocean in the 1600s.
 - It is a climate phenomenon characterized by the **periodic warming of sea surface temperatures** in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.
 - During El Niño, **trade winds weaken**. Warm water is pushed back east, toward the west coast of the Americas and as a result, **cold water is pushed towards Asia**.

Statement 2 is correct:

- It means **Little Girl** in Spanish. La Niña is also sometimes called El Viejo, anti-El Niño, or simply "a cold event." La Niña has the opposite effect of El Niño.
- The trade winds **become stronger than usual**, pushing more warmer waters towards the Indonesian coast, and making the eastern Pacific Ocean **colder than normal**.
- **Impact:** La Nina, the opposite of El Nino, typically brings **good rainfall during the monsoon season**.

34. (b)

Context

- Prime Minister Modi and his Mauritian counterpart jointly inaugurated an **airstrip and the St James Jetty** on North Agaléga Island in the Indian Ocean.

Agaléga Island

- Agaléga is a group of **two islands** with a total area of 26 sq km, in the western Indian Ocean.
- It lies approximately 1,050 km north of **Mauritius**, and belongs to the island nation.



GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/INITIATIVE

1. With reference to Atal Pension Yojana (APY), consider the following statements:
 1. It was launched in 2018 to provide old-age income security to Indian citizens.
 2. The subscriber is eligible to get a lifelong monthly pension of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 from the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions.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. The 'Digital Criminal Case Management System (CCMS) Platform' was developed by:
 - (a) National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)
 - (b) National Investigation Agency (NIA)
 - (c) The National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT)
 - (d) Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)
3. Which of the following statements is **not correct** about the ULLAS Initiative?
 - (a) It aims to bridge the gap in basic literacy among citizens aged 21 and above.
 - (b) The program targets individuals who may have missed formal foundational education opportunities.
 - (c) The programme also imparts essential life skills like digital literacy, financial literacy, and legal awareness.
 - (d) Statements a and c.
4. PM-SURAJ portal, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
 - (a) It is to boost the integration of solar energy in rural areas of the country.
 - (b) It is a new solar-rooftop scheme for the North East region of the country.
 - (c) It is a national portal which facilitates higher enrollment of women in the research institutions.
 - (d) It is to economically empower people belonging to socially backward classes, scheduled castes, tribes and other disadvantaged sections of the society.
5. Which of the following statements are correct about the IMPRINT-India initiative?
 1. It is an initiative of the Ministry of science and technology.
 2. It aims at providing solutions to the most relevant engineering challenges and translating knowledge into viable technology in selected domains.Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 or 2
6. 'Mahtari Vandan Yojana', recently seen in the news, was launched by which of the following states?
 - (a) Bihar
 - (b) Uttar Pradesh
 - (c) Chhattisgarh
 - (d) West Bengal

7. The Right to Repair Portal, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) To provide consumers with access to repair information for their products.
 - (b) To give access to citizens to file complaints against companies which fail to comply with consumer rules.
 - (c) An e-court portal designed to compensate litigants who suffered losses.
 - (d) An initiative by the Ministry of Environment to replenish natural water bodies with the help of citizens.
8. 'Chakshu Platform', recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) Spam Calls
 - (b) Education
 - (c) Health
 - (d) Surveillance

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)
Atal Pension Yojana (APY), is a flagship social security scheme of the Government of India.
About
- It was **launched in 2015** to provide **old-age income security** to Indian citizens, with a particular focus on the poor, underprivileged, and workers in the unorganized sectors.
 - Under the APY, **the subscriber is eligible to get a lifelong monthly pension of Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000** from the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions.
 - The same pension would be paid to the spouse of the subscriber after the demise of the subscriber and on the demise of both the subscriber and spouse, the pension wealth as accumulated till age 60 of the subscriber would be returned back to the nominee.
2. (b)
The Digital CCMS Platform: It is a user-friendly, easy-to-deploy, customizable and **browser-based software**, developed by the **National Investigation Agency (NIA)**, designed to **improve coordination and justice delivery in NIA's operations**.
It aims to enable NIA personnel to **better coordinate in terrorism and organised crime** cases, thereby **improving justice delivery**.
3. (a)
ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) Initiative
- It aims to bridge the gap in basic literacy and critical life skills among citizens aged 15 and above.
 - The program targets individuals who may have missed formal education opportunities. It equips them with basic literacy skills like reading, writing, and numeracy.
 - ULLAS goes beyond basic literacy by imparting essential life skills like digital literacy, financial literacy, and legal awareness. This empowers individuals to navigate the complexities of modern life.
4. (d)
Pradhan Mantri Samajik Utthan and Rozgar Adharit Jankalyan' (PM-SURAJ) portal
- **Parent ministry:** The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 - **Aim:** To economically empower people belonging to socially backward classes, scheduled castes, tribes and other disadvantaged sections of the society.
 - It will serve individuals from disadvantaged communities, including **Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes, and Safai Karamcharis (sanitation workers)**.

- **Objective:** The portal streamlines the process of applying for financial assistance schemes offered by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Significance:

- **Direct Benefit Transfer:** Cuts out middlemen and ensures funds reach beneficiaries directly through bank accounts.
- **Reduced Hassle:** Simplifies the application process by offering a centralized online platform.
- **Economic Upliftment:** Aims to empower marginalized communities by providing capital to start or expand businesses.
- **Social Upliftment:** Furthermore, it will also empower these classes not only economically but also socially.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct and Statement 2 is correct.

Impacting Research Innovation & Technology (IMPRINT):

- **Launched on:** November 5, 2015
- **Parent body:** It is a joint initiative of the **Ministry of Education** and DST, Government of India.
- **Aim:** Providing solutions to the most relevant engineering challenges and translating knowledge into viable technology in 10 selected technology domains.
- **Vision:** IMPRINT India is a multi-stakeholder mission programme aimed at bridging the gap between scientific knowledge base created through fundamental and applied research and fruitful translation of the same through engineering invention and technological innovation for the betterment of society.



- **IMPRINT-2:** IMPRINT has now graduated into the next edition, IMPRINT-2, with wider scope, simpler guideline for participation and better synergy among investigators, partners and collaborators.
- **SERB(Science and Engineering Research Board) in the DST** is proposed to be made the nodal agency for implementing the IMPRINT-2.

6. (c)

News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the **Mahtari Vandan Yojana** in Chhattisgarh.

About

- The scheme has been launched to provide financial assistance of Rs 1000 per month to eligible married women of the **Chhattisgarh state**, as monthly Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- Widows, divorced, and deserted women will also be eligible for this scheme.

7. (a)

To provide consumers with access to repair information for their products.

About the Right to Repair Portal:

- **Aim:** To provide consumers with access to repair information for their products and reduce e-waste.
- **Vision:** The website provides information about the **circular economy**, which is the new economic model that focuses on **repairing and reusing products**, as opposed to throwing them away.

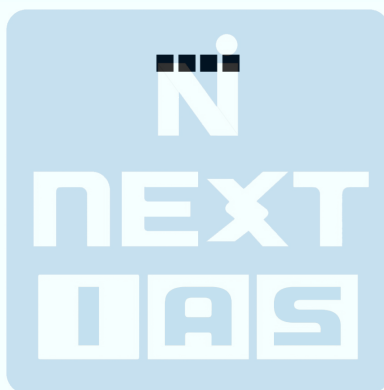
- This shift is in line with the government's vision of **creating a circular economy by promoting mindful and deliberate utilisation of products** instead of mindless and wasteful consumption.
- **Key objectives:**
 - The Right to Repair Portal India **brings together information from different sectors** including automobiles, consumer durables, mobile and electronics, and farming equipment.
 - It provides consumers with **access to product manuals and repair videos**, as well as information on the price and warranty of spare parts.
 - The portal also **allows consumers to submit feedback and suggestions** on products and services.
- **Role:** The website is expected to play a key role in **enabling consumers to make informed decisions** about the purchase and maintenance of their products, and to promote a circular economy model.

8. (a)

News: Recently, the Union Minister for Communications launched the **Chakshu Platform** and Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP).

Chakshu Platform

- It aims to protect the public from **spam or fraud calls**.
- It **provides citizens with a platform** to flag suspicious communication received via calls, SMS, or WhatsApp messages aimed at defrauding individuals.
 - Examples include requests for KYC updates or bank account details, payment wallets, SIM cards, and gas connections.



DEFENCE / INTERNAL SECURITY

1. With reference to the IMT TRILAT Naval Exercise, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a bilateral exercise between India and Tanzania.
 2. The first edition of the exercise was conducted in 2022.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 which country does India conduct the tri-service military exercise codenamed "Tiger Triumph"?
 - (a) Russia
 - (b) China
 - (c) United States
 - (d) Japan
3. 'Operation Sankalp' is related to which of the following?
 - (a) Maritime Security
 - (b) Tribal Entrepreneurs
 - (c) Aspirational Blocks Programme
 - (d) Cyber Security
4. With reference to the India's Nuclear Weapon Program, consider the following statements:
 1. Operation Shakti established India as a Nuclear Powered State.
 2. India is not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).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. Recently, India alongwith which one of the following countries participated the *Exercise Tiger Triumph-24*?
 - (a) United Kingdom
 - (b) United Arab Emirates
 - (c) United States of America
 - (d) Saudi Arabia
6. Which of the following is correct regarding Exercise 'LAMITIYE-2024'?
 - (a) It is a joint exercise between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces
 - (b) It is India's biggest multilateral naval exercise.
 - (c) It is an annual exercise and conducted alternatively in India and Japan.
 - (d) It is a joint military exercise between India and Nepal to enhance interoperability.
7. MIRV technology, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
 - (a) Disease diagnosis
 - (b) Missile system
 - (c) Advance robotics
 - (d) Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

8. With reference to Agni-V missile, consider the following statements :

1. Agni-V is a ballistic missile, indigenously developed by the DRDO having a range of more than 7,000 km.
2. Agni missiles are the main land-based delivery systems for India's nuclear weapons.
3. It is integrated with the MIRV technology that allows multiple warheads to be loaded on a single missile delivery system.

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

9. With reference to the *Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) Project*, consider the following statements:

1. It is envisaged to develop a single-engine stealth aircraft in India.
2. It is being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in collaboration with Russia.

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. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Project Seabird, recently seen in the news?

1. It is a naval infrastructure project which entails the creation of a naval base at Karwar in Karnataka State.
2. It was approved in 1975 after the Indo-Pak War of 1971.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below

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

11. Project Seabird, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Counter- terrorism.
- (b) Border infrastructure
- (c) Naval infrastructure
- (d) Anti-piracy.

12. The Samudra Laksamana, is a maritime exercise between India and which one of the following countries?

- (a) Seychelles
- (b) Malaysia
- (c) Thailand
- (d) Japan

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: IMT TRILAT Exercise is a joint trilateral maritime exercise between India, Mozambique and Tanzania.

Statement 2 is correct: The first edition of the exercise was conducted in 2022.

2. (c)

Exercise Tiger Triumph

- It is the India- U.S tri-service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise
- The exercise is scheduled to include a **harbour phase** followed by a **sea phase** where U.S. and Indian forces will practise combined operational manoeuvre, command and control, and joint sustainment operations. Service members will also participate in cultural and athletic events.
- **Objectives** : The exercise is aimed at developing interoperability for conducting HADR operations and refine Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to enable rapid and smooth coordination between forces of both countries.
- It will build trust and confidence in the ability to work together and to respond as an integrated joint force.

3. (a)

News: Recently, **Operation Sankalp** of the Indian Navy has completed 100 days.

Operation Sankalp

- It was launched by the Indian Navy in December 2023 and it aims to safeguard India's **maritime interests** and thwart the resurgence of piracy.
- Under this, the Indian Navy is conducting maritime security operations in the **Gulf of Aden and adjoining areas, Arabian Sea and off the East Coast of Somalia.**

What is maritime piracy and why is it on rise in the Indian Ocean region?

- Piracy is any illegal act, broadly defined as robbery on the high seas (i.e. outside of the 12nm limit of Territorial Waters), whereas robbery occurring within the 12nm limit is treated as a crime of robbery under the laws of the coastal state.
- Pirates are hijacking merchant ships in the "target-rich" waters of the Indian Ocean after hundreds of vessels diverted south to avoid the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea.

4. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Operation Shakti: In 1998, India conducted a series of nuclear tests at Pokhran, codenamed "Operation Shakti."

- These tests included both fission and fusion devices and marked India's formal entry into the nuclear weapons club.
- India is **not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**, and stated that the NPT is discriminatory and perpetuates a two-tiered system of **nuclear haves and have-nots** by unfairly restricting access to peaceful nuclear technology for non-nuclear weapon states.

5. (c)

News: Recently, **India and the US** jointly commenced the Exercise Tiger Triumph-24 in **Eastern Seaboard** in the USA.

- **The Exercise Tiger Triumph-24:** It is a **bilateral tri-service exercise** aimed at developing interoperability for conducting **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** operations and refining **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** to enable rapid and smooth coordination between the forces of both countries.
 - The **first Tiger Triumph exercise** took place in 2019.

- **Participants in the Exercise: Navy, Army and Air Force** of both countries:
 - **Indian Navy** Ships and Aircrafts, **Indian Army** personnel and vehicles, and **Indian Air Force** aircraft and helicopters along with the Rapid Action Medical Team (RAMT).
 - The US is represented by **US Navy Ships** with embarked troops of the **US Marine Corps** and **US Army**.

6. (a)

In News : Indian Army contingent departed for Seychelles to participate in the Tenth edition of Joint Military Exercise “LAMITIYE-2024”

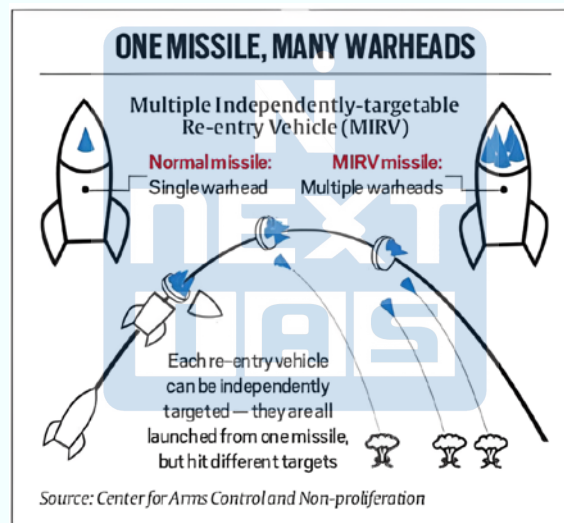
- It is a Joint Exercise Between the Indian Army and Seychelles Defence Forces (SDF).
- ‘LAMITIYE’ meaning ‘Friendship’ in the Creole language is a biennial training event and has been conducted in Seychelles since 2001.

7. (b)

Missile system

MIRV technology

- **MIRV (Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicle)** technology is the capability that allows multiple warheads to be loaded on a single missile delivery system and programmed to hit different targets.
 - They can all be **made to hit the same location too**, one after the other, thus ensuring complete annihilation of the target.

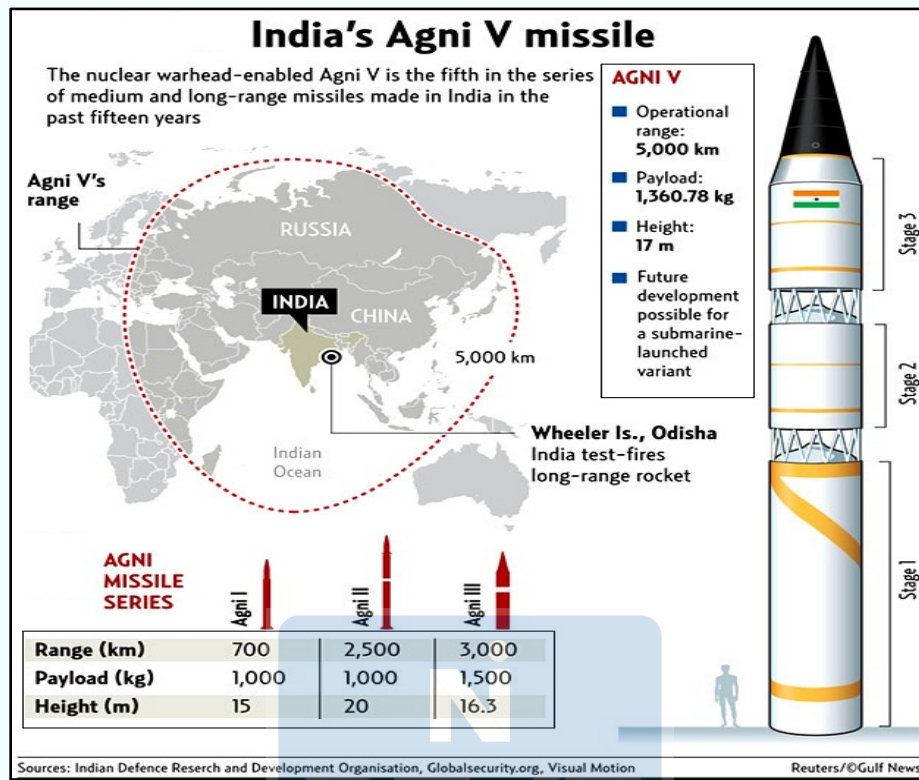


- The technology was **developed in the 1960s** and first deployed in the 1970s by the United States and the then Soviet Union.
- Over the years, **France, the United Kingdom, and eventually China** have developed this technology. Pakistan too has claimed to have tested an MIRV-equipped missile called Ababeel, first in 2017 and then in 2023.
- The number of warheads that a missile can carry depends on its **design, weight, size, range and other parameters**. The one that India tested can carry **three to four** warheads. There are other systems that can carry as many as 15 warheads, or even more.
- However, an **MIRV-equipped missile has never been used so far in any conflict situation**. Arms control advocates argue that MIRV technology incentivises the **urge to strike first**, thus increasing the risk from nuclear weapons.

8. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct and Statement 2 and 3 are correct.

Agni-V missile: One missile, many weapons



- The integration of MIRV technology is a long-awaited upgrade for the Agni family of **short, medium and intercontinental range ballistic missiles** indigenously developed by the DRDO.
- Agni missiles are the main **land-based delivery systems** for India's nuclear weapons.
- **Developed in the 1990s**, the first-generation Agni missiles were deployed in the armed forces in the mid-2000s.
- Agni-I to Agni-IV missiles have ranges between **700 to 3,500 km** and can carry single payloads weighing between **12 and 40 kilotons**.
- Agni-V, the version that has been equipped with MIRV technology, can travel **more than 5,000 km**, and can potentially enter the intercontinental range as well, considered to be 5,500 km and above.

9. (d)

Both the statements are not correct.

- **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA):** It is a **fifth-generation fighter jet project**, undertaken by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**, and will be manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- It is envisaged as a 25-tonne **twin-engine stealth aircraft** with an internal weapons bay and **Diverterless Supersonic Intake** which has been developed in India for the first time.

10. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: It is a naval infrastructure project which entails the creation of a naval base at Karwar (Karnataka) on the west coast of India.

Statement 2 is not correct: It was approved in 1999 following the Pokhran-II by the then Union Defence Minister George Fernandes.

- Post-Indo-Pak War of 1971, there felt a need for an additional naval base since Mumbai Harbour faced congestion, which led to security issues for its Western Fleet.

11. (c)

Naval infrastructure.

Project Seabird

- Project Seabird is a **large-scale naval infrastructure project** by the **Indian Navy** to **establish a major naval base at Karwar, Karnataka, on India's west coast.**
- The project's execution involves renowned Indian industry infrastructure leaders such as **AECOM India Ltd., Larsen & Toubro, ITD Cementation India Ltd, Nagarjuna Construction Company, Navayuga Engineering Company Ltd., and Shapoorji Pallonji Group.**

Project Phases:

- **Phase I (Completed):** Constructed a deep-sea harbor, breakwaters, a township, a naval hospital, a dockyard uplift center, and a ship lift. This phase allows for berthing of around 10 ships.
- **Phase II (Ongoing):** The Phase IIA marine works include piers designed to accommodate ships/submarines, providing a berthing space of more than 6 kilometers, technical facilities, electrical substations, switch gears, and support utilities.
 - The center-piece of Phase IIA Works is an **iconic Covered Dry Berth**, standing at a height of 75 meters, taller than the Qutub Minar in Delhi, and spread over 33000 m2 land area.
 - This dry berth is designed to facilitate **simultaneous docking and comprehensive enclosed maintenance** of up to four capital ships.

12. (b)

News: The **3rd edition** of the India-Malaysia bilateral maritime exercise '**Samudra Laksamana**' was held in Visakhapatnam.

About

- Indian Naval Ship Kiltan and Royal Malaysian Ship KD Lekir participated in this exercise.
- The exercise aims to strengthen bonds and enhance interoperability between the Indian and Royal Malaysian Navy.

Do you know?

- "Exercise HARIMAU SHAKTI" is a Joint bilateral training exercise between the Indian & Malaysian Army.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. The India-led Group of Friends (GOF) at the United Nations focuses on which of the following issues?
 - (a) Promoting trade ties between developing countries.
 - (b) Ensuring accountability for crimes against UN peacekeepers.
 - (c) Negotiating global climate change agreements.
 - (d) Advocating for nuclear non-proliferation.
2. Report titled '*Think Eat Save: Tracking Progress to Halve Global Food Waste*' is released by:
 - (a) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - (b) United Nations
 - (c) World Health Organization (WHO)
 - (d) International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
3. Which of the following international institutions is responsible for the initiative like '*Atoms4Climate*' ?
 - (a) Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA)
 - (b) International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
 - (c) International Energy Agency (IEA)
 - (d) World Nuclear Association (WNA)
4. With reference to the International Seabed Authority (ISA), consider the following statements:
 1. The organisation came into existence in 1994 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
 2. It has 169 Members, including 168 Member States and the European Union.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 statements is correct about the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)?
 - (a) It was established post constitution of the World Trade Organisation.
 - (b) It is a permanent organ of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.
 - (c) It mainly focused on promoting trade, investment, and development in developing countries.
 - (d) Both b & c
6. Consider the following statements:
 1. The Rohingya are a Muslim minority ethnic group belonging to the Myanmar's Rakhine State.
 2. India launched Operation Insaniyat to provide relief assistance for the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. The Supreme Court of India recently underlined that '*there is a pressing need*' for reform in the law *related to bail* and stressed the government to consider a special legislation on the lines of:
 - (a) Sweden
 - (b) France
 - (c) South Korea

- (d) United Kingdom
8. Consider the following statements with reference to The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):
1. NATO is a military alliance of countries from Europe and North America.
 2. Finland became NATO's newest member in March 2024.
 3. Every NATO country contributes to the costs of running the Alliance based on a cost-share formula derived from Gross National Income.
- Which of the above statements are correct ?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
9. With reference to World Trade Organization (WTO), consider the following statements:
1. It is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations.
 2. It is headquartered in Hague (Netherlands).
 3. A country must first join the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to become a member of WTO.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
10. The term '*Uniting for Consensus Model*' sometimes appeared in the news, is related to:
- (a) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
 - (b) World Trade Organization (WTO)
 - (c) United Nations Security Council (UNSC)
 - (d) European Commission
11. With reference to the *Digital Innovation Board*, consider the following statements:
1. It is a part of the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.
 2. It primarily focuses on fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in digital development.
- 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. Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following organisations/institutions?
- (a) The International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
 - (b) World Economic Forum
 - (c) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
 - (d) European Union
13. Which among the following countries are the nuclear powered states?
1. India
 2. China
 3. France
 4. Pakistan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

14. Which of the following groups of countries are the members of the EFTA (European Free Trade Association)?

- (a) Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland
- (b) Iceland, Liechtenstein, United Kingdom and France.
- (c) United Kingdom, France, Norway, and Switzerland
- (d) Liechtenstein, Norway, Italy and Spain.

15. India has '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue with which of the following countries?

- 1. Russia
- 2. Brazil
- 3. USA
- 4. Bangladesh

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

16. With reference to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, consider the following statements:

- 1. It was founded in 1949 and aims to ensure the security and defense of its member countries.
- 2. Belgium, Canada and Finland are among the founding members.

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. M23 rebels, recently seen in the news, are related to which of the following countries?

- (a) Rwanda and Congo
- (b) Israel and Palestine
- (c) Russia and Ukraine
- (d) Afghanistan and Pakistan

18. Which of the following groups of countries are the members of the EFTA (European Free Trade Association)?

- (a) Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland
- (b) Iceland, Liechtenstein, United Kingdom and France.
- (c) United Kingdom, France, Norway, and Switzerland
- (d) Liechtenstein, Norway, Italy and Spain.

19. With reference to the *BBNJ Treaty*, consider the following statements:

- 1. It establishes the sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources.
- 2. It sets rules to conduct Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) before human activities take place in the high seas.

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

20. With reference to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. It was established with the signing of the Washington Treaty in 1949.
- 2. Its headquarter is located in Brussels, Belgium.

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

21. With reference to European Free Trade Association (EFTA), consider the following statements:

- 1. Its member states are Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
- 2. India is the EFTA's second largest trading partner.

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

22. Which among the following countries has become the 32nd member (newest) of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)?

- (a) Finland
- (b) Ukraine
- (c) Sweden
- (d) Norway

23. Which of the following countries are **not** the member countries of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation?

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

24. Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform (FFSR) initiative, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following platforms/institutions?

- (a) WTO
- (b) UNFCCC
- (c) World Bank
- (d) UNIPCC

25. Which of the following countries recently got approval as the new members of the World Trade Organisation(WTO)?

- (a) Comoros and Timor-Leste
- (b) Palestine and Eritrea
- (c) Monaco and Kosovo
- (d) Kiribati and Marshall Islands



26. Consider the following statements:

1. Seychelles was the first country to join India's Jan Aushadhi initiative.
2. Agalega islands are located in the Bay of Bengal.

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)

Recently, the India-led Group of Friends (GOF) deliberated on strategies to strengthen legal frameworks against perpetrators of malicious acts targeting Peacekeepers, focusing on supporting measures for ensuring accountability.

About the India-led Group of Friends (GOF):

- It is a significant initiative **launched in 2022 by India** during its presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC).
- It represents the 'political will' of member states, particularly of the troop and police contributing countries, to champion the implementation of the provisions of **UNSC Resolution 2589**.
- It comprises 40 member states, and **India, Bangladesh, Egypt, France, Morocco, and Nepal** serve as **co-chairs** of the GOF.

Objectives and Functions:

- It aims to promote accountability for all **acts of violence against United Nations (UN) peacekeepers** and provide capacity building and technical assistance to the host state authorities.

2. (b)

In News : Recently, the **United Nations** released a report titled '*Think Eat Save: Tracking Progress to Halve Global Food Waste*'.

Key Highlights of the Report:

- **Scale of Food Waste:** In 2022, the world wasted 1.05 billion tonnes of food, amounting to one-fifth (19%) of food available to consumers being wasted at the retail, food service, and household level.
 - Households were responsible for 631 million tonnes of food waste, equivalent to 60% of the total food wasted in 2022.
- **Food Insecurity:** Food waste occurs while 783 million people are hungry and a third of humanity faces food insecurity.
- **Global Problem:** Food waste is **not just a 'rich country' problem**.
- High-income, upper-middle income, and lower-middle income countries differ in observed average levels of household food waste by just 7 kg/capita/year.

3. (b)

The **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** has launched an '*Atoms4Climate*' initiative at the annual **UN Climate Change Conference (COP28)** amid a rising wave of international **support for scaling up the use of nuclear power** to achieve global climate goals by slashing the greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming to net zero by 2050.

4. (b)
International Seabed Authority (ISA)
- It is an autonomous international organization established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1994 Agreement).
 - The organisation came into force in 1994 and is headquartered in **Kingston, Jamaica**.
 - ISA has **169 Members, including 168 Member States and the European Union**.
 - It was set up to regulate the exploration and exploitation of marine non-living resources of oceans in international waters.
5. (d)
UNCTAD
- **Established in 1964** to promote trade, investment, and development in developing countries.
 - It is a **permanent organ of the United Nations (UN)** General Assembly. UNCTAD has approximately 190 members.
 - It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
 - **Functions:**
 - Comprehend options to address macro-level development challenges
 - Achieve beneficial integration into the international trading system
 - Diversify economies to make them less dependent on commodities
 - Limit their exposure to financial volatility and debt
6. (c)
Both the statements are correct: The Rohingya are a **Muslim minority ethnic group** with their roots in the **Arakan kingdom in Myanmar**, formerly known as Burma.
- The Rohingya claim to have lived in Myanmar's **Rakhine State** for generations, but successive governments in the country have disputed their ties, labelling them **illegal immigrants from Bangladesh**.
 - **Operation Insaniyat:** In 2017, India launched "Operation Insaniyat" to provide **relief assistance for the refugee camps in Bangladesh**.
7. (d)
In News :
- Recently, the **Supreme Court of India** underlined that '**there is a pressing need**' for reform in the law related to bail and stressed the government to consider a special legislation **on the lines of the law in the United Kingdom**.
- Current Bail Laws in India:**
- The **Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC)** governs the terms of bail in India.
 - It **does not explicitly define 'bail'** but it does **define the terms 'bailable offence' and 'non-bailable offence'** under **Section 2(a)**.
 - **Sections 436–450** of the CrPC govern the provisions relating to bail.
 - However, the Supreme Court has noted that the current bail laws have led to overcrowded jails and hasty arrests.
8. (c)
Statements 1 and 3 are correct : The **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**: It was founded in 1949 and is a group of 32 countries from **Europe and North America** that exists to protect the people and territory of its members. It is founded on the principle of collective defence, meaning that if one NATO Ally is attacked, then all NATO Allies are attacked. Every NATO country contributes to the costs of running the Alliance, based on a **cost-share formula derived from Gross National Income**. This covers the

costs of NATO's operations and missions, facilities, Command Structure and jointly-owned equipment, like its surveillance drones.

Statement 2 is not correct : Sweden became NATO's newest member (7 March 2024).

9. (a)

Statement 1 is correct : World Trade Organization (WTO) is the **only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations**.

- It is run by its member governments. All major decisions are made by the membership as a whole, either by ministers (who usually meet at least once every two years) or by their ambassadors or delegates (who meet regularly in Geneva).

Statements 2 and 3 are not correct : Any state or customs territory having full autonomy in the conduct of its trade policies may join ("accede to") the **WTO**, but WTO members must agree on the terms

- The overall objective of the WTO is to help its members use trade as a means to raise living standards, create jobs and improve people's lives
- the **WTO headquarters is located in Geneva, Switzerland**

10. (c)

In News : Recently, India criticised the Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Model at the United Nations for opposing reforms to the Security Council.

The Uniting for Consensus (UfC) Model:

- It is a significant initiative at the United Nations (UN) which was **initiated by Italy in the 1990s**.
- It is also known as the '**Coffee Club**' that comprises **12 member countries** (*Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Spain, and Turkiye*) and **2 observers** (*China and Indonesia*).
- It primarily aims **to counter** bids for permanent seats in the United Nations Security Council by **G4 nations – India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan**.

11. (b)

In News : Recently, India was elected as co-chair of Digital Innovation Board of International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

Statement 1 is not correct:

- **Digital Innovation Board:** It is a part of the **Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development**, an initiative by the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**.
- It comprises **Ministers and Vice-Ministers of Telecom/ICT** from **23 member countries of ITU** spanning Asia, Europe, Africa, North and South America.

Statement 2 is correct:

- It **primarily focuses** on fostering **innovation and entrepreneurship in digital development** for a more inclusive digital future.

12. (a)

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development

- **The International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** has started an **Innovation and Entrepreneurship Alliance for Digital Development**.
- **Aim:** To respond to significant unmet needs of ITU Membership in the area of innovation, as articulated in the **Kigali Action Plan** adopted at the **World Telecommunication Development Conference 2022 (WTDC-22)** and the **Outcomes of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2022 (PP-22)**.
- **The Alliance will unite:**
 - Government ministries and specialized agencies, including national regulatory authorities and innovation agencies
 - Industry and private sector players from the ICT and digital sectors

- Academia and the R&D community
- Non-governmental and community-based organizations, and civil society
- International and intergovernmental organizations
- Development banks and donors

- **Opportunity:** The Alliance offers a new approach to bridging the Digital Innovation Divide and empowering ITU membership to overcome challenges on their path through digital transformation.
- **The Alliance has three main vehicles: -**
 1. A Digital Transformation Lab
 2. A Network of Acceleration Centres
 3. A Digital Innovation Board

13. (d)

There are **nine countries** recognized as possessing nuclear weapons.

- These countries are often referred to as "**nuclear-armed states**" or "**nuclear powers**."
- United States, Russia, **China**, United Kingdom, **France**, **India**, **Pakistan**, North Korea and Israel.

14. (a)

Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

- The EFTA (European Free Trade Association) is **separate from the European Union** is an intergovernmental organisation of four European nations, **set up in 1960**.
- **Member States:** Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.
- **Mission:** For the promotion of free trade and economic integration between its members.
- India signed a **free trade agreement (FTA)** with **four European countries** — Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland, recently, with a goal of reaching **\$100 billion in investments in India and one million jobs within 15 years**.

15. (c)

India and Brazil concluded the **first '2+2' defence and foreign ministerial dialogue**.

- The 2+2 meetings signify the **participation of two high-level representatives**, Ministers holding Foreign and Defence portfolios, from each of the two countries who aim to enhance the scope of dialogue between them.
- Having such a mechanism **enables the partners to better understand and appreciate each other's strategic concerns** and sensitivities taking into account political factors on both sides, in order to build a stronger, more integrated strategic relationship.
- India has held 2+2 meetings with ministers from the **USA, Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom and Russia**.

16. (a)

NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a **military alliance of countries**.

- **Establishment:** It was founded in **1949** with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, more popularly known as the **Washington Treaty**.
- **Aim:** To ensure the **security and defense of its member countries** through collective defense. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- **Statement 2 is not correct: Founding Members:** The original members of NATO were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

- **Members:** It has **32 member countries**, **Finland** and **Sweden** became the 31st and 32nd members respectively.

17. (a)

News: Recent clashes in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have triggered global alarm and exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in the region.

About

- Violent clashes between the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) army and Rwandan-backed M23 Tutsi-led rebels in eastern Congo** have killed scores and displaced hundreds of thousands of people.
- The **March 23 Movement, or M23**, is one of 120 insurgent groups active in the eastern region of Congo.

18. (a)

Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

- The EFTA (European Free Trade Association) is **separate from the European Union** is an intergovernmental organisation of four European nations, **set up in 1960**.
- **Member States:** Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.
- **Mission:** For the promotion of free trade and economic integration between its members.
- India signed a **free trade agreement (FTA) with four European countries** — Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland, recently, with a goal of reaching **\$100 billion in investments in India and one million jobs within 15 years**.

19. (c)

In News :

- **BBNJ Treaty (aka High Seas Treaty):** It is a landmark international agreement aimed at the conservation and **sustainable use of marine biological diversity** in areas beyond national jurisdiction.
- It is **expected** that the treaty can **enter into force** by the June 2025 **UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France**.

Statement 1 is correct:

- **BBNJ Treaty** It sets up a procedure to establish large-scale marine protected areas in the high seas.
 - It establishes the sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources.

Statement 2 is correct:

- Clear rules to conduct environmental impact assessments before human activities take place in the high seas are also part of the agreement.
- It foresees capacity building and the transfer of marine technology between the Parties.

20. (c)

Both the statements are correct.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- **NATO**, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance.
- **Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium
- **Background:** It was established by 12 countries from Europe and North America with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty (also known as Washington Treaty) in 1949 in Washington, D.C .
- The objective was to provide collective security against the Soviet Union attack in the aftermath of World War II.

21. (a)

News: India signed a trade agreement with the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

About

- **EFTA Members:** Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
- India is the EFTA's **fifth-largest trading partner** after the European Union, the United States, Britain and China, with total two-way trade touching \$25 billion in 2023.

Significance of the Agreement:

- EFTA countries will invest approximately \$100 billion and create 1 million jobs in India in the next 15 years.
- India expects that the pact will boost exports of pharmaceuticals, garments, chemicals and machinery while attracting investments in automobiles, food processing, railways and the financial sector.
- It provides an opportunity to integrate into EU markets. Over 40% of Switzerland's global services exports are to the EU. Indian companies can look to Switzerland as a base for extending its market reach to the EU.

22. (c)

News: Sweden formally joined NATO as the **32nd member** of the transatlantic military alliance, ending decades of post-World War II neutrality.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- NATO, also called the North Atlantic Alliance, is an intergovernmental military alliance.
- Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium

Background: It was established by 12 countries from Europe and North America with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty (also known as **Washington Treaty**) in 1949 in Washington, D.C

Collective Defense: According to Article 5, NATO works on the principle of collective defense, where an attack on any NATO member is considered an attack on all NATO members.

Members: It comprises 32 member states – two North American countries (USA and Canada) and 29 European countries and one eurasian country (Turkey).

- Finland became the 31st member in 2023.

23. (c)

News: Recently, Bangladesh's Prime Minister pitched for a common currency (like - EURO for European Union) for Muslim countries to facilitate trade and commerce between them.

- The Bangladesh PM said this during her interaction with a delegation of D-8 trade ministers.

What is D-8?

- D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation is an organization for economic cooperation among the following countries: **Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkiye.**
- The establishment of the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation was announced through the **Istanbul Declaration** of Summit of Heads of State/Government on June 15, 1997.
- The **objectives** of D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation are to improve member states' position in the **global economy**, diversify and create new opportunities in trade relations, enhance participation in decision-making at international level, and improve standards of living.

24. (a)

WTO

- **Environmental initiative's presentations at WTO MC13 are:**
- **Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade (DPP)** —by Australia, Barbados, China, Ecuador, Fiji and Morocco, outlines trade-related actions to address the environmental, health and economic impacts of plastics pollution.
- **Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions (TESSD):** 76 WTO members taking part in the TESSD unveiled a package of outcome documents highlighting advancements made since MC12 and pinpointing future action in trade policy.
- **Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform (FFSR) initiative:** 48 WTO members participating in the FFSR initiative presented a comprehensive plan at the 13th Ministerial Conference to advance work towards rationalisation, phase-out or elimination of harmful fossil fuel subsidies.
 - **The 48 FFSR co-sponsors are** Albania; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; European Union (and 27 member states); Fiji; Iceland; Liechtenstein; Moldova, Republic of; Montenegro; New Zealand;

North Macedonia; Norway; Panama; Paraguay; Samoa; Switzerland; Tonga; the United Kingdom; Uruguay; and Vanuatu.

25. (a)

Comoros and Timor-Leste

Major outcomes of MC13

- **Abu Dhabi Ministerial Declaration:** It adopts a Ministerial Declaration setting out a forward-looking, reform agenda for the organization.
 - It is **committed to preserve and strengthen the ability of the multilateral trading system**, with the WTO at its core, to respond to current trade challenges.
- **WTO membership for Comoros and Timor-Leste:** Ministers formally approved the WTO membership terms of Comoros, an island LDC in Africa and Timor-Leste, an island LDC in Asia at MC 13.
 - Comoros and Timor-Leste will bring the **total number of WTO members to 166**.
- **On dispute settlement reform:** Renewing the commitment to have a fully and well-functioning dispute settlement system by 2024.
 - Ministers instructed officials to accelerate discussions, build on the progress already made, and work on unresolved issues.
- **Special and differential treatment (S&DT):** To improve use of the special and differential treatment (S&DT) provisions for developing and least developed countries (LDCs) with a view to making them more precise, effective and operational.

26. (d)

Both the Statements are not correct.

- Recently, the Prime Minister of India and Mauritius jointly inaugurated **an airstrip, jetty, and 6 other projects** to ensure maritime security and connectivity to **Mauritius' Agalega islands**.
- **Mauritius** has become the **first country to join India's Jan Aushadhi initiative** which will benefit the people of Mauritius by providing better quality Made-in-India generic medicines.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGYRE

1. With reference to the Space science and Technology Awareness Training (START) programme, consider the following statements:

1. Its objective is to attract the funding to the fields of space science and technology.
2. All Indian Corporates and Private Individuals can contribute to the programme.

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 among the following is the name given to the landing site of Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander?

- (a) Tiranga Point
- (b) Statio Shiv Shakti
- (c) Sarabhai crater
- (d) Jawahar Sthal

3. "DART Mission", recently seen in the news, is related to:

- (a) JAXA
- (b) ISRO
- (c) NASA
- (d) ESA

4. SAKHI app, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Women Self Help Groups
- (b) Digital Literacy
- (c) Gaganyaan Mission
- (d) Monitoring Plastic Wastes

5. With reference to the 'IceCube', which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a neutrino observatory at the earth's South Pole that detects subatomic particles called neutrinos.
2. The chances of spotting neutrinos are higher when the size of the neutrino observatory is larger.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 or 2

6. With reference to the *Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) in India*, consider the following statements:

1. It is designed to produce more nuclear fuel than it consumes.
2. Once commissioned, India will be the third country after Russia and the United States to have a commercial operating FBR.

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. Which one of the following planets along with the earth is considered in the recent 'Astronomical Grand Cycles or 2.4 Million-Year Cycle'?

- (a) Venus
(b) Mars
(c) Saturn
(d) Jupiter
8. **Matsya6000, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?**
(a) A ballistic missile launched by DRDO, which can travel upto 6000 km.
(b) A blue economy mission of India aims to harness the potential of fisheries.
(c) A deep-ocean human submersible that aims to reach the ocean bed at a depth of 6 km.
(d) A spaceship on board of India's Gaganyaan mission launched by ISRO.
9. **With reference to Large Language Models (LLMs), which of the following statements is/are correct?**
1. It is an artificial intelligence algorithm that uses deep learning techniques.
2. LLMs can power chatbots and virtual assistants for natural language conversations.
Select the correct answer using the code given below:
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
10. **With reference to the *Very Small Aperture Terminal (V-SAT) Station*, consider the following statements:**
1. It bounces the signal from satellites instead of being transported through physical means.
2. The signal quality can be affected by the weather and other environmental conditions
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 Small Satellite Launch Vehicle, consider the following statements:**
1. It is a three-stage launch vehicle, having a lift-off weight of about 120 tonnes.
2. The SSLV missions are useful to launch small-sized satellites into Low Earth Orbit.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
12. **With reference to the India's three-stage nuclear programme, consider the following statements:**
1. It was designed by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
2. The second stage of the program involves the deployment of Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs).
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. **Recently, the term 'Juice Jacking' was mentioned in the news. What does it mean?**
(a) It is a process to sustainable clean the oil present on the surface of water
(b) It is a type of large language model
(c) A cyber attack through USB charging ports
(d) A process of transferring charge through wireless technology.

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

Both the statements are not correct: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is conducting the Space science and Technology Awareness Training (START) 2024 programme.

- **Objective:** To attract the youngsters to the fields of space science and technology.
- **Feature:** The training modules will comprise introductory level topics on various verticals of space science and technology.
 - There will be sessions on Indian space exploration programmes and research opportunities.
- **Eligibility:** Post-graduate students and final year undergraduate students of physical sciences and technology studying in educational institutes, universities and colleges within India are eligible to be considered for the training.

2. (b)

News: The International Astronomical Union (IAU) working group for Planetary System Nomenclature has approved the name “Statio Shiv Shakti” for the landing site of Chandrayaan-3’s Vikram lander.

About

- Planetary nomenclature, like terrestrial nomenclature, is used to uniquely identify a feature on the surface of a planet or satellite so that it can be easily located, described, and discussed.
- The Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature “contains detailed information about all names of topographic and albedo features on planets and satellites [and some planetary ring and ring-gap systems] that the IAU has named and approved from its founding in 1919 through the present time”.
- The IAU is the internationally recognised authority for assigning names to planetary surface features.

3. (c)

News: According to a recent study, published in the **Planetary Science Journal**, collision with NASA’s DART spacecraft has altered the shape of asteroid Dimorphous.

About

- Asteroid Dimorphous, which before the DART encounter looked like a ball, now appears to be shaped more like a watermelon.

What are Asteroids?

- Asteroids, sometimes called minor planets, are rocky, airless remnants left over from the early formation of the solar system about 4.6 billion years ago.
- They mostly originate between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. This region is also known as the asteroid belt.

What was NASA’s DART mission?

- DART was the first-ever mission of asteroid deflection by changing an asteroid’s motion in space through kinetic impact.
- The collision of NASA’s DART spacecraft into the asteroid Dimorphous is a successful test in preventing the Earth from any hazardous asteroids in space.

4. (c)

News: The Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) has developed the **SAKHI (Space-borne Assistant and Knowledge Hub for Crew Interaction)** app.

About

- This app will help astronauts on the **Gaganyaan space flight mission** in carrying out a range of tasks such as looking up vital technical information or communicating with one another.
- It will keep the crew connected with the onboard computer and ground-based stations, guaranteeing a seamless communication link.
- The app will also remind them about their hydration and dietary schedules and sleep patterns.

5. (c)

Both statements are correct.

About The IceCube:

- The IceCube neutrino observatory is a device at the earth's South Pole that detects subatomic particles called neutrinos.
- It was built and is maintained by the IceCube Collaboration, which consists of many universities worldwide led by the University of Wisconsin, Madison.
- IceCube consists of thousands of sensors buried more than 1.4 km beneath the ice plus multiple detectors above the surface.

Neutrinos

- Neutrinos are light particles that very rarely interact with matter. This is why they're called "ghost particles".
- Neutrinos come in different types: electron neutrino, Muon neutrino and Tau neutrino.
- By some estimates, a human-sized neutrino detector will have to wait for a century for a single neutrino to interact with a sensor. The larger the detector's collecting area, the higher the chances of spotting neutrinos.

How Icecube detects neutrinos?

- IceCube is the world's biggest 'neutrino telescope'; its sensors are distributed throughout a cubic kilometre of ice.
- When a neutrino interacts with the ice surrounding the sensors, it may produce some charged particles and some radiation.
- The sensors detect the radiation to infer the detection of a neutrino and use the radiation's properties to understand more about the particle.

6. (a)

In News : Recently, India's first indigenous [Fast Breeder Reactor](#) at Kalpakkam in Tamil Nadu began 'core loading'.

Statement 1 is correct:

- **Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR):** It is a part of India's three-stage nuclear power program, which is designed to produce more nuclear fuel than it consumes.
- It is an advanced third-generation reactor with inherent passive safety features ensuring a prompt and safe shutdown of the plant in the event of an emergency.
- Since it uses the spent fuel from the first stage, FBR offers a great advantage in terms of significant reduction in nuclear waste generated.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- FBR symbolises India's entry into the crucial second stage of the country's three-stage nuclear program.
- Once commissioned, India will only be the second country after Russia to have a commercial operating FBR.

7. (b)

In News: Recently, a study found geologic evidence that the earth is warming in a cycle that runs millions of years.

- **Astronomical Grand Cycles:** It refers to the long-term cycles of celestial bodies that have profound impacts on Earth's climate.
- These cycles, particularly the *2.4 Million-Year Cycle*, are driven by the gravitational interactions between Earth and other planets, particularly Mars.
- It is believed to influence Earth's climate, causing periods of global warming or cooling.

The Role of Mars:

- The **2.4 million-year cycle** coincides with the timing of known **gravitational interactions between Earth and Mars** as the two planets orbit the sun.
- **Mars' gravitational pull on Earth** may cause our planet to be **pulled slightly closer to the sun**, resulting in **more solar radiation** and hence a **warmer climate**.
- It leads to periods of higher incoming solar radiation and warmer climates in cycles of 2.4 million years on Earth.

8. (c)

A deep-ocean human submersible that aims to reach the ocean bed at a depth of 6 km.

Samudrayaan Mission

- As a part of DOM, India's flagship deep ocean mission, 'Samudrayaan', was initiated in 2021 by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**.
- With 'Samudrayaan', India is embarking on a **crewed expedition to reach a depth of 6,000 m** to the ocean bed in the central Indian Ocean.
- This journey will be accomplished by **Matsya6000, a deep-ocean submersible**.

Matsya6000

- The Matsya6000 is **India's flagship deep-ocean human submersible** that aims to reach the ocean bed at a depth of 6,000 m.
- Accompanied by **three crew members, called "aquanauts"**, the submersible carries a suite of scientific tools and equipment designed to facilitate observations, sample collection, basic video and audio recording, and experimentation.
- The submersible will be equipped with a **suite of scientific sensors and tools**, and have an operational endurance of **12 hours**, which is expandable up to 96 hours in the event of an emergency.

9. (c)

Both the statements are correct.

Large Language Models (LLMs)

- A large language model (LLM) is a type of artificial intelligence (AI) algorithm that uses **deep learning techniques** and massively large data sets to understand, summarize, generate and predict new content.
- Deep learning involves the probabilistic analysis of unstructured data, which eventually enables the deep learning model to recognize distinctions between pieces of content without human intervention.
- It helps to understand how characters, words, and sentences function together.

Applications of Large Language Models (LLMs)

- **Chatbots and Virtual Assistants:** LLMs can power chatbots and virtual assistants that engage in natural language conversations with users to provide information, answer queries, or assist with tasks.
- **Prevent cyber attack:** LLMs have the ability to process large data sets collected throughout an enterprise network and can spot patterns that indicate a malicious cyber attack and generate an alert.
- **Text Generation:** LLMs can generate coherent and contextually relevant text based on prompts provided by users. This capability is useful for tasks like content creation, story generation, and poetry writing.

10. (c)

In News : Recently, the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** planned to collaborate with ISRO to deploy **V-SAT stations on a pilot basis** for around 80 tribal villages in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Maharashtra to bring Internet services.

- **Very Small Aperture Terminal (V-SAT) Station:** It is a **two-way satellite ground station** with a dish antenna that is used **to transmit narrowband data or broadband data** for the provision of satellite Internet access to remote locations.

Statement 1 is correct:

- It can be used in place of a large physical network as **it bounces the signal from satellites** instead of being transported through physical means like an ethernet connection.

Statement 2 is correct:

- Because the **signal needs to bounce**, there can be a **latency issue** that wouldn't exist with a physical network.
 - It takes time for information to reach the dish and the station due to one part of the system being way up in geosynchronous orbit above the earth.
 - The signal quality can be **affected by the weather** and other environmental conditions.

11. (c)

News: Prime Minister Modi laid the foundation stone of the second rocket launchport of ISRO at Kulasekarapattinam situated in coastal Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district.

- The new launchport will provide a natural advantage to ISRO's future launches pertaining to the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV).

What are SSLVs?

- SSLV is a small satellite launch vehicle developed by ISRO to cater for the launch of small satellites.
- It has a **three-stage launch vehicle**, having a lift-off weight of about 120 tonnes and is 34 metres in length and 2 metres in diameter.

What are they used for?

- The SSLV missions are useful to launch small-sized satellites weighing anywhere between **10 to 500kg into the Low Earth Orbit**.
- They are low on cost and intended satellite insertion into orbits takes a shorter flight time.

12. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Homi J. Bhabha designed the three-stage programme as India has **limited domestic uranium resources but has abundant Thorium**.

Statement 2 is correct: The second stage of the program involves the **deployment of Fast Breeder Reactors (FBRs)**.

- FBRs are designed to produce **more fissile material than they consume** by utilizing a fast neutron spectrum.

13. (c)

About the Juice Jacking

- It is a **type of cyberattack** where hackers tamper with **public USB charging ports**, infecting them with **malware** or making hardware changes that allow them **to steal data from devices** connected to them.
- Most attacks target **both Android and iOS mobile devices**, with older devices being particularly vulnerable due to their outdated software.

The Threat:

- When users connect their devices to compromised USB ports, hackers use the connection to hack into mobile devices and **steal personal data** like email, SMS, and saved passwords **or deliver malware** by gaining access to the phones.

■■■■■

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. With reference to the Great Indian Bustards, consider the following statements:

1. They are found in Rajasthan and Gujarat only.
2. It is listed as critically endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. With reference to the United Nations Climate Change Conference, consider the following statements:

1. These conferences are organized under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), an international treaty that came into force in 1994.
2. The COP meetings are held annually, and each conference is numbered sequentially.

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. Which of the following factors is **least** likely to contribute to accelerated land erosion?

- (a) Deforestation
- (b) Overgrazing
- (c) Construction of terraces on slopes
- (d) Increase in intensity of rainfall

4. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Brown Carbon 'Tarballs'?

1. They are small carbonaceous particles formed due to the burning of fossil fuels.
2. The brown carbon has a strong light-absorbing capacity throughout the spectra.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5. Consider the following pairs

Species In News : *IUCN Red List status*

1. Cougar Vulnerable
2. Bull shark Critically Endangered
3. Great Indian Bustard Least Concern

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three

- (d) None
- 6. Which among the following are the reasons behind the Water Scarcity in India?**
1. Inefficient agricultural practices
 2. Climate change
 3. Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
- 7. With reference to International Day of Forests, consider the following statements:**
1. The day was first observed in the year 2013.
 2. This year's theme is "Forests and innovation: new solutions for a better world".
- 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. Arsenic contamination in groundwater is a significant environmental and public health issue. Which of the following statements about arsenic contamination is/are correct?**
1. Arsenic is a naturally occurring trace element that occurs in many minerals, usually in combination with sulfur and metals.
 2. Inorganic arsenic compounds are less harmful to health than organic arsenic compounds.
 3. Long-term exposure to arsenic from drinking-water and food can cause cancer and skin lesions.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
- 9. With reference to the Great Indian Bustard, consider the following statements:**
1. It is mostly found in Rajasthan and Gujarat.
 2. It is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 10. With reference to the Microplastics, consider the following statements:**
1. It is defined as plastics more than five millimetres in diameter.
 2. The government has broadened the definition of biodegradable plastics by including materials that do not leave any microplastics.

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 North-Atlantic right whale, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is mostly found along the Atlantic coast of North America.
- 2. It is listed as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. "Greenwashing", a term frequently in the news, refers to which of the following?

- (a) Making oceans plastic-free.
- (b) Eco-friendly techniques in the construction sector.
- (c) False claims about a company's environmental or sustainability credentials.
- (d) Restoring deserts into fertile land through desert reforestation.

13. With reference to the Greater one-horned rhino, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. The species is found in foothills of the Himalayas and the Brahmaputra and Ganges valley.
- 2. It is listed as Least Concerned under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species

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

14. With reference to Sharks in India, consider the following statements:

- 1. Over 160 shark species are reported in India.
- 2. Tamil Nadu accounts for more than 60% of the illegal trade in shark body parts 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

15. With reference to Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. It is located on the bank of the Brahmaputra river in Assam.
- 2. It is the only habitat of One Horned Rhinoceros in the world.

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

16. With reference to the Great Indian one-horned rhinoceros, consider the following statements:

1. It is commonly found in Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan and in Assam, India.
2. It is listed as endangered under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. Which among the following are the impacts of the Rising Global Sea Surface Temperature?

1. Ocean Stratification
2. Increase in Population of Phytoplanktons
3. Marine Heat Waves

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

18. Which among the following are the factors causing Human-Animal conflict?

1. Lack of Protected areas
2. Deforestation
3. Agricultural expansion
4. Population explosion

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

19. With reference to **Kaziranga National Park**, which of the following statements is/are correct?

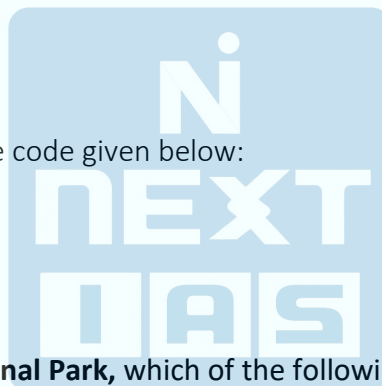
1. The rivers that pass through it are Brahmaputra and Diphlu river.
2. It is the only habitat of One Horned Rhinoceros in the world.

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

20. In which of the following areas/regions in India, are you most likely to find Golden Langurs?

- (a) Uttarakhand Himalayas
- (b) Western Ghats
- (c) Eastern Ghats
- (d) Assam



- 21. Which one of the following best describes the term "Genetic Pollution" sometimes seen in the news?**
- It is genes introduced in GMOs that can pass on to other members of the same species and contaminate them.
 - It is a phenomenon under which genes that are activated under certain conditions, impact the other genes.
 - It is the migration of genes from GM plants into conventional crops or related species in the wild.
 - It is the impact of chemicals on the genetic pool of the species leading to mutations.
- 22. Consider the following pairs:**
- | Protected Area | State |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Intanki elephant Reserve | Manipur |
| 2. Kali Tiger Reserve | Maharashtra |
| 3. Mayurjharna Elephant Reserve | West Bengal |
- How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All three
 - None
- 23. With reference to Jim Corbett National Park, which of the following statements is/are correct?**
- The rivers that pass through it are Ramganga and Rishi Ganga river.
 - It was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 24. Recently, India's First National Dolphin Research Centre was inaugurated in which of the following states?**
- Uttar Pradesh
 - Bihar
 - Assam
 - West Bengal
- 25. With reference to Dachigam National Park, which of the following statements is/are correct?**
- The park is located in the Zabarwan Range of Himalayas in Arunachal Pradesh.
 - The park is known for the animal species, Kashmir stag.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 26. With reference to Methane Gas, consider the following statements:**
- It is the largest gas contributor to Global Warming.
 - Rice fields are one of the sources of methane emission.

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

27. Green jobs are crucial for achieving sustainable development because they:

- (a) Offer higher wages compared to traditional jobs.
- (b) Create employment opportunities in rural areas.
- (c) Contribute to environmental protection and resource conservation.
- (d) Require less investment compared to traditional industries.

28. With reference to the *Hanguls found in Kashmir*, consider the following statements:

1. They can be spotted near the adjoining area of Rajparian Wildlife Sanctuary.
2. They are listed as Critically Endangered in IUCN's Red Data Book.

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

29. With reference to Okhla Bird Sanctuary, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The bird Sanctuary is at the Okhla barrage over Yamuna River.
2. It is situated in Gurugram, on Delhi-Haryana state border.

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

30. With reference to the Status of Leopards in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Madhya Pradesh houses the largest population of leopards in India.
2. India's leopard numbers declined by 8% between 2018- 2022.

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

31. According to the recently conducted fifth cycle of leopard population estimation (2022) in India. Which among the following states have the highest number of leopards?

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

32. With reference to the Sea Slug, consider the following statements:

1. A new marine species of head-shield sea slug is named after the President of India Droupadi Murmu.
2. It was discovered from Digha of West Bengal coast and Udaipur of Odisha coast.
3. Sea slugs are hermaphroditic.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

33. 'Melanochlamys Droupadi', recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Anti-Malarial Drug
- (b) Marine Species
- (c) Fruit-Ripening Agent
- (d) Exoplanet

34. With reference to the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Focus of the Alliance is to conserve seven big cats of the world.
2. The headquarter of IBCA is located in St. Petersburg, Russia.

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. (b)

News: The Supreme Court has formed an expert panel to balance the Great Indian Bustard bird conservation with sustainable energy goals.

Indian Bustard bird

- Scientific Name: *Ardeotis nigriceps*
- One of the heaviest flying birds endemic to the Indian subcontinent.
- State Bird of Rajasthan

Habitat:

- Untamed, Arid grasslands.
- A Maximum number of GIBs are found in Jaisalmer and the Indian Army-controlled field firing range near Pokhran, **Rajasthan**.
- **Other areas:** Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Protection Status:

- **IUCN Status:** Critically Endangered.
- Listed in Wildlife Protection Act's Schedule 1.

2. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The United Nations Climate Change Conferences, often referred to as COP (Conference of the Parties), are international gatherings where countries come together to discuss and negotiate global efforts to address climate change.

- These conferences are organized under **the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**, an international treaty came into force in **1994** with the objective of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.
- The COP meetings are held **annually**, and each conference is numbered sequentially.

3. (c)

Construction of terraces on slopes is a soil conservation technique that actually helps to reduce land erosion. Terraces act as barriers, slowing down the flow of water and preventing it from washing away topsoil.

The rest of the factors are responsible for soil erosion.

Deforestation removes vegetation cover, leaving the soil exposed to the erosive forces of wind and water.

Overgrazing removes vegetation cover and compacts the soil, making it more susceptible to erosion.

Increased intensity of rainfall can lead to flash floods and increased runoff, which can significantly accelerate erosion.

4. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Tarballs are small light-absorbing, carbonaceous particles formed due to the burning of biomass or fossil fuels that deposit on snow and ice. They hasten glacial melt.

Statement 2 is not correct: Brown carbon (BrC) is brown in colour and its absorption is limited to UV and lower visible wavelengths. Aerosol absorption depends on the mass, mixing state, chemical composition and the refractive index of the species present in the atmosphere.

5. (d)

Cougar also known as the mountain lions, panthers or pumas.

- They are known for their strength, agility, and awesome ability to jump.
- It is listed as **Least Concern** in IUCN Red List
 - It is included in CITES Appendix II.

Bull Sharks is a large coastal shark with a circumglobal distribution.

- They are more aggressive than most shark species and responsible for many unprovoked attacks on humans worldwide.
- IUCN Red List status : It is listed as **Vulnerable** species.

Great Indian Bustard is the State bird of Rajasthan.

- It inhabits arid and semi-arid grasslands with scattered short scrub, bushes and low intensity cultivation in flat or gently undulating terrain.
- Listed in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, in Appendix I of CITES, as **Critically Endangered** on the IUCN Red List.

6. (d)

India is facing a **threat of water shortage** as **water levels in reservoirs** across India have **reported lower storage levels than last year**.

Reasons behind Water Scarcity in India

- **Inefficient agricultural practices** and excessive groundwater extraction have depleted crucial water sources.
- **Climate change** further aggravates the situation, causing irregular rainfall patterns and affecting the recharge of rivers and aquifers.

- **Poor water management** and lack of proper infrastructure also play a significant role in exacerbating the crisis.
- **Deforestation and degradation of watersheds** lead to soil erosion and reduced infiltration capacity, affecting groundwater recharge and overall water availability.
- **Rapid urbanisation and industrialisation** have led to increased pollution of water bodies, making them unfit for consumption.

7. (c)

Both the statements are correct.

News: International Day of Forests was celebrated on 21st March 2024.

- The **theme** for this year's International Forest Day is "**Forests and innovation: new solutions for a better world**".

Background

- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 March the International Day of Forests in November 2012 to celebrate and raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests.
- International Day of Forests was observed for the first time on March 21, 2013.

8. (c)

Statement 2 is not correct and Statement 1 and 3 are correct.

Arsenic (As)

- Arsenic is a **naturally occurring trace element** that occurs in many minerals, usually in combination with sulfur and metals.
- It is **highly toxic** in its **inorganic form**.

Effects on health

- Long-term exposure to arsenic can cause **cancer, skin lesions, cardiovascular disease, diabetes etc.**
- In-utero and early childhood exposure have been linked to **negative impacts on cognitive development and increased deaths** in young adults.
- In Taiwan, arsenic exposure has been linked to "**Blackfoot disease**". It is a severe disease of blood vessels leading to gangrene.

Permissible Limits

- The **World Health Organization's** provisional guideline value for arsenic in drinking water is **0.01 mg/l (10 µg/l)**.
- In India the permissible limit of arsenic in the absence of an alternative source is **0.05 mg/l (50 µg/l)**.

Status of Arsenic Contamination in India

- The occurrence of Arsenic in groundwater was first reported in **1980 in West Bengal in India**.
- Maximum number of the arsenic-affected habitations are in the **Ganga and Brahmaputra alluvial plains**.

9. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The Great Indian Bustard population is **confined mostly to Rajasthan and Gujarat**. Small populations occur in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

● **Conservation Status:**

- Listed in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972,
- Appendix I of CITES,
- Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

10. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Plastics break down into their smaller units called **microplastics** – officially defined as plastics **less than five millimetres in diameter**.

- These microplastics find their way across the planet, from the depths of the Pacific Ocean to the heights of the Himalayas.

Statement 2 is correct: The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has introduced a new set of amendments to India's Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2024.

- It defines **biodegradable plastics** as **not only capable of degradation** by biological processes in specific environments such as soil, landfill but **also as materials that do not leave any microplastics**.

11. (a)

News: According to a recent study, female North Atlantic right whales may never breed after entanglement in fishing gear.

About

- The North-Atlantic right whale is one of the most endangered of all large whales and is now **mostly found along the Atlantic coast of North America**, where it is threatened by entanglement in fishing gear and ship collisions.

Protection Status

- North Atlantic right whales are legally protected, both internationally and in U.S. waters, including policies that seek to reduce deaths or serious injuries resulting from entanglements.
- **IUCN Status:** listed as **Critically Endangered**

12. (c)

False claims about a company's environmental or sustainability credentials.

About Greenwashing

- "Greenwashing" means the **practice of marketing products/services as green**, when in fact they do **not meet the requirements** to be defined as green activities/projects.
- Greenwashing is when a **company makes claims about its positive environmental endeavors** but is **misleading** the public about them, or outright lying.

13. (a)

Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.

Greater one-horned rhino

- **Habitat:** The grasslands and wetlands located in the foothills of the Himalayas and the Brahmaputra and Ganges valley.
 - The Great one horned rhino is commonly found in India, Nepal, and Bhutan.
 - In India they are found in **Kaziranga National Park** and **Manas National Park** in Assam, **Pobitora reserve forest in Assam** (having the highest Indian rhino density in the world), **Orang National park** of Assam, **Laokhowa reserve forest** of Assam and **Royal Chitwan National Park** in Nepal.
- **Protection Status:**
 - IUCN Status: Vulnerable
 - Schedule I of Wildlife Protection Act
 - CITES Appendix I

14. (c)

News : The TRAFFIC and WWF-India released a report titled '**Netted in illegal wildlife trade: Sharks of India**'.

About

- TRAFFIC: Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce.
- It analysed the data from 2010 to 2022.

Major Findings

- **Tamil Nadu accounted for almost 65% of the illegal trade in shark body parts.**
- Karnataka, Gujarat, Kerala, and Maharashtra follow Tamil Nadu in that order in illegal shark trade.
- The products were exported to Singapore, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Sri Lanka, and mainland China.
- The demand for shark fins and meat is a major driver of global shark fishery.

Sharks in India

- Over 160 shark species are reported in India and only 26 sharks have been given the highest protection status under the Wild Life (Protection) Act of 1972 by listing them in Schedules I and II.

15. (a)

Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.

Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is located on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra river in Morigaon district in Assam.
- It is often referred to as 'Mini Kaziranga' owing to the similarity of landscape, floral, and faunal distribution.
- Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary is known for holding the **highest density** of Greater One Horned Rhinoceros in the country.
- The Sanctuary consists of the Rajamayong Reserve Forest and Pobitora Reserve Forest.
- Rhino population is also found in Kaziranga National Park, Jaldapara National Park in Bengal, Orang National Park in Assam, Manas National Park in Assam etc.

16. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Great one horned rhino is commonly found in Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan and in Assam, India.

Statement 2 is not correct: Conservation Status:

- IUCN Status: vulnerable
- CITES: Appendix I (I includes species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances).

17. (c)

The **average global sea surface temperature (SST)** for February 2024 stood at **21.06 degree Celsius**, the **highest ever** in a dataset that goes back to 1979.

- Sea surface temperature is the **temperature of the water at the ocean surface**.

Option 1 is correct: Ocean Stratification: Warmer oceans lead to an **increase in ocean stratification** — the **natural separation of an ocean's water into horizontal layers** by density, with warmer, lighter, less salty, and nutrient-poor water layering on top of heavier, colder, saltier, nutrient-rich water.

Option 2 is not correct: Threat to Phytoplanktons: Nutrients are not able to travel up to the surface of the oceans from below. This could **threaten the population of phytoplankton** — single-celled plants that thrive on the ocean surface and are the base of several marine food webs.

Option 3 is correct: Marine Heat Waves: Warmer oceans cause marine heat waves (MHWs), which occur when the surface temperature of a particular region of the sea **rises to 3 or 4 degree Celsius** above the average temperature for **at least five days**.

18. (d)

Human-Wildlife Conflict

- Human-wildlife conflict is when encounters between humans and wildlife lead to negative results, **such as loss of property, livelihoods, and even life**.

Reasons/ Factors causing Human-Animal conflict

- Urbanisation & Development
- Lack of Protected areas
- Population explosion
- Deforestation
- Agricultural expansion
- Climate change
- Invasive species
- Increase in eco-tourism
- Substantial increase in the population of prolific breeders like wild boars and peacocks.

19. (a)

Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.

Kaziranga National Park

- **Location:** Golaghat, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon districts of the state of Assam.
- It was declared a **Wildlife Sanctuary in 1950** and notified as Kaziranga National Park in 1974 under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, of 1972. It was also recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in 1985.
- The rivers that pass through it are **Brahmaputra and Diphlu river**.
- The Park is the abode of more than **70%** of **One Horned Rhinoceros** in the world.
 - **The One-horned Rhino** is listed under the **Schedule I** of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and **vulnerable** in the IUCN Red List.

20. (d)

Assam

Golden Langur



- **Scientific Name:** *Trachypithecus geei*
- **Native to:** India and Bhutan.
- **Geographic Range:** The geographic range of golden langurs is limited to **Assam, India and neighboring Bhutan** where they live year-round.
 - The area they inhabit is restricted to the region surrounded by four geographical landmarks: **the foothills of Bhutan (north), Manas river (east), Sankosh river (west), and Brahmaputra river (south)**.
- **Food Habits:** Golden langurs are both folivores and frugivores. Their diets consist of ripe and unripe fruits, young and mature leaves, leaf buds, flower buds, seeds, twigs, and flowers.
- **Unique features:**
 - Golden langurs can be most easily recognized by the **color of their fur**, after which they are named.
 - It has been noted that their **fur changes colors according to the seasons**.
 - In the winter it is dark golden chestnut and in the summer it is more cream colored.
 - **The color of the young also differs from adults** in that they are almost pure white.
 - The tail has a tassel on the end and is notably larger in males than in females. **Males also tend to be slightly larger than females.**
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
 - **CITES:** Appendix I

21. (a)

Genes introduced in GMOs can pass on to other members of the same species and perhaps other species through 'gene escape' thereby leading to their genetic contamination. Genes might interact at gene, cell, plant and ecosystem level. For instance, herbicide resistance into weeds, and the development of "superweeds".

22. (a)

Pairs 1 and 2 are incorrect.

- **Intanki National Park in Kohima, Nagaland** is a home to varied wildlife, which include Golden langur, Hoolock gibbon, Palm civets, Tiger, Sloth bear, Wild dogs, Flying squirrel, Black stork, Monitor lizard, Python etc. In the year 2005, the park was **declared as an elephant reserve** by the government.
- **Kali Tiger Reserve, earlier known as Dandeli-Anshi Tiger Reserve**, is located in **Karnataka**. The Tiger Reserve comprises two important protected areas of the region viz., Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary and Anshi National Park. Forests are primarily **moist deciduous and semi-evergreen**, with **patches of evergreen forests**. Animals found in the Reserve include Tiger, Spotted deer, Sloth bear, Wild boar, Hanuman langur, Bonnet macaque., etc. Kali Tiger Reserve is **home to rare black panthers**.
- **Mayurjharna Elephant Reserve, West Bengal** is the elephant reserve in east India which was set up in the year 1987 and was proclaimed as an Elephant Reserve on 24th October, 2002.

23. (b)

Statements 1 is not correct and Statements 2 is correct.

The Corbett National Park

- The Park is located in the Nainital district of **Uttarakhand**.
- It was established in **1936** as **Hailey National Park**. Later it was renamed Corbett National Park after the hunter and naturalist **Jim Corbett**.
- **The rivers that pass through it are Ramganga, Kosi & Sonanadi.**
- The Corbett National Park has been divided into **six major different tourism zones**: Bijrani Safari Zone, Jhirna Safari Zone, Dhela Safari Zone, Dhikala Zone, Durga Devi Zone, Sitabani Buffer Zone.
- It is also being honored as the place where **Project Tiger** was first launched in 1973.
- The park is home to the **Royal Bengal Tigers**, Himalayan black bears, Indian elephants, crested serpent eagle, blossom-headed parakeet etc.

24. (b)

News: India's first centre for research on conserving the **endangered Gangetic river dolphin** was inaugurated in Patna, Bihar.

- Bihar is home to around half of the estimated 3,000 **Gangetic dolphins in India**.

Objective

- The National Dolphin Research Centre (NDRC) seeks to serve as a **central hub for research** on diverse facets of Gangetic dolphins, including studies on their behavior, survival mechanisms, and factors contributing to mortality.

Ganges River Dolphins (also called 'susu')

- **Scientific Name:** Platanista Gangetica.
- **Conservation Status:** Endangered (IUCN), Schedule I of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- Appendix I of CITES

25. (b)

Statements 1 is not correct and Statements 2 is correct.

Dachigam National Park

- Dachigam National Park is located in Jammu and Kashmir. It covers an area of 141 sq km.
- The park is located in the Zabarwan Range of the western Himalayas.
- The main animal species that Dachigam is known for is the hangul, or the Kashmir stag. Other species include: Musk deer, Kashmir gray langur etc.

26. (b)
Statement 1 is not correct: Methane is an invisible but strong greenhouse gas, and the second largest contributor to global warming after carbon dioxide, responsible for 30 percent of global heating since the Industrial Revolution.
Statement 2 is correct: Rice fields are one of the sources of methane emission.
The main reason is fossil fuel operations, which account for about 40 percent of all human-caused methane emissions.
27. (c)
Contribute to environmental protection and resource conservation.
About Green Jobs:
- The International Labour Organization defines green jobs as “decent jobs that contribute to preservation or restoration of the environment”.
 - They involve the development, application, and maintenance of technologies, products, and services that help conserve natural resources, reduce pollution, and mitigate climate change.
- Status in India
- India has the potential to create up to 35 million green jobs by 2047 across traditional and emerging sectors, including renewable energy, waste management, electric vehicles, green construction and sustainable textiles, according to ‘The ‘Gearing Up the Workforce for a Green Economy’ report by Skill Council for Green Jobs (SCGJ).
 - The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) estimates that solar photovoltaic (PV) projects built in India between 2011 and 2014 created approximately 24,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.
28. (c)
In News : Recently, the experts suggested that the number of Hanguls in Kashmir will cross 300 this spring, the first time in more than three decades.
Statement 1 is correct:
- Hangul (aka the Kashmir Stag): It is a unique subspecies of the Asian Red Deer, and the State Animal of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - Distribution: Dachigam National Park and its nearby areas; Rajparian Wildlife Sanctuary, Overa Aru, Sind Valley, and the forests of Kishtwar and Bhaderwah in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Statement 2 is correct:
- Conservation Efforts: In 1947, around 2000 were spotted and the number fell to 384 by 1968.
 - Despite being the state animal of Jammu and Kashmir, only 289 individuals of this elusive species remain.
 - IUCN’s Red Data Book: Critically Endangered
29. (a)
Statements 1 is correct and Statements 2 is not correct.
Okhla Bird Sanctuary
- The bird Sanctuary is at the Okhla barrage over Yamuna River.
 - It is situated in Noida, Gautam Buddh Nagar district, on Delhi-Uttar Pradesh state border.
 - Recently the WWF Environmental Information and Assessment Center Program (EIACP PC-RP), operating under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, marked the World Wildlife Day 2024 at the Okhla Bird Sanctuary.
30. (a)
Statement 1 is correct and statement 2 is not correct.

Context

- The fifth cycle of leopard population estimation was carried out by the National Tiger Conservation Authority and Wildlife Institute of India.

About

- India's leopard numbers **rose by 8%** from 12,852 in 2018 to 13,874 in 2022.
- **Madhya Pradesh** houses the largest population of leopards in the country – 3907 , followed by **Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu**.
- Tiger Reserves or sites with highest leopard population are, Nagarajunasagar Srisailem (Andhra Pradesh), followed by Panna (MP), and Satpura (MP).

31. (b)

News: The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, released the report on **Status of Leopards in India**.

About

- The **fifth cycle of leopard population** estimation was carried out by the National Tiger Conservation Authority and Wildlife Institute of India.

Key Findings

- India's leopard numbers rose by 8% from 12,852 in 2018 to 13,874 in 2022.
- **Madhya Pradesh** houses the **largest population of leopards** in the country – 3907 (2018: 3421), followed by Maharashtra (2022: 1985; 2018: 1,690), Karnataka (2022: 1,879; 2018: 1,783) and Tamil Nadu (2022: 1,070; 2018: 868).
- Tiger Reserves or sites with highest leopard population are, Nagarajunasagar Srisailem (Andhra Pradesh), followed by Panna (MP), and Satpura (MP).

32. (c)

All three statements are correct: The Zoological Survey of India named a new marine species of head-shield sea slug **after President of India Droupadi Murmu** as **Melanochlamys droupadi**.

- The species belonging to Melanochlamys genus was discovered **from Digha of West Bengal coast and Udaipur of Odisha coast**.
- Sea slugs are **hermaphroditic**, meaning they possess both male and female reproductive organs. They can reproduce through both sexual and asexual means.

33. (b)

News: The Zoological Survey of India named a new **marine species** of head-shield sea slug with ruby red spot after President of India Droupadi Murmu.

About

- This species belonging to **Melanochlamys genus** was discovered from Digha of West Bengal coast and Udaipur of Odisha coast.
- The new species of head-shield sea slug, which is found nowhere in the world, is named as **Melanochlamys droupadi**.
- Species of the genus Melanochlamys are characterised morphologically by a short, blunt and cylindrical body and a smooth dorsal surface with two dorsal equal or unequal shields, named the anterior cephalic and posterior shield.

34. (a)

Statement 1 is correct and statement 2 is not correct.

Context

- The Union Cabinet approved the creation of **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** to set up a global network for the conservation of tigers and other big cats.

About

- The alliance was conceived as a multi-country, multi-agency coalition of **96** big cat range countries and others to establish a common platform for conservation.
- **Objective:** Focus of the Alliance is to conserve **seven big cats** of the world which includes Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar and Cheetah.
 - **In India** out of the seven big cats **only five** — tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard and cheetah — are found.
- The government also approved a one-time budgetary support of **₹150 crore** for a period of five years from **2023-24 to 2027-28**.
- **Governance:** IBCA governance consists of an Assembly of Members, Standing Committee and a Secretariat with its **Head Quarter in India**.

■■■■



Society

1. Which among the following reasons can be attributed to the decline in Fertility Rate in India?

1. Decline in Infant Mortality
2. Rise in Female Literacy
3. Rising living costs

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

2. With reference to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), consider the following statements:

1. In 1973, the Dhebar Commission set up a separate category for Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs).
2. Madhya Pradesh has the largest population of PVTGs.

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)

Drop in Fertility Rate: India's fertility rate has dropped from nearly **6.2 in 1950** to just **under 2 in 2021**. It is projected to dip further to **1.29 in 2050** and **1.04 in 2100**.

Reasons for Decline in Fertility Rate in India

- **Government Policy:** Post-independence, there was a need to restrict the population. So the Family Welfare Programme was intended to convince people to have no more than two children.
 - Slowly that behaviour change started showing up.
- **Decline in Infant Mortality:** Due to various maternal and child health-related programmes and successful immunisation infant mortality declined in India substantially and small families became the norm.
- **Rise in Female Literacy:** Due to the rise of female literacy and women's participation in the workforce the career consciousness, financial returns and economic independence have increased in India which means that women are reconsidering their options of having a second child.
- **Economic Factors:** Economic factors such as **rising living costs**, the need for dual incomes to support households, and the desire for better standards of living have contributed to smaller family sizes.

2. (a)

Statement 1 is correct:

- In 1973, the **Dhebar Commission set up a separate category for Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)**.
- PVTGs are a more vulnerable group among tribal groups in India.
 - These groups have primitive traits, geographical isolation, low literacy, zero to negative population growth rate and backwardness.
 - Moreover, they are largely dependent upon hunting for food and a pre-agriculture level of technology.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- Population: The 2011 census of India had put the Vulnerable Tribal Population at 10.45 Crore in 75 communities spread across 18 States and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands,
- Odisha has the largest population of PVTGs followed by Madhya Pradesh.



MISCELLANEOUS

1. Consider the following statements with reference to Bharat Ratna.

1. It is the highest civilian award of India.
2. Its recommendations are made by the Vice President of India to the Prime Minister.
3. It carries monetary grants of 5 Lakh Rupees .

How many statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. With reference to Sangita Kalanidhi Award, consider the following statements:

1. It is considered as one of the highest awards in the field of Hindustani music.
2. The award comprises a gold medal and a birudu patra (citation).

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. With reference to the *Academy Awards*, consider the following statements:

1. These were presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.
2. These have been recognizing excellence in cinematic achievements since 1929.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. With reference to the National Archives of India, consider the following statements:

1. The National Archives of India is an attached Office under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. It was established on August 15, 1947, as a Record Department.
3. The National Archives of India is also the nodal agency for the implementation of the Public Records Act, 1993 and Public Record Rules, 1997.

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

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

5. Venice Biennale, an internationally famed event, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Football
- (b) Literature
- (c) Art
- (d) Music

6. Which among the following countries has recently announced a bill to legalize 'aid in dying'?
- (a) China
 - (b) Ukraine
 - (c) France
 - (d) India

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

In News : President Droupadi Murmu presented the Bharat Ratna Awards at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Statement 1 is correct : Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award of the country. It is awarded in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour.

Statements 2 and 3 not correct : The recommendations for Bharat Ratna are made by the Prime Minister to the President of India.

- No formal recommendations for Bharat Ratna are necessary.
- The Award does not carry any monetary grant.

2. (b)

News: Noted carnatic vocalist and Magsaysay award winner T.M. Krishna has been selected for the Sangita Kalanidhi award of the Music Academy for 2024.

Sangita Kalanidhi Award

- Considered the highest accolade in the field of **Carnatic music**, it came into existence in 1942. Prior to that, a senior musician/expert was invited to preside over the Music Academy's annual conference.
- In 1942, it was decided that the musician so invited would be conferred the title of Sangita Kalanidhi, the award comprising a **gold medal and a birudu patra (citation)**.

3. (c)

Statement 1 is correct:

- The **Academy Awards (aka Oscars)** is an annual awards ceremony honouring outstanding creative and technical achievements in the film industry.
- The awards are **presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences**, and winners are selected by the Academy's voting membership.
- The winners are awarded a **golden statuette**, officially called the '**Academy Award of Merit**'.

Statement 2 is correct:

- These have been recognizing excellence in cinematic achievements **since 1929**, covering various categories, including *Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress*, and many others.

4. (a)

Statement 1 and 2 are not correct and Statement 3 is correct.

The National Archives of India

- **Parent body:** The National Archives of India is an **attached Office under the Ministry of Culture**.
- **Established on:** 11 March 1891 at Kolkata (Calcutta) as the **Imperial Record Department**.
- **Transfer:** Following the **transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi in 1911**, the present building of the National Archives of India was constructed in **1926** which was designed by **Sir Edwin Lutyens**.
 - The transfer of all records from Calcutta to New Delhi was completed in 1937.
- **Role:** The National Archives of India is also the nodal agency for the implementation of the **Public Records Act, 1993 and Public Record Rules, 1997**.

- **Repository:** National Archives of India has at present in its repositories a collection of over **34.00 cr. pages of Public Records**, which include files, volumes, maps, bills assented to by the President of India, treaties, rare manuscripts, oriental records, private papers, etc.
- A major chunk of Oriental records is in **Sanskrit, Persian and Odia**.

5. (c) Art

Venice Biennale

- The Venice Biennale, known as “the Olympics of the art world”, is one of the biggest and most prestigious art fairs in the world, beginning in 1895, takes place every two years.
- Biennales feature **contemporary art by artists** from various countries that are usually linked by a common curatorial theme.
- The **60th edition of the Venice Biennale**, will open on April 20, 2024 in Venice, Italy.
 - The **international art exhibition** will showcase **333 artists** under curator **Adriano Pedrosa’s** central theme “**Stranieri Ovunque**” or “**Foreigners Everywhere**”.
 - Notably, **works of Indian artists and a public collective** will also be displayed at the exhibition.

6. (c)

Context: France has announced a bill to legalize “aid in dying” that will allow adults facing end-of-life illness to take lethal medication.

About

- If the bill is cleared, France will join European countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal, where euthanasia is allowed.

What is Euthanasia?

- It is the act of deliberately ending a person’s life to eliminate pain. Euthanasia is of two types - active and passive.
- Active euthanasia involves an active intervention to end a person’s life with substances or external force, such as administering a lethal injection.
- Passive euthanasia refers to withdrawing life support that is essential to keep a terminally ill person alive.

Status of euthanasia in India

- The Supreme Court in *Common Cause vs. Union of India* (2018) allowed passive euthanasia for terminally ill or permanently vegetative patients with a valid living will. However, active euthanasia remains illegal in India.

■■■■

Reports/Index

1. Report titled '*State of India Digital Economy for 2024*' sometimes was in news, released by:
 - (a) NITI Aayog
 - (b) Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR)
 - (c) Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)
 - (d) Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)
2. Consider the following:
 1. Global Wage Report
 2. State of the World Report
 3. World Social Protection Report
 4. Industrial Development Report

How many of the above reports are released by the *International Labour Organisation (ILO)*?

 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) Only three
 - (d) All four
3. With reference to the *World Happiness Report 2024*, consider the following statements:
 1. India has been ranked 126th out of more than 140 countries.
 2. Freedom from corruption is among the six variables used to measure the happiness Index.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. With reference to the '*World Air Quality Report 2023*', consider the following statements:
 1. Delhi was the world's most polluted capital city.
 2. India ranked third worst polluted country out of 134 countries trailing behind Bangladesh and Pakistan.

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. The report '*State of the Global Climate for 2023*' was released by:
 - (a) International Labour Organization (ILO)
 - (b) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
 - (c) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 - (d) World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

- 6.** Consider the following statements with reference to “Profits and Poverty: The economics of forced labour report”.
1. It is released annually by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
 2. As per a recent report, Total annual illegal profits from forced labour are highest in Europe and Central Asia.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 7.** The State of Global Climate report 2023, recently seen in the news, was released by which of the following institutions?
- (a) WEF
 - (b) WMO
 - (c) UNIPCC
 - (d) UNEP
- 8.** Consider the following statement with reference to Gender Inequality Index(GII) 2022
1. It is released by World Economic Forum
 2. A low GII value indicates low inequality between women and men.
 3. Denmark topped the index followed by India .
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 2 and 3 only
- 9.** Which among the following are the parameters of the Human Development Index (HDI)?
1. Life Expectancy
 2. Education
 3. Gross national income (GNI) per capita
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 10.** With reference to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) latest report (Period 2019-23) , consider the following statements:
1. Ukraine became the world’s biggest importer of arms.
 2. Russia remained India’s main arms supplier, accounting for 36% of its arms imports.

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. 'Democracy Report 2024', recently seen in the news, was released by which of the following?

- (a) Reporters Without Borders
- (b) Association for Democratic Reforms
- (c) Amnesty International
- (d) V-Dem Institute

12. The 'State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) 2023' recently released by which of the following institutions/bodies?

- (a) Coal Corporation of India(CCI)
- (b) Common cause
- (c) Centre for Science and Environment(CSE)
- (d) The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)

13. With reference to the State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) 2023, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. SEEI 2023 is the first ever edition of the index launched in 2023.
- 2. Some new indicators added in SEEI 2023 include non-fossil fuel-based power procurement, EE in affordable housing, measures for electrification for end-use in industries.

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. (c)

In News :

- The 'State of India Digital Economy 2024' Report was released by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).
- According to the report, India as a nation is highly digitalised, the average Indian is not.
 - It noted that nearly 48% of Indians do not access the internet and the quality of fixed line internet services does not match up to other G20 countries.
 - India's gender gap in internet connectivity is, at 10%, higher than the world average of 9%, and the rural-urban divide is at 58%, higher than the world average of 49%.
 - While the digital divide along gender is large, it is declining.

2. (b)

In News : Recently, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Institute of Human Development (IHD) together released the India Employment Report for 2024.

- Other Flagship Reports of ILO:

- **Global Wage Report;**
- World Employment and Social Outlook;
- **World Social Protection Report;**
- World of Work Report;
- The 'State of the World Report' and 'Industrial Development Report' are not released by the ILO.

3. (c)

Both the statements are correct: **World Happiness Report 2024** has been released by the **United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network**.

- It is released **annually** and takes into **account six variables** — GDP per capita, healthy life expectancy, having someone to count on, freedom to make life choices, generosity, and **freedom from corruption**.
- **India** ranked **126th same as last year**, China ranked 60th, Nepal at 93, Pakistan at 108, Myanmar at 118, Sri Lanka at 128 and Bangladesh at 129th spots.

4. (c)

Context: **World Air Quality Report 2023**, released by IQAir has reported **Delhi as World's most polluted capital city**.

Key Highlights

- India ranked **third worst polluted country** out of 134 countries trailing behind Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- **Bihar's Begusarai** topped the list as the "**most polluted metropolitan area** in 2023.
- Over 66% of cities have PM2.5, five times higher than WHO standards.
- **96% of India's population reside** in areas where air quality exceeds WHO guidelines by seven times.

PM 2.5

- PM stands for particulate matter, and 2.5 represents its size—2.5 microns like 1/30th the diameter of a single strand of hair.
- These particles are small enough to enter different organ systems and bloodstream causing oxidative stress (means fast rate of damage to body cells then their repairing capacity).
- Oxidative stress in the body causes various illnesses like stroke, Parkinson's disease and cancers.

5. (d)

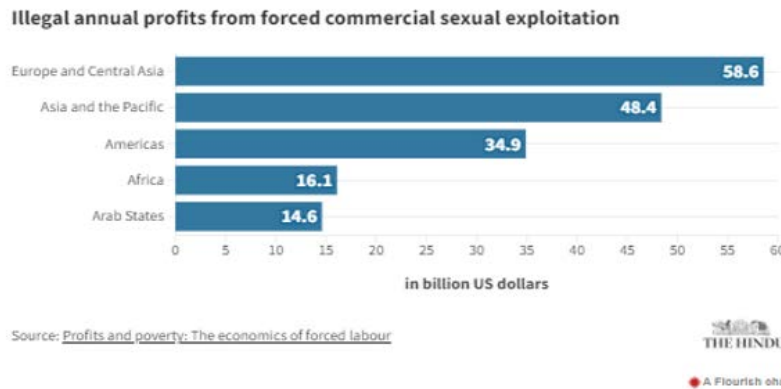
News : Recently, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) released the '**State of the Global Climate' for 2023**.

- It provides a comprehensive overview of the state of the global climate and highlights the urgent need for climate action.

6. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct : The International Labour Organization (ILO) released a report titled "Profits and Poverty: The economics of forced labour".

- **People engaged in forced labour:** There were 27.6 million people engaged in forced labour on any given day in 2021. This figure translates to 3.5 people for every thousand people in the world.



- **Amount of illegal profits:** Forced labour in the private economy **generates US\$236 billion** in illegal profits per year.

Statement 2 is correct : Total annual illegal profits from forced labour are **highest in Europe and Central Asia (US\$84 billion)**, followed by Asia and the Pacific (US\$62 billion), the Americas (US\$52 billion), Africa (US\$20 billion), and the Arab States (US\$18 billion).

- **Sector wise :** **Forced commercial sexual exploitation** accounts for more than **two-thirds (73 per cent)** of the **total illegal profits**, despite accounting for only 27 per cent of the total number of victims in privately imposed labour.

7. (b)

WMO

The State of Global Climate report 2023

- The State of Global Climate report is released by the **World Meteorological Organization**.
- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is a **specialized agency of the United Nations** responsible for promoting international cooperation on atmospheric science, climatology, hydrology, and geophysics.

8. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Gender Inequality Index 2022 has been released by UNDP in their Human Development Report 2023/2024.

Statement 2 is correct: GII is a composite metric of gender inequality using three dimensions:

- reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market.

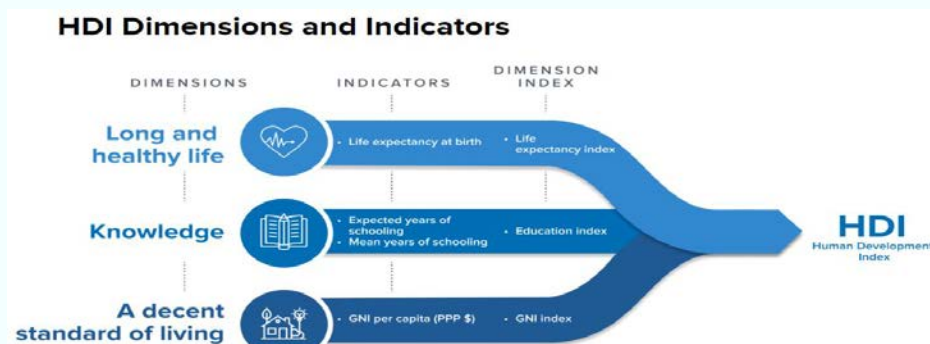
- A low GII value indicates low inequality between women and men, and vice-versa.

Statement 3 is not correct: Denmark topped the index followed by Norway, Switzerland and Sweden.

- India has registered a significant jump of 14 ranks in Gender Inequality Index 2022.
- It ranked 108 out of 166 countries with a score of 0.437 in GII 2022.

9. (d)

The HDI is a composite index computed based on three parameters – **life expectancy, education, and gross national income (GNI) per capita**.



10. (b)

News: India was the world's top arms importer for the period 2019-23 with imports having gone up by 4.7% compared to the period 2014-18, according to the Swedish think tank, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

- **Russia remained India's main arms supplier**, accounting for 36% of its arms imports.

Global Scenario

- Nine of the 10 biggest arms importers in 2019–23, including the top 3 of India, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, were in Asia and Oceania or the Middle East.
- **Ukraine** became the **fourth biggest arms importer** globally.
- Arms exports of the world's largest supplier, U.S. grew by 17% between 2014–18 and 2019–23.
- France emerged as the world's second largest arms supplier as its exports grew by 47%.

11. (d)

News: According to the 'Democracy Report 2024', India is 'one of the worst autocratisers'.

About

- The report is released by the Gothenburg-based **V-Dem Institute** which tracks democratic freedoms worldwide.
- The report categorises countries into four regime types based on their score in the Liberal Democratic Index (LDI): Liberal Democracy, Electoral Democracy, Electoral Autocracy, and Closed Autocracy.

Key Findings

- According to the report, 71% of the world's population live in autocracies, an increase from 48% ten years ago.
- The level of democracy enjoyed by the "average person in the world is down to 1985-levels", with the sharpest decline occurring in Eastern Europe, and South and Central Asia.

12. (d)

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)

About the State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) 2023:

- The SEEI activity was initiated by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), in association with Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE).
- **Aim:** To evaluate the annual progress of EE implementation in the states.
 - The State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) **identifies and addresses gaps** concerning state-level energy efficiency policies, programmes, and investments.

13. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct and Statement 2 is correct.

About the State Energy Efficiency Index (SEEI) 2023:

- The SEEI activity was initiated by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), in association with Alliance for an Energy Efficient Economy (AEEE).
 - **SEEI 2023 is the fifth edition of the index** after the successful execution of State Energy Efficiency Preparedness Index 2018, SEEI 2019, SEEI 2020 and SEEI 2021-22.
- **Framework**









Sectors									
Categories									
Policy	Cross-sector	Buildings	Industries	Municipal Services	Transport	Agriculture	DISCOM	Total	
Finance									
Institutional Capacity									
Adoption of EE Measures									
Energy Savings									
	Programme-specific Indicators								
	Common Indicators								
Sector weights	15	22	17	11	16	8	11	100	
Indicator Weights	Common	15	9	6	2	7	3	6	48
	Programme		13	11	9	9	5	5	52

Figure 2: Framework for SEEI 2023

- Some new indicators added in SEEI 2023 include non-fossil fuel-based power procurement, EE in affordable housing, measures for electrification for end-use in industries and electric cooking in buildings, and actions for reducing the gap between average cost of supply (ACS) and average realisable revenue (ARR) of the utilities.
- Key outcomes



Figure 1: Performance of states and UTs under SEEI 2023

- In SEEI 2023, the states and UTs are categorised as 'Front runner' (≥ 60), 'Achiever' (50-59.75), 'Contender' (30-49.75), and 'Aspirant' (< 30) based on their total scores.
- The top-performing states in each group are *Karnataka (Group 1)*, *Andhra Pradesh (Group 2)*, *Assam (Group 3)*, and *Chandigarh (Group 4)*.
- The most substantial decline in score in SEEI 2023 has been observed in Rajasthan, with a decrease of 46.5 points, primarily attributed to lack of reported data.

Disaster

1. With reference to the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, consider the following statements:

1. It is a multi-stakeholder platform constituted by the Government of India in 2013.
2. One of the functions is to review the National Disaster Management Policy.

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. (c)

Statement 1 is correct. National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction is a multi-stakeholder platform constituted by the Government of India in 2013 to facilitate dialogue, sharing experiences, views, ideas, action-oriented research & explore opportunities in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

Statement 2 is correct

Functions of National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

- To **review the progress** made in the field of disaster management from time to time.
- To **appreciate** the extent and manner in which the **Disaster Management Policy has been implemented** by the Central and State Governments, and other concerned agencies, and to **give appropriate advice in the matter**.
- To **advise on coordination** between the Central and State Governments/UT Administrations, local self-governments and civil society organizations for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- To **advise suo-moto or on a reference** made by the Central Government or any other State Government or a Union territory Administration on any question pertaining to disaster management.
- To **review the National Disaster Management Policy**.



Agriculture

1. '*Mushk budji Rice*' is the indigenous aromatic rice variety from which of the following regions?
 - (a) Assam
 - (b) Madhya Pradesh
 - (c) Uttar Pradesh
 - (d) Kashmir
2. With reference to 'palm oil' consider the following statements:
 1. The palm oil tree is native to Southeast Asia.
 2. The palm oil can be used to produce biodiesel.
 3. Indonesia is currently India's top supplier of palm oil.Which of the given above statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)
Mushk budji Rice is the indigenous aromatic rice variety from Kashmir.
 - Mushk budji Rice of Anantnag District in Jammu and Kashmir received the Geographical Indication Tag in 2023.
2. (b)
Statement 1 is not correct: Oil palm trees are native to Africa but were brought to South-East Asia just over 100 years ago as an ornamental tree crop.
 - **Statement 2 is correct:** The palm oil can be used to produce biodiesel. The Indonesian government has, since 2020, made 30% blending of diesel with palm oil mandatory as part of a plan to slash fossil fuel imports.
 - **Statement 3 is not correct:** Indonesia has been India's top supplier of palm oil, though it was overtaken by Malaysia in 2021-22.

