

DAILY MCQs COMPILATION

with

EXPLANATIONS

May 2023

NEXT IAS



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HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. Consider the following festival events:

1. Poora Vilambharam - A custom where the elephant pushes open the temple gates.
2. Kodyettam - Custom of Flag Hoisting
3. Sample Vedikettu - The fireworks show.
4. Madathil varavu - Participation of more than 200 artists.

These events are performed during which of the following festivals in India?

- (a) Chettikulangara Kumbha Bharani
- (b) Thrissur Pooram
- (c) Tyagaraja Aradhana
- (d) Srivari Brahmotsavam

2. Consider the following statements:

1. Naga and Kuki communities account for about 90% of the population in Manipur.
2. The Meiti community are largely concentrated in Imphal Valley and are mostly Hindus.

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 are the reasons for the Meitei community's Demand of Scheduled Tribes status?

1. The community is not covered under Scheduled Castes (SC) or Other Backward Classes (OBC) reservation.
2. Overall reduction in the community's population in the state.
3. Claim of marginalization of the community in their ancestral land.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

4. With reference to the Percussion Instruments, consider the following statements:

1. They require the use of methods like striking, rubbing, shaking or friction to play them.
2. Two main types of them are pitched and unpitched percussion instruments.
3. Unpitched percussion instruments have specific notes and pitches.

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. He was a Hindu saint, philosopher, poet, and a devotee of Lord Ram and Hanuman. He wrote the Maruti Stotra. Which among the following saints is described here?

- (a) Tulsidas
- (b) Samarth Ramdas
- (c) Kabir
- (d) Tukaram

6. Consider the following pairs

	Painting style	State
1.	Gond	Madhya Pradesh
2.	Pattachitra	Maharashtra
3.	Madhubani	Bihar
4.	Warli	Odisha

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

7. With reference to the Santiniketan, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is located in the Birbhum district in West Bengal.
- 2. It was originally established by Rabindranath Tagore.
- 3. It is surrounded by the rivers, the Ajay and the Kopai.

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

8. Which of the following best describes the term 'khatduh' belonging to the state of Meghalaya?

- (a) The youngest daughter of the tribal matrilineal system of Khasis, Jaintias and Garos.
- (b) The "custodian" of the land & the clan's property.
- (c) Any Khasi woman who marries a non-Khasi.
- (d) Both (a) and (b)

9. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Under the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972, the Archaeological Survey of India can retrieve surrendered as well as illegally exported antiquities.
- 2. Kohinoor diamond was taken by the British after the signing of the Treaty of Lahore.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

10. Consider the following statements:

- 1. The Copyright Act, 1957 provides copyright protection in India.
- 2. India is a signatory to the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, 1886.

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. Consider the following statements, with reference to the Channapatna toys craft:

- 1. The craft was used to create the mascot of Dancing Girl of Mohenjodaro.
- 2. It is protected as a Geographical Indication (GI).
- 3. Channapatna is known as the Gombegala Ooru (toy- town) of Kerala.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. With reference to Dancing Girl of Mohenjodaro, consider the following statements:

1. The Dancing Girl was discovered in 1926, by British archaeologist Ernest McKay.
2. There is enough evidence to claim that the woman depicted was a dancer.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

13. With reference to the decennial Census of India, consider the following statements:

1. The census is a Union subject under Article 246 of the India Constitution.
2. The responsibility of conducting the decadal census rests with the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
3. The Census Act was enacted in 1951 to provide a plan for conducting population census.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

14. Consider the following pairs:

Traditional Toys	State
1. Channapatna	Karnataka
2. Etikoppaka	Andhra Pradesh
3. Kondapalli	Assam

How many pairs given above are **incorrectly** matched?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1: (b)

Thrissur Pooram

About:

- Thrissur Pooram is celebrated in the Malayalam month of Medam (April-May).
- This festival is considered the “mother of all poorams”.
- It is held in the Thekkinkadu Maidanam in Thrissur

Celebrations:

○ Obeisance to the Shiva:

- The Pooram is centered on the Vadakkunnathan Temple, with all these temples sending their processions to **pay obeisance to the Shiva**, the presiding deity.
- The **Thampuran** is believed to have chalked out the program and the main events of the Thrissur Pooram festival.

○ Flag Hoisting:

- The pooram officially begins from the event of flag hoisting.
- The flag hoisting ceremony (**Kodiyettam**) begins seven days before Thrissur Pooram.

- All the participating temples of Thrissur Pooram are present for the ceremony, and there is a light fireworks to announce the commencement of the festival.
- **Poora Vilambharam:**
 - Poora Vilambharam is a custom where the elephant pushes open the south entrance gate of the Vadakkunnathan Temple, which hosts the Thrissur Pooram, with the idol of 'Neithilakkavilamma' atop of it.
- **Madathil varavu:**
 - One of the major events in Thrissur Pooram is "**Madathil varavu**", a **panchavadhyam melam**, participating more than **200 artists**, with instruments such as **thimila, madharam, trumpet, cymbal and edakka**.
- **Sample Vedikettu - the fireworks show:**
 - On the fourth day after flag hoisting, Thiruvambady and Paramakkavu Devaswoms present a one-hour-long firework show known as the Sample Vedikettu.

2. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The state's geography is divided between a **central valley that accounts for about 10% of the landmass of Manipur and is home primarily to the Meitei and Meitei Pangals who constitute roughly 64.6% of the state's population.**

- The remaining 90% of the geographical area comprises hills, surrounding the valley, that are home to the recognised tribes, about 35.4% of the population.
- Manipur's two major tribal communities – Naga and Kuki – live in the hill districts, which account for about **90% of the state's area.**

Statement 2 is correct: The Meiteis are largely concentrated in the **Imphal Valley.**

They are currently categorized as **OBCs or SCs**, the Meitei people dominate in more than half the State's Assembly constituencies. A **majority of them identify as Hindu** while about 8% are Muslim.

3. (b)

Manipur has two major tribal communities – Naga and Kuki – live in the hill districts, which account for about **90% of the state's area.** The Meiteis account for roughly 64.6% of the state's population and are largely **concentrated in the Imphal Valley.** They are currently **categorized as OBCs or SCs**, the Meitei people dominate in more than half the State's Assembly constituencies. **Hence, it is not the reason for the demand.**

Demand of Meitei community for ST status

Loss of identity:

- In their plea before the High Court, the petitioners argued that the Meitei community was recognised as a tribe before the **merger of the princely state of Manipur with the Union of India in 1949.**
- They also claim that they **lost their identity** as a tribe after the merger.

Victimization of the community & reduction in population:

- In various pleas to the state and central governments, the STDCM has stated that as a result of being left out of the ST list, "**the community has been victimized** without any constitutional safeguards to date.
- Their population which was 59% of the total population of Manipur in 1951 has now been reduced to 44% as per 2011 Census data". Hence option 2 is correct.

Preserving the community & land rights:

- It was argued in court that the demand for ST status arose from the **need to "preserve" the community**, and "**save the ancestral land, tradition, culture and language**" of the Meiteis.
 - The Meitei/Meetei have been gradually marginalised in their ancestral land. **Hence option 3 is correct.**

4. (a)

Statement 1 and 2 are correct: Percussion instruments are the **oldest man-made musical instruments** and produce music based upon percussion. The family of percussion musical instruments includes those which require the use of **methods like striking, rubbing, shaking or friction for playing them.**

- Percussion instruments are of two main types: **pitched and unpitched percussion** instruments.

Statement 3 is not correct: Pitched percussion have **specific notes and pitches** while the latter lacks the identified pitch.

5. (b)

Samarth Ramdas (1608 – 1681), also known as **Sant Ramdas or Ramdas Swami**, was a Hindu saint, philosopher, poet, writer and spiritual master.

- He was a devotee of **Lord Ram and Hanuman**, he toured the entire Indian subcontinent for 12 years, during which he came across various spiritual teachers and diverse religious traditions.
- His paean to Lord Hanuman, Maruti Stotra, is still commonly recited by school children as well as wrestlers akhadas across Maharashtra.

6. (b)

In News: MyGov in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture launched 'YUVA PRATIBHA – Painting Talent Hunt' under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

- **Pair 1 is correctly matched: Gond painting: Gonds of Madhya Pradesh** have a rich tradition with their chiefs ruling over Central India. They worshipped nature. Paintings of Gonds of Mandla and its surrounding regions have recently been transformed into a colourful depiction of animals, humans, and flora.
- **Pair 2 is not correctly matched: The Pattachitra of Odisha** depicts stories from the famous poem, the Geet Govind, and devotional stanzas by ancient poets, singers and writers.
- **Pair 3 is correctly matched: Madhubani art** is from the district of the same name in **Bihar** and is now well-known all over the world.
- **Pair 4 is not correctly matched: Warli painting:** The Warli community inhabits the west coast of Northern **Maharashtra** around the north Sahyadri range with a large concentration in the district of Thane.

7. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Santiniketan, popularly known today as a university town, is **located in the Birbhum district in West Bengal.**

Statement 2 is not correct: It was originally an ashram built by **Debendranath Tagore**, where anyone, irrespective of caste and creed, could come and spend time meditating on the one Supreme God. **Debendranath, father of the Poet, Rabindranath**, was also known as Maharshi (which means one who is both saint and sage) and was a leading figure of the Indian Renaissance.

Statement 3 is correct: The area is flanked on two sides by the **rivers, the Ajay and the Kopai.**

8. (d)

Matriliny in Meghalaya

Communities:

- The Khasis, numbering about 1.39 lakh, are one of the three indigenous matrilineal communities in the northeastern State. The other two are Garos and Jaintias.

What constitutes Matriliny?

- In this system, lineage and descent are traced through the mother's clan, like
 - Children take the mother's surname,
 - The husband moves into his wife's house, and
 - The **youngest daughter (khatduh)** of the family is bequeathed the full share of the ancestral — or the clan's — property. **Hence option (a) and (b) are correct.**

- **The khatduh becomes the “custodian” of the land.**
 - She assumes all responsibility associated with the land, including taking care of aged parents, unmarried or destitute siblings.

Khasi marrying non-Khasi person:

- It is mandatory for any Khasi woman who marries a non-Khasi to obtain the Khasi tribe certificate for applying for the ST certificate for her children.

9. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Under the **Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972**, the Archaeological Survey of India can retrieve **only such antiquities that have been illegally exported out of the country.**

Statement 2 is correct: Kohinoor was surrendered by Maharaja Dalip Singh **as part of the 1849 Lahore treaty with the British.**

10. (c)

Both Statement 1 and 2 are correct: **The Copyright Act, 1957** provides copyright protection in India.

- India follows a **hybrid model of exception** in which **fair dealing with copyrighted work** is exempted for some specific purposes **under Section 52(1)(a) of the Copyright Act 1957.** India also has a long list of enumerated exceptions.
- India being a **signatory to the Berne Convention** for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, 1886, is obligated to **give equal protection** to the works originating not only in India but also outside India in any of the contracting states.

11. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: On the occasion of **International Museum Day** PM Modi unveiled the **Expos mascot – a “contemporised” version of the famous Dancing Girl of Mohenjodaro.** The traditional craft of **Channapatna toys** was used to create this mascot.

Statement 2 is correct: Channapatna toys are a particular **form of wooden toys and dolls** that are manufactured in the **town of Channapatna in the Ramanagara district of Karnataka.**

- This traditional craft is protected as a **Geographical Indication (GI).**

Statement 3 is not correct: As a result of the popularity of these toys, Channapatna is known as the **Gombegala Ooru (toy- town) of Karnataka.**

- Traditionally, the work involved lacquering the wood of the *Wrightia tinctoria* tree, colloquially called **Aale mara (ivory-wood).**

12. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Dancing Girl was **discovered in 1926**, by British archaeologist **Ernest McKay** in a ruined house in the ‘ninth lane’ of Mohenjodaro’s citadel.

- Even though Mohenjodaro and Harappa became part of Pakistani territory after the Partition, the **Dancing Girl remained in India** as part of an agreement.
- Today, the bronze figurine sits in the **National Museum of India** as an artifact, often referred to as its “star object”.

Statement 2 is not correct: John Marshall, Director-General of the ASI from 1902 to 1928 who oversaw the initial excavations in Harappa and Mohenjodaro, described the figurine as “a young girl, her hand on her hip in a half-impudent posture, and legs slightly forward as she **beats time to the music with her legs and feet**”.

As Marshall’s description suggests, it is the pose that the figurine strikes that has led historians to believe that the **woman depicted was a dancer. However, there is no other evidence to support this claim.**



13. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The census is a Union subject under Article 246 of India Constitution.

Statement 2 is not correct: The responsibility of conducting the decadal census rests with the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

Statement 3 is not correct: Census organization was set up on an ad-hoc basis for each census till the year 1951 census. The Census Act was enacted in 1948 to provide a plan for conducting population census along with the duties and responsibilities of census officers.

14. (a)

Channapatna toy: Channapatna town is in the Ramanagara District in **Karnataka** and is popularly known as 'Gombegala Nagara' (City of Toys) or the 'Toy Land of **Karnataka**'.

- **Etikoppaka Toys:** Etikoppaka is a small village located on the banks of the river Varaha in the Visakhapatnam district of **Andhra Pradesh**.
 - Made in the Etikoppaka region of Andhra Pradesh, these toys are made with lacquer color and are traditionally known as Etikoppaka toys or Etikoppaka Bommalu. The village is very famous for its toys made of wood.
- **Kondapalli Toys:** Kondapalli toys - cultural icons of **Andhra Pradesh** - are one of the most sold handicrafts in India and abroad, across online, wholesale, and retail platforms.

ECONOMY

1. Consider the following statements, with reference to the Foreign Exchange Management Act, of 1999:

1. It was enacted to replace the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, of 1973.
2. It lays down provisions for current account and capital account transactions.
3. It applies to all branches, offices, and agencies outside India controlled by a person resident in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. Consider the following statements:

1. All India Radio is the largest radio network in the world and has headquarters in New Delhi.
2. Analog terrestrial radio broadcast in India is carried out only in Frequency Modulation (FM) (88–108 MHz).

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 scheme, “Vivad se Vishwas I – Relief to MSMEs”, Consider the following statements:

1. 50% of the forfeited amount deducted during the COVID-19 pandemic will be returned to MSMEs.
2. Government e-Marketplace (GeM) will be the implementing agency of the scheme.

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. Which of the following steps can be taken to reap demographic dividend in India:

1. Increasing women’s participation in the workforce.
2. Investing more in children and adolescents, particularly in nutrition and learning during early childhood.
3. A greater focus on skilling and Reskilling.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5. Which of the following characteristics can be attributed with the Reserve Currency?

1. Highly Stable Currency
2. Low Liquidity
3. Wide Acceptance in the Global Market
4. Facilitate International Transactions

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

6. Consider the following statements with reference to the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC).
1. It is the largest power-generating company in India.
 2. It was conferred the status of Maharatna Company in 1997.
 3. It marked its first overseas capacity addition, beginning with Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant (MSTPP) in Bhutan.
- 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
7. With reference to the Navratna Status to PSUs, Consider the following statements:
1. When a company achieves Navratna status, it gets enhanced financial and operational freedom.
 2. It empowers it to invest up to Rs 1,000 crore or 15% of their net worth on a single project without seeking government approval.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Consider the following statement with reference to Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project (KMTTP):
1. It is a massive connectivity project to connect the Haldia port to Mizoram through Myanmar.
 2. The project will reduce the need to transport goods through the narrow Siliguri corridor.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
9. With reference to Natural Gas, consider the following statements:
1. Natural gas is mainly methane and other higher alkanes, carbon dioxide, nitrogen etc.
 2. Currently, Natural gas makes up only about 6% of the nation's overall energy mix.
- 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 assets are included in the level of India's foreign exchange reserves?
1. Gold
 2. Special Drawing Rights (SDRs)
 3. Foreign Currency Assets (FCA)
- 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
11. With reference to the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), consider the following statements:
1. It is a non-profit initiative by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
 2. It is based on an open-sourced methodology independent of any specific platform.
 3. With ONDC, consumers can discover any seller, product or service by using any compatible application or platform.

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

12. With reference to the Goods and Services Tax (GST), consider the following statements:

1. It is a comprehensive, multistage, destination-based tax.
2. The GST Council headed by the Prime Minister is the governing and key decision-making body for GST.

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. Pratima Murthy Committee has been recently constituted by which of the following bodies?

- (a) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
(b) Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI)
(c) National Health Authority (NHA)
(d) The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)

14. Which of the following inputs are required to do a transaction via Aadhaar-enabled Payment System (AePS)?

1. Aadhaar Number
2. One Time Password
3. Fingerprint captured during enrollment.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

15. Consider the following statements regarding the Pension Sector in India:

1. Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is the regulatory body for overall supervision and regulation of pensions in India.
2. PFRDA comes under the ambit of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
3. In 2009, the National Pension Scheme was extended to all the citizens of the country in the age group of 18-70 years, including the unorganised sector workers.

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

16. A report titled 'India's Booming Gig and Platform Economy' was recently released by which of the following bodies?

- (a) Ministry of Commerce and industry (b) World Bank
(c) World Economic Forum (d) NITI Aayog

17. The Sapre committee, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Center-state relations (b) Tax Reforms in India
(c) Agricultural policy (d) None of the above

18. Consider the following statements:

1. The Rs 2000 notes were introduced primarily with the objective of meeting the currency requirement of the economy.

2. The Clean Note Policy seeks to give the public good-quality currency notes and coins with better security features.

3. The Rs 2000 notes will not continue as legal tender anymore.

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

19. With reference to the Arsenic, consider the following statements:

1. It is a natural component of the earth's crust found only on land in the environment.
2. It has been associated with cardiovascular disease and diabetes.
3. It is one of WHO's 10 chemicals of major public health concern.

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

20. With reference to the Human PanGenome Project, consider the following statements:

1. It is a linear sequencing of the genome.
2. Genomes from many populations are not a part of the project.

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. With reference to Smart Cities Mission, consider the following statements:

1. The Union Ministry of Urban Development is responsible for implementing the mission in collaboration with state governments.
2. It is a Central Sector Schemes.

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 Angel Tax, consider the following statements:

1. It is the tax that unlisted companies are liable to pay on the capital they raise through issue of shares.
2. Bringing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) under the purview of angel tax is to prevent the circulation of unaccounted money.
3. FDI from Singapore, Netherlands and Mauritius have been included into the exemption list as per the latest Amendment.

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

23. With reference to the US debt ceiling, consider the following statements:

1. It is the total amount the US government is allowed to borrow to finance its expenditure.
2. The debt limit was introduced in 1917, when the US entered World War I.
3. The President controls the government's expenditure in the US.

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

24. Which among the following are **not** the key components of the Union Budget currently?

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Revenue Budget | 2. Plan Expenditure |
| 3. Tax Proposals | 4. Capital Budget |

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

25. Consider the following statements:

1. Air transport, globally, accounts for just about 20 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions every year.
2. The International Civil Aviation Organisation's long-term global aspirational goal (LTAG) for international aviation of net-zero carbon emissions is by 2050.
3. The LTAG does attribute specific obligations in the form of emissions reduction goals to individual States.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1: (d)

In News: The Enforcement Directorate carried out searches at the three premises of Byju Raveendran under the provisions of the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA)**.

Statements 1,2 and 3 are correct: The Parliament has enacted the Foreign Exchange Management Act, of 1999 to replace the **Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, of 1973**.

- This Act came into force on the 1st day of June 2000.
 - It **extends** to the whole of India and also **applies to all branches, offices, and agencies** outside India owned or controlled by a person resident in India and also to any contravention thereunder committed outside India by any person to whom this Act applies.
 - The Act provides for a legislative and regulatory framework, for inbound and outbound investments, and facilitates trade and business opportunities between Indian and other countries.
 - It lays down provisions for **current account** and **capital account transactions**.
 - The Act also makes provisions for enforcement, penalties, adjudication, and appeal.

2. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: All India Radio (AIR) was established in 1936 (named as Akashvani in 1956) is the national public radio broadcaster of India and is a division of Prasar Bharati. Its headquarter is in New Delhi. It is the largest radio network in the world.

Statement 2 is not correct: Currently, Analog terrestrial radio broadcast in India is carried out in Short Wave (SW) (6–22 MHz), Medium Wave (MW) (526–1606 kHz) and Frequency Modulation (FM) (88–108 MHz).

3. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: 95 % of the **forfeited amount** relating to performance security, bid security and liquidated damages forfeited/ deducted during the COVID-19 pandemic will be returned to MSMEs.

Statement 2 is correct: **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)** has developed a dedicated web-page for implementation of this scheme. Eligible claims shall be processed only through GeM.

4. (d)

- Countries like Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea have already shown us how demographic dividend can be reaped to achieve incredible economic growth by:
 - **Increasing women's participation in the workforce.** As of 2019, 20.3% of women were working or looking for work, down from 34.1% in 2003-04.
 - **Investing more in children and adolescents**, particularly in nutrition and learning during early childhood.
 - A greater focus needs to be on transitioning from secondary education to **universal skilling** and entrepreneurship, as done in South Korea.
 - Health investments - Evidence suggests that better health facilitates improved economic production.
 - Making reproductive healthcare services accessible on a rights-based approach. We need to provide universal access to high-quality primary healthcare.
- India needs to address the diversity between States. While India is a young country, the status and pace of population ageing vary among States. Southern States, which are advanced in demographic transition, already have a higher percentage of older people. A new federal approach to governance reforms for demographic dividend will need to be put in place for policy coordination between States on various emerging population issues such as migration, ageing, skilling, female workforce participation and urbanization.

5. (c)

Reserve currencies are **foreign currencies held by central banks** and other monetary authorities **to facilitate international transactions, stabilize exchange rates, and bolster financial confidence.**

These currencies are typically characterized by their **stability, liquidity, and wide acceptance in global markets**, which make them attractive for holding and conducting international transactions.

A reserve currency is also used by central banks to prepare for **international debt obligations and to influence their domestic exchange rate.**

6. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: NTPC is **India's largest power utility** with an installed capacity of 72,304 MW (including JVs), and plans to become a 130 GW company by 2032.

Statements 2 and 3 are not correct: NTPC has marked its **first overseas capacity** addition with the commissioning of the first unit of Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant in **Bangladesh**. NTPC has made forays into hydro power, renewable energy, coal mining, power trading, energy services, etc.

- **In 2010**, NTPC was granted the coveted status of '**Maharatna Company**' by the Government of India to make it a global giant.

7. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: When a company achieves Navratna status, it gets enhanced financial and operational freedom.

Statement 2 is correct: It empowers it to invest up to Rs 1,000 crore or 15% of their net worth on a single project without seeking government approval.

8. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: It is a massive connectivity project to connect the Haldia port (West Bengal) to Mizoram through Myanmar.

Statement 2 is correct: This project will reduce distance from Kolkata to Sittwe by approximately 1,328 km and will reduce the need to transport goods through the narrow Siliguri corridor, also known as Chicken's Neck.

9. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Natural gas is mainly methane and other higher alkanes, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and hydrogen sulphide.

Statement 2 is correct: Currently, Natural gas makes up 6% of the nation's overall energy mix.

10. (d)

In News: The Reserve Bank's gold reserves increased by 34.22 tonnes year-on-year to reach 794.64 tonnes in March-end 2023.

- Foreign exchange reserves are an important component of the balance of payments and an essential element in the analysis of an economy's external position. The level of India's foreign exchange reserves comprising **foreign currency assets (FCA), gold, SDRs and reserve tranche position (RTP)** in the IMF.

11. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) is a non-profit initiative of the **Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, Ministry of Commerce.

Statement 2 is correct: Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) is an initiative aiming at **promoting open networks for all aspects** of exchange of goods and services over digital or electronic networks.

- ONDC is to be based on **open-sourced methodology**, using open specifications and open network protocols independent of any specific platform.

Statement 3 is correct: ONDC is **expected to make e-Commerce more inclusive** and accessible for consumers. Consumers can potentially discover any seller, product or service by using any compatible application or platform, thus increasing freedom of choice for consumers.

12. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Goods and Services Tax is an **indirect tax** used in India on the **supply of goods and services**. It is a destination based tax.

- It is a **value-added tax** levied on most goods and services sold for domestic consumption.
- It was **launched in India in 2017** as a comprehensive indirect tax for the entire country.

Statement 2 is not correct: The GST Council headed by the **Union Finance Minister** is the governing and key decision-making body for GST.

13. (b)

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) has constituted a **five-member expert committee** comprising medical experts and insurers for advice on matters related to **mental health and insurance**.

- The panel, with a **two-year tenure**, comes in the backdrop of mental health being identified as an important area requiring attention for insurance coverage.
- The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) **Director Pratima Murthy will chair the committee**.

14. (c)

It is a bank-led model which allows online financial transactions at Point-of-Sale (PoS) and Micro ATMs through the business correspondent of any bank using Aadhaar authentication.

- It is created by National Payments Corporation of India.
- The **only inputs required** for a customer to do a transaction under this scenario are:-
 - Bank Name
 - Aadhaar Number
 - Fingerprint captured during enrollment.
- The model removes the need for OTPs, bank account details, and other financial details.

15. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is the regulatory body for overall supervision and regulation of pensions in India.

Statement 2 is not correct: It operates under the jurisdiction of the **Union Ministry of Finance**.

Statement 3 is correct: The NPS was introduced in 2004, the primary pension system for government employees.

- NPS for government employees is a defined contribution plan with co-contribution from the government. The value of the pension corpus is marked-to-market, and accordingly, the rate of return is market determined.
- **In 2009, NPS was extended to all the citizens of the country in the age group of 18-70 years, including the unorganised sector workers (on a voluntary basis).**

16. (d)

'India's Booming Gig and Platform Economy':

- Recently, a report was released by **NITI Aayog** titled **'India's Booming Gig and Platform Economy'** which provides insights into the possibilities of the **Gig sector**, as well as a road map for further research and analysis.
 - The report estimates that 77 lakh workers were **engaged in the gig economy** in 2020–21.
- **Definition of Gig worker:**
 - The report 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.
- **Job generation potential:**
 - India's gig workforce, estimated to be at 77 lakh in 2020-21, is expected to go up to 2.35 crore by 2029-30.
 - It even goes on to term platform labour as the **"Fourth Industrial Revolution"**.

17. (d)

The Supreme Court made public the report of the court-appointed expert panel in the Hindenburg-Adani row case. **Justice A.M. Sapre committee** is a six-member expert committee constituted by the Supreme Court in the **Hindenburg-Adani allegations** case and headed by former Supreme Court judge, Justice A.M. Sapre.

- It gave the Supreme Court a detailed assessment of the situation which could have led to volatility in the securities market due to the Hindenburg-Adani row.

18. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Rs 2000 note was introduced in **November 2016 under Section 24(1) of The RBI Act, 1934**, primarily with the objective of meeting the currency requirement of the economy after the legal tender **status of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 notes was withdrawn**.

Statement 2 is correct: The 'Clean Note Policy' of the Reserve Bank of India, it has been decided to withdraw the Rs 2000 denomination banknotes from circulation.

- The Clean Note Policy seeks to give the **public good-quality currency notes and coins with better security features**, while soiled notes are withdrawn out of circulation.

Statement 3 is not correct: The notes will continue as **legal tender**. The RBI has advised banks to **stop issuing Rs 2,000 denomination** banknotes with immediate effect and all Rs 2,000 currency notes **must be exchanged before September 30, 2023**.

19. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Arsenic is a natural component of the **earth's crust** and is widely distributed throughout the **environment in the air, water, and land**.

- It is highly toxic in its inorganic form.
- It is naturally present at high levels in the groundwater of several countries.

- In India, the states of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, and Chhattisgarh are reported to be most affected by arsenic contamination of groundwater above the permissible level.

Statement 2 is correct: Contaminated water used for drinking, food preparation, and irrigation of food crops poses the greatest threat to **public health from arsenic**.

- Long-term exposure to arsenic from drinking water and food can **cause cancer and skin lesions**.
- It has also been associated with **cardiovascular disease and diabetes**.

Statement 3 is correct: Arsenic is one of WHO's 10 chemicals of major public health concern.

- WHO's work to reduce arsenic exposure includes setting guideline values, reviewing evidence, and providing risk management recommendations.
- WHO publishes a guideline value for arsenic in its Guidelines for drinking-water quality.

20. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Unlike the earlier reference genome, which is a linear sequence, the **pangenome is a graph**.

Statement 2 is correct: The pangenome is built using genomes of **19 men and 28 women** mainly from **Africa but also from the Caribbean, Americas, East Asia, and Europe**.

- Although the project is a leap forward, genomes from many populations are still not a part of it. For example, genomes from more people from **Africa, the Indian subcontinent, indigenous groups in Asia and Oceania, and West Asian regions** are not represented in the current version of the pangenome map.

21. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: It was launched in **2015**, aimed at providing **core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment and a decent quality of life** to their citizens through the application of '**smart solutions**'.

- **The Union Ministry of Urban Development** is responsible for implementing the mission in collaboration with state governments.

Statement 2 is not correct: 100 cities have been selected to be developed as Smart Cities through a two-stage competition.

- The Mission is operated as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**.

22. (a)

Statement 1 and 2 are correct:

- Angel Tax is the tax that unlisted companies (startups) are liable to pay on the capital they raise through issue of shares.
 - It will be counted as income for the start-up and be subject to income tax under the head 'Income from other Sources' for the relevant financial year.
 - Angel tax **was first introduced in 2012** to deter the generation and use of unaccounted money through the subscription of shares of a closely held company at a value that is higher than the fair market value of the firm's shares.
- **The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)** had proposed to also **include foreign investors in the ambit**, meaning that when a start-up raises funding from a foreign investor, that too will now be counted as income and be taxable.
 - This move aligns with the Government's initial intention of bringing FDI under the purview of angel tax to **prevent the circulation of unaccounted money**.

Statement 3 is not correct: Countries like Singapore, Netherlands and Mauritius, which constitute the major chunk of foreign direct investment in India, **have not been included in the exemption list**.

23. (a)

Statement 1 and 2 are correct: What is the US debt ceiling?

- The debt ceiling, or debt limit, is the **total amount the US government is allowed to borrow to finance its expenditure**, such as paying salaries and welfare allowances.
 - The debt limit was **introduced in 1917**, when the US entered World War I.
- Constitutionally, Congress controls the government's expenditure. The debt ceiling was introduced in order to make it easier for the executive to operate without having to turn to Congress every time it wanted to spend — it allowed the government to borrow as required as long as it kept under the debt limit approved by Congress. Hence, Statement 3 is not correct.
- Currently, this limit is at **\$31.4 trillion. The Republicans**, who have a majority in the House, are refusing to raise it unless the Democrat-run government agrees to their demands, which include a **significant cut in spending**.

24. (b)

The Union Budget includes the following key components:

- **Revenue Budget:** This section details the government's **estimated revenue from various sources such as taxes, non-tax revenues and capital receipts**. It shows how much money the government plans to earn from taxes, non-tax revenues, and other sources.
- **Capital Budget:** This section details the government's **proposed spending on various capital projects such as infrastructure development, capital investment in public sector enterprises, and other long-term investments**. It shows how much money the government plans to spend on long-term projects like building new roads, bridges, and airports.
- **Fiscal Deficit:** The budget also includes an estimate of the fiscal deficit, which is the **difference between the government's total expenditure and its total revenue**. The government **aims to reduce the fiscal deficit** to maintain financial stability.
- **Tax Proposals:** The budget also includes proposals for **changes in tax laws and tax rates**, which can have a significant impact on businesses and individuals.
- The Plan and Non-Plan classification were **done away with from fiscal 2017-18**. A broad understanding over the years has been that **Plan expenditures are good and Non-Plan expenditures are bad** resulting in skewed allocations in the Budget. This needed to be corrected to give **greater focus to Revenue and Capital classification of Government expenditure**.

25. (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: Air transport, globally, accounts for **just about 2 percent** of global carbon dioxide emissions every year, and less than two per cent of greenhouse gas emissions.

Statement 2 is correct: The 41st ICAO Assembly adopted a long-term global aspirational goal (LTAG) for international aviation of **net-zero carbon emissions by 2050** in support of the UNFCCC Paris Agreement's temperature goal.

- Recently, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has announced that India will start participating in the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) and the Long-Term Aspirational Goals (LTAG) from 2027.

Statement 3 is not correct: The LTAG **does not attribute specific obligations or commitments in the form of emissions reduction goals** to individual States. Instead, it recognizes that each State's special circumstances and respective capabilities (e.g., the level of development, maturity of aviation markets, sustainable growth of its international aviation, just transition, and national priorities of air transport development) will inform the ability of each State to contribute to the LTAG within its own national timeframe.

INDIAN POLITY AND CONSTITUTION

1. With reference to Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011, Consider the following statements:
1. SECC-2011 was conducted under the 1948 Census of India Act.
 2. The Ministry of Rural Development conducted a caste census in 2010-11 along with the socio-economic census.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
2. Which of the following statements is **not correct** regarding the Governor's powers in relation to bills in the state legislature?
- (a) Governor cannot send the bill back to the State Legislature if it is a Money Bill.
(b) When a governor reserves a bill for the president's consideration, he is no longer involved in the bill's enactment.
(c) If any Bill is pending in the House, the governor can send a message to such House to remind them about the same.
(d) None of the above
3. Consider the following statements with reference to The Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013.
1. It mandated that every employer must constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) at each office or branch with 10 or more employees.
 2. It is applicable to all sectors including organised and unorganised sectors.
- 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. What among the following are the functions of Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO):
1. Approval of new drugs and clinical trials
 2. To regulate the profession of Pharmacy in India.
 3. License approval of blood banks and vaccines.
 4. Control the advertisements regarding drugs.
- Choose the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only (b) 1, 3 and 4 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
5. Consider the following statements regarding the practice of Polygamy in India.
1. The Hindu personal law outlaws bigamy and polygamy in India whereas the Muslim personal law does not.
 2. India is the only country to have Polygamy permissible and legal exclusively for Muslims.
 3. A Muslim woman is not allowed to marry more than one individual.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

6. Nabam Rebia case, which was recently in the news, is related to which of the following?
- The basic structure of the constitution
 - The special marriage Act
 - Triple talaq judgment
 - Disqualification petitions under the anti-defection law
7. Consider the following statements with reference to the National Medical Commission:
- It has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as National Medical Commission Act, 2019.
 - It has 2 autonomous Boards.
 - It frames guidelines for determination of fees of 50 percent of seats in private medical institutions and deemed to be universities.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
8. With reference to the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), consider the following statements:
- EVMs were first used in 70-Paravur Assembly Constituency of Kerala in 1982.
 - India does not use any EVMs produced abroad.
 - EVM has two parts, a 'control unit' and a 'balloting unit'.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
9. Consider the following statements:
- India has enacted the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA), to put in place a speedy compensation mechanism for victims of a nuclear accident.
 - India is not a signatory to the 1997 Convention on Supplementary Compensation (CSC).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
10. The term 'general consent' which is frequently seen in the news is related to which of the following organizations?
- Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)
 - Food Corporation of India (FCI)
 - Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
 - Competition Commission of India (CCI)
11. Consider the following statements, with reference to Competition Commission of India (CCI):
- It is a statutory body within the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
 - The Director General (DG) Office is the investigative wing of the CCI.
- Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
12. Consider the following statements regarding the Collegium System for the appointment of judges:
- The Supreme Court Collegium consists of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) and four senior-most judges of the apex court.

2. The collegium from time to time provides the guidelines for the appointment of the Supreme Court judges.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

13. Consider the following statements:

1. Central Civil Servants are selected by the central government and officers are allotted various state cadres.
2. The Conduct Rules were framed based on recommendations of the committee constituted by Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1962.

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. Consider the following statements with respect to recusal:

1. The practice is based on the principle of due process of law.
2. The decision to recuse can come only from the judge.
3. There are no formal rules governing recusals.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

15. Consider the following statements, with reference to the New Parliament Building:

1. It has been developed as part of India's Central Vista Redevelopment Project.
2. The Lok Sabha hall is based on the lotus theme.

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. Consider the following statements:

1. Article 298 grants the Centre and the state governments the power to carry on trade.
2. Neither the President nor the Governor can be personally held liable for such contracts.

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: SECC-2011 was not done under the 1948 Census of India Act and the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India was not entrusted to do the same.

Statement 2 is correct: Ministry of Rural Development conducted a caste census in 2010-11 along with the socio-economic census.

2. (d)

Governor's powers regarding bills in the state legislature:

- The **Governor's assent is necessary** for the Bills which are passed by the State legislature to become a law.

- **Sending for reconsideration:**

- The Governor can send the bill back to the House for reconsideration but if the bill is sent back by the House without any change, the Governor has to give his assent to that bill.
- Also, he cannot send the bill back to the State Legislature if it is a Money Bill. **Hence statement (a) is correct.**

- **Reserving the bill for the president's consideration:**

- The Governor also has the right to reserve some bills for the consideration of the President.
- And when a governor reserves a bill for the president's consideration, he is no longer involved in the bill's enactment. **Hence statement (b) is correct.**
- Even if the President refers it to the Assembly for reconsideration, the Bill will still be brought before the President and not the Governor following the reconsideration.

- **Withhold assent:**

- The Governor also has power to withhold assent to the a Bill

- **Pending bill in the legislature:**

- If any Bill is pending in the House(s), the governor can send a message to such House(s) to remind them about the same. **Hence statement (c) is correct.**

3. (c)

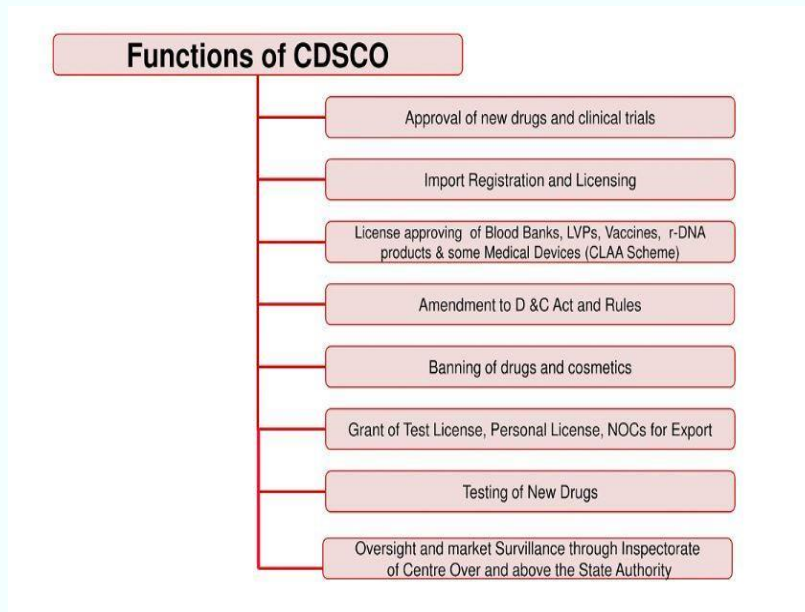
In News: A recent investigation revealed that more than half of India's 30 national sports federations do not have an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) which is a legal requirement under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act, 2013.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct: The Government of India has enacted 'the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013' (POSH Act) with the aim to provide a safe and secure work environment to women.

- It broadened and gave legislative backing to what is known as the Vishaka Guidelines, which were laid down by the Supreme Court in a judgment passed in 1997.
 - It mandated that every employer must constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) at each office or branch with 10 or more employees.
 - It lay down procedures and defined various aspects of sexual harassment, including the aggrieved victim, who could be a woman "of any age whether employed or not", who "alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment".
 - The aggrieved victim under the Act **can be a woman "of any age whether employed [at the workplace] or not"**, who "alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment".
 - In effect, the Act protects the rights of all women who are working or visiting any workplace, in any capacity.
 - Further, the Prevention of Workplace Sexual Harassment Act applies to both the organized and unorganized sectors in India.

4. (c)

Statement 1 and 3 are correct only.



- **The Pharmacy Act, 1948:** It is meant to regulate the profession of Pharmacy in India.
- **The Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisement) Act, 1954:** It provides to control the advertisements regarding drugs; it prohibits the advertising of remedies alleged to possess magic qualities.

5. (b)

Polygamy

- **About:**

- Polygamy is defined as “the **act or custom** of maintaining **more than one spouse** at the same time”.

- **Polygamy under Hindu Law:**

- **The Hindu Marriage Act**, which came into effect on May 18, 1955, made it clear that Hindu polygamy would be **abolished and criminalised**.
 - **Monogamy** was the sole option available to Hindus.

- **Polygamy under the Muslim personal law:**

- Crucially, while the Hindu personal law outlaws bigamy and polygamy, the Muslim personal law does not. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The clauses under the ‘Muslim Personal Law Application Act (Shariat) of 1937, as construed by the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, apply to Muslims in India.
- A Muslim man can marry and maintain **four women or spouses** at the same time, according to Muslim personal law.
 - Under Muslim personal law, such a relationship is **recognised and legal**.
- While a Muslim man can have four wives at the same time, however, the same is **not applicable to a Muslim woman**.
 - A Muslim woman is not allowed to marry more than one individual. Hence **statement 3 is correct**.

- **Global practice:**

- Polygamy is permissible and legal **exclusively for Muslims** in nations such as India, Singapore, as well as Malaysia. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Polygamy is still **recognised and practiced** in nations such as Algeria, Egypt, and Cameroon.

6. (d)

The Nabam Rebia case

- In **Nabam Rebia & Bamang Felix v. Deputy Speaker, Arunachal Legislative Assembly** (2016), the Supreme Court had ruled that it would be
 - “constitutionally impermissible for a Speaker of the House to adjudicate upon disqualification petitions under the anti-defection law as per Tenth Schedule while a motion of resolution for his/her own removal from Office of Speaker is pending”.

7. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: It has been constituted by an **act of Parliament** known as **National Medical Commission Act, 2019** which came into force in 2020.

- **The Board of Governors** in supersession of Medical Council of India constituted under section 3A of the **Indian Medical Council Act, 1956** stands dissolved thereafter.

Statement 2 is not correct: It has 4 Autonomous Boards:

- Under-Graduate Medical Education Board
- Post-Graduate Medical Education Board
- Medical Assessment and Rating Board
- Ethics and Medical Registration Board

Statement 3 is correct: Framing guidelines for **determination of fees and all other charges** in respect of **fifty percent of seats in private medical institutions and deemed to be universities** which are governed under the provisions of this Act is among one of the functions of the National Medical Commission.

8. (d)

Statement 1 is correct: EVMs were first used in the 70-Paravur **Assembly Constituency of Kerala** in 1982.

Statement 2 is correct: EVMs are produced **indigenously by 2 PSUs viz. Bharat Electronics Ltd., Bengaluru and Electronics Corporation of India Ltd., Hyderabad.** India **does not use any EVMs** produced abroad.

Statement 3 is correct: EVM has two parts – a ‘**control unit**’ and a ‘**balloting unit**’ – connected by a **5-metre cable**.

- The balloting unit is in the voting compartment into which the voter enters to cast the vote by pressing the button against the name and symbol of the candidate of her choice and the control unit is with the EC-appointed polling officer.
- The **control unit** has been termed the EVM’s ‘brain’, as the balloting unit is turned on only after the polling officer presses the ‘Ballot’ button on it and the vote is then cast. The control unit is with the **Election Commission selected polling officer**.

9. (a)

Law governing nuclear liability

- **Convention on Supplementary Compensation (CSC):**

- The umbrella Convention on Supplementary Compensation (CSC) was adopted in 1997 with the aim of **establishing a minimum national compensation amount**.
- The amount can further be increased through public funds, (to be made available by the contracting parties), should the national amount be insufficient to compensate for the damage caused by a nuclear incident.

- **India’s Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA):**

- Even though India was a signatory to the CSC, Parliament ratified the convention only in 2016. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- To keep in line with the international convention, India enacted the **Civil Liability for Nuclear**

Damage Act (CLNDA) in 2010, to put in place a speedy compensation mechanism for victims of a nuclear accident. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- The CLNDA provides for **strict and no-fault liability on the operator** of the nuclear plant, where it will be held liable for damage regardless of any fault on its part.
- It ensures that **compensation is available to the victims for nuclear damage** caused by a nuclear incident or disaster and sets out who will be liable for those damages.

10. (c)

General Consent:

- The conduct or continuance of investigation into offences committed within the territory of a state, **consent of the state is required** which most of the time is **delayed or even denied**.
 - General Consent:
 - CBI needs consent of a state to probe offences in the state's jurisdiction, a general consent is given to the agency so that consent is not required for every individual case.
 - Withdrawal of consent means CBI cannot investigate even a central government employee stationed in a state without the consent of the state government.
- **Many states**, including West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Meghalaya, have **withdrawn general consent** for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to probe cases in their jurisdiction.
 - At the time of withdrawing consent, all states alleged that the central government was using the CBI to unfairly target the opposition.

11. (c)

Statement 1 and 2 are correct:

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) is a statutory body within the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs** and is responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002.
- The CCI was established in 2003.
- It consists of a Chairperson and not more than 6 Members appointed by the Central Government.
- **The Director General (DG) Office is the investigative wing of the CCI**, which commences investigation once the Commission passes a prima facie order directing the DG to do so.

12. (a)

Collegium system

- **Appointment of Judges:**
 - Judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court are appointed by the provisions mentioned in Articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution of India.
 - **Articles 124 and 217** state that the President shall appoint judges to the Supreme Court and high courts after consultation with the Chief Justice of India and other judges.
- **Composition:**
 - The Supreme Court Collegium consists of the CJI and four senior-most judges of the apex court. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - The High Court Collegium consists of the Chief Justice of the High Court and two senior-most judges of that particular court.
- **Issues with the current collegium system:**
 - The collegium system **does not provide any guidelines or criteria** for the appointment of the Supreme Court judges and it increases the ambit of **favoritism**.
 - In the collegium system, there are no criteria for testing the candidate or for doing a background check to establish the credibility of the candidate. Hence statement 2 is not correct.

- The **absence of an administrative body** is also a reason for worry because it means that the members of the collegium system are **not answerable for the selection** of any of the judges.

13. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: There are **three All India Services** – the Indian Administrative Service, the Indian Police Service and the Indian Forest Service – which are selected by the central government with officers allotted to various state cadres.

- Other services are called **Central Civil Services**. These services are under the central government itself with no state cadre system.
- They include services such as the Indian Foreign Service, the Indian Revenue Service, Customs and Central Excise Service and several others.

Statement 2 is correct: There are two sets of rules for civil servants – **one for All India Services and the other for Central Civil Services**. Specially designed Conduct Rules govern an officer's behaviour and conduct.

- The AIS Conduct Rules, 1968 and CCS Conduct Rules, 1964 are mostly similar. These were framed based on recommendations from a committee constituted by then Minister of Home Affairs Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1962.

14. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The practice **stems from the cardinal principle of due process of law** that nobody can be a judge in her own case.

Statement 2 is not correct: The decision to recuse generally comes from the judge herself as it rests on the conscience and discretion of the judge to disclose any potential conflict of interest.

- In some circumstances, **lawyers or parties in the case bring it up before the judge**. If a judge recuses, the case is listed before the Chief Justice for allotment to a fresh Bench.

Statement 3 is correct: There are **no formal rules governing recusals**, although several Supreme Court judgments have dealt with the issue.

- In *Ranjit Thakur v Union of India* (1987), the Supreme Court held that the test of the likelihood of bias is the reasonableness of the apprehension in the mind of the party.
- The 1999 charter 'Restatement of Values in Judicial Life', a code of ethics adopted by the Supreme Court states that "A Judge shall not hear and decide a matter in a company in which he holds shares... unless he has disclosed his interest and no objection to his hearing and deciding the matter is raised."

15. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Central Vista Redevelopment Project

- The new parliament building has been developed as part of India's Central Vista Redevelopment Project.
- Central Vista Redevelopment Project refers to the ongoing redevelopment to revamp the Central Vista, India's central administrative area located near Raisina Hill, New Delhi.
- The area was originally designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker during British colonial rule.

Statement 2 is not correct: Features of new Parliament Building

- **Design:** It has a built-up area of about 65,000 sq m, with its triangular shape ensuring the optimum utilisation of space.
- **Capacity:** The new building will house a larger Lok Sabha hall with a capacity of up to 888 seats, and a larger Rajya Sabha hall with a capacity of upto 384 seats. The Lok Sabha may accommodate up to 1,272 seats for joint sessions of Parliament.
- **Theme:** The Lok Sabha hall is based on the peacock theme, India's national bird. The Rajya Sabha is based on the lotus theme, India's national flower.

- **Constitutional Hall:** A state of the art Constitutional Hall in the building “symbolically and physically puts the Indian citizens at the heart of our democracy”, says the official website.

16. (c)

Both statements 1 and 2 are correct: Article 298 grants the Centre and the state governments the **power to carry on trade** or business, acquire, hold, and dispose of property, and make contracts for any purpose, while **Article 299 delineates** the manner in which these contracts will be concluded.

Objective of the Article

- The objective behind Article 299(1), as per the 1954 top court ruling in ‘**Chatturbhuj Vithaldas Jasani v. Moreshwar Parashram & Ors**’, is that there must be a **definite procedure** according to which contracts must be made by agents acting on the government’s behalf; otherwise, **public funds may be depleted by unauthorized or illegitimate contracts**.
- It implies that contracts **not adhering** to the manner given in Article 299(1) **cannot be enforced by any contracting party**.
- However, Article 299 (2) says that essentially, neither the **President nor the Governor can be personally held liable for such contracts**.

GEOGRAPHY

1. Consider the following pairs:

Bridge Associated	River
1. Bogibeel bridge	Lohit river
2. Dhola-sadiya bridge	Krishna river
3. Vikramshila Setu	Ganga river

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) Only 1 pair
- (b) Only 2 pairs
- (c) All 3 pairs
- (d) None of the above

2. With reference to the Galapagos Islands, consider the following statements:

- 1. These Islands are located in Ecuador.
- 2. The Islands are named after their giant tortoises.
- 3. Darwin's Theory of evolution by means of natural selection was inspired by his study on the endemic species on the Islands.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

3. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Temperature is the measure of the average heat or thermal energy in a substance.
- 2. The annual mean temperature of the world is known to have increased by 0.7 degree Celsius from the average of the 1850-1900 period.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. Consider the following statements regarding the river Krishna:

- 1. It originates in the Western ghats in the state of Karnataka.
- 2. It flows only through four states in India.
- 3. Hemavati, Lakshmana Tirtha, Kabini, Suvarnavathi, Shimsha are the principal tributaries joining Krishna.

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

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

5. Consider the following statements, with reference to the shrinking of lakes:

- 1. Tso Moriri in Ladakh is the worst affected Natural Lake in India.
- 2. The main reason behind the drop in water levels is sedimentation.

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. Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update 2023-2027 has been released by which of the following organizations?
- (a) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
 - (b) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 - (c) The World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
 - (d) European Environment Agency (EEA)

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Pair 1 is not correct: The **Bogibeel Bridge** is the longest rail-cum-road bridge of India on the **Brahmaputra River in Assam**.

Pair 2 is not correct: **Dhola-sadiya bridge** spans the Lohit River, a major tributary of the Brahmaputra.

Pair 3 is correct: Vikramshila Setu is a bridge across the Ganges, near Bhagalpur in Bihar. Vikramshila Setu is the 6th longest bridge over water in India. The 4.7 km long two-lane bridge serves as a link between NH 33 and NH 31 running on the opposite sides of the **Ganges**.

2. (d)

Statement 1, 2 and 3 are correct: The Galapagos Islands are an archipelago of volcanic islands belonging to the South American country '**Ecuador**'.

- **Location:** The archipelago is located in the Eastern Pacific around the Equator. Straddling the equator, islands in the chain are located in both the northern and southern hemispheres.
- **Geology:** The archipelago is located on the Nazca Plate (a tectonic plate), which is moving east/southeast, diving under the South American Plate. Volcanism has been continuous on the Galápagos Islands for at least 20 million years.
- **Ecology:** The Galapagos are famous for their large number of endemic species, which were studied by **Charles Darwin** in the 1830s and inspired his theory of evolution by means of natural selection. The Galapagos Islands are named after their giant tortoises.



3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Temperature is the **measure of the average heat or thermal energy** in a substance.

- Air and water temperatures are primarily determined by the amount of sunlight that is absorbed by the surface of the Earth, and the amount of heat that is re-radiated in the atmosphere by the greenhouse gases.
- **Atmospheric and ocean circulation** redistribute heat across the surface of the Earth and shape regional temperature patterns.

Statement 2 is not correct: According to the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change the world is currently **at around 1.1°C of warming** from the average of the 1850-1900 period.

- An assessment of climate change over the Indian subcontinent, published by the Ministry of Earth Sciences in 2020, said **annual mean temperatures had risen by 0.7 degree Celsius from 1900**.

4. (c)

Krishna River

- The Krishna is an east-flowing river. It originates at Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra and merges with the Bay of Bengal. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- It flows through Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Together with its tributaries, it forms a vast basin that covers 33% of the total area of the four states.
- The principal tributaries joining Krishna are the Ghataprabha, the Malaprabha, the Bhima, the Tungabhadra and the Musi. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- Most of this basin comprises rolling and undulating country, except for the western border, which is formed by an unbroken line of the Western Ghats.
- The important soil types found in the basin are black soils, red soils, laterite and lateritic soils, alluvium, mixed soils, red and black soils and saline and alkaline soils.

5. (c)

Both Statement 1 and 2 are correct: More than 50 percent of the world's largest lakes and reservoirs have shrunk over the past three decades **primarily due to climate change and human activities**, according to a new study.

- More than half of the reservoirs located in peninsular India have witnessed substantial water storage decline, mainly due to sedimentation. Moreover, among the worst affected natural lakes in the country is Ladakh's Tso Moriri.
- **Sedimentation:** The main reason behind the drop in water levels is sedimentation — the process of particles such as sand and stones settling to the bottom of a body of water.
 - Sedimentation is the primary contributor to the global storage decline in existing reservoirs and has a larger impact than hydroclimate variability, i.e., droughts and recovery from droughts.

6. (c)

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) released two reports titled "Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update 2023-2027" and "State of Global Climate 2022 recently."

Major Findings

- The predictions of the recently released reports point to precipitation anomalies and an increase in marine heat waves as compared to marine cold spells.
- The **El Niño**, which is currently brewing, will further strengthen this year, resulting in a 98% possibility of witnessing temperatures higher than 2016 at least in one of the years in the 2023-27 period.
- **Global surface temperature:** The annual mean global surface temperature between 2023 and 2027 will be 1.1-1.8 degree Celsius higher than the baseline temperature of 1850-1900 or pre-industrial levels.
- In 2022, it was 1.15 degrees above the baseline, and by 2027, the average will exceed 1.5 degrees, a critical point beyond which there may be no return.
- The cryosphere is shrinking, and there is a mass loss of glaciers in High-mountain Asia, Western North America, and South America.
 - Due to the alarming rate of warming of the Arctic Ocean, the Greenlandian ice sheet is melting at a faster pace, contributing to the increase in sea level.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. What is the CU– Chayan Portal recently seen in the news?
 - (a) A unified faculty recruitment portal for Central universities.
 - (b) A portal for promoting ease of doing business.
 - (c) A portal for recruitment of Healthcare professionals under the National Health Mission.
 - (d) None of the above
2. Consider the following statements:
 1. Thalassemia is an inherited blood disorder that causes the body to have less hemoglobin than normal.
 2. Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana has been implemented under the National Health Mission (NHM).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 Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi, consider the following statements:
 1. It is launched by the Ministry of Education.
 2. Every child till the age of 12-years will be provided with high-quality preschool instruction in the mother tongue on a daily basis.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. What is SAKSHAM that has been launched recently?
 - (a) Scheme by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship for marginalized people.
 - (b) Saving Account scheme for women at higher interest rates in the Post Office.
 - (c) A dedicated and unified platform that will provide training and medical education in online mode.
 - (d) None of the Above
5. Consider the following statements regarding the Harit Sagar Guidelines 2023:
 1. It has been launched by The Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.
 2. These Guidelines provide a framework for the Major Ports for reduction in carbon emission to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. With reference to the Mission LiFe, consider the following statements:
 1. It aims to promote an environment-conscious lifestyle that focuses on mindful and deliberate utilisation.
 2. Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle is one of the themes under the mission.
 3. The mission is a 3-year programme.

4. Meri LiFe App will help in tracking the progress being made on Mission LiFE. Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
(c) 2 and 3 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
7. What is the aim of the recently launched Sanchar Saathi Initiative?
- (a) To strengthen the security of mobile users or subscribers in the country.
(b) To increase the use of mobile phones in remote areas of the country.
(c) To establish good mobile phone connectivity and establish stronger networks throughout the country.
(d) None of the above
8. Recently launched “75/25 initiative” is related to which one of the following?
- (a) To screen and put 75 million people with hypertension and diabetes on standard care by 2025.
(b) To cover 25% of the population of the country with a universal social security system by 2075.
(c) To reduce the percentage of unemployment upto 75% by 2025.
(d) To reduce Emissions Intensity of India’s GDP by 25 % by 2075.
9. Parakh initiative recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following fields?
- (a) Education (b) Defence
(c) Fertilizer subsidy (d) Cybersecurity

EXPLANATIONS

1: (a)

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has launched **CU– Chayan, a unified faculty recruitment portal for Central universities**. The UGC has developed this portal to create an enabling environment for both universities and the applicants.

2. (c)

In News: Minister of State for Health launched the third phase of the Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana of the Health Ministry in New Delhi.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct: Thalassemia is a chronic blood disorder. It is a **genetic disorder** due to which a patient cannot make enough hemoglobin found in Red Blood Cells (RBCs).

- **Thalassemias are inherited disorders** passed from parents to children through genes.
- The Union Health Ministry has been implementing the Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana since 2017 under the **National Health Mission (NHM)** and recently completed its second phase in March 2023.

3. (d)

Statement 1 is not correct: In May 2023, the **Union Ministry for Women and Child Development** launched the Centre’s flagship programme ‘Poshan Bhi, Padhai Bhi’.

- **Objective:** The programme will focus on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) at anganwadis across the country. The aim is to make anganwadi centres as nutrition hubs as well as education-imparting centres.

Statement 2 is not correct: Anganwadi Centres will be strengthened with high-quality infrastructure, play equipment, and well-trained Anganwadi workers/teachers.

- **Every child (till the age of 6-years)** would be provided with at least two hours of high-quality preschool instruction in the mother tongue on a daily basis, as per the New Education Policy.

4. (c)

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the **SAKSHAM** (Stimulating Advanced Knowledge for Sustainable Health Management), a Learning Management Information System (LMIS).

- SAKSHAM is an initiative developed by the **National Institute of Health & Family Welfare (NIHFW)**, which provides all health-related training programmes to healthcare professionals of the country in digital mode.
- The dedicated and unified platform will provide training and medical education in **online mode**.

5. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways has launched 'Harit Sagar' the **Green Port Guidelines 2023**.

Statement 2 is correct: Objective: To minimize waste through **Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle** to attain zero waste discharge from port operations and promote monitoring, based on Environmental Performance Indicators.

- These Guidelines provide a framework for the Major Ports for drawing out a comprehensive action plan for achieving targeted outcomes in terms of quantified reduction in carbon emission to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

6. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: Objective: Mission LiFE aims to promote an **environment-conscious lifestyle** that focuses on **mindful and deliberate utilisation** instead of mindless and destructive consumption. It functions on the basic principles of 'Lifestyle of the planet, for the planet and by the planet'.

Statement 2 is correct: Upon successful sign-up, users will be guided to participate in a series of LiFE related tasks under the following 5 themes, **namely, Save Energy, Save Water, Reduce Single Use Plastic, Adopt Sustainable Food Systems and Adopt Healthy Lifestyle**.

Statement 3 is not correct: Duration: The mission is a 5-year programme.

Statement 4 is correct: To catalyze youth action for climate change, Union Minister for Environment launched a **mobile application, called "Meri LiFE" (My life)**.

- The Meri LiFE app will help in tracking the progress being made on Mission LiFE.

7. (a)

Union Minister of Communications launched the Sanchar Saathi portal to ensure Safety and security of the mobile users.

Sanchar Saathi initiative

- The Department of Telecom has developed a citizen centric portal named Sanchar Saathi.
- It has following modules:
 - Know your mobile connections – to know mobile connections registered in your name.
 - CEIR (Central Equipment Identity Register) – for blocking stolen/lost mobiles.
 - Telecom Analytics for Fraud Management and Consumer Protection (TAFMCP)
 - ASTR (Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification) – to identify fraudulent subscribers.

8. (a)

To mark the World Hypertension Day (May 17), the Union Health Ministry has launched the **75/25 initiative and the Shashakt Portal**.

- Under the 75/25 initiative, the Union Health Ministry aims at screening and putting 75 million people with hypertension and diabetes on standard care by 2025.

9. (a)

The PARAKH stands for The Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development. It is a workshop organised by the Ministry of Education that aims to bring together the **60 school examination boards operating in various Indian states and Union territories under one umbrella.**

- PARAKH has been launched as part of the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 that envisaged a standard-setting body to advise school boards regarding new assessment patterns and latest research, and promote collaborations between them.
- It will be tasked with holding periodic learning outcomes tests like the National Achievement Survey (NAS) and State Achievement Surveys.

DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. Recently India handed over a Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) and a Landing Craft Assault ship to which of the following countries?
- (a) Maldives (b) Mauritius
(c) Sri Lanka (d) Seychelles
2. What is the purpose of the recently signed Washington Declaration?
- (a) To protect the Korean Peninsula from a nuclear attack by North Korea.
(b) Reaffirmation of Non-Proliferation Treaty in the European region.
(c) To fulfill Climate Change Goals aligning with the Paris Agreement.
(d) Ensuring Food security in the African Region.
3. With reference to the Improvised explosive devices (IEDs), consider the following statements:
1. They can be made using anything from fireworks to military-grade explosives.
 2. They can only be used for the explosion of nearby targets.
 3. They are often used as a weapon by insurgent or terrorist groups to target the military.
- 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
4. Consider the following statements:
1. The Positive Indigenisation List of Line Replacement Units (LRUs) is notified by the Ministry of Defence.
 2. The government allowed FDI in the defence sector under automatic route up to 100%.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Consider the following military exercises of India?
- | Exercise | Country |
|--------------------|-----------|
| 1. Samudra Shakti | Indonesia |
| 2. Mitra Shakti | Thailand |
| 3. Desert Eagle II | Oman |
| 4. Maitree | Sri Lanka |
- How many pairs given above are correctly matched?
- (a) Only one pair (b) Only two pairs
(c) Only three pairs (d) All four pairs
6. Operation Dhvast has been launched by which of the following bodies?
- (a) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
(b) National Investigation Agency (NIA)
(c) The Enforcement Directorate (ED)
(d) Railway Protection Force (RPF)

7. Consider the following statement with reference to Indian Navy Submarines:
1. India's submarine fleet is based at three locations Visakhapatnam, Mumbai and Gujarat.
 2. INS Kalvari is the first of the six Scorpene class submarines built under Project 75.
- 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)

India hands over two naval vessels for Maldives

- Continuing India's capacity building assistance in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), the Defence Minister recently handed over a **Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV)** and a **Landing Craft Assault ship to the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF)**.
 - The FPV, capable of coastal and offshore surveillance at high speeds, was commissioned as **MNDF Coast Guard ship Huravee**.
- **Significance:**
 - In recent years, India has significantly scaled up assistance towards capacity building and capability enhancement for **Indian Ocean littoral states and countries in the IOR**.
 - The handing of the two platforms as a symbol of the shared commitment of India and the Maldives towards peace and security in the IOR.

2. (a)

In News

- U.S.-South Korea has signed the "**Washington Declaration**" as a nuclear deterrence strategy.

What is the Washington Declaration?

- **Purpose of the Agreement:**
 - To protect the Korean Peninsula from a nuclear attack by North Korea.
- **Provisions:**
 - An **American nuclear ballistic submarine** would be deployed in the Korean peninsula.
 - A **nuclear consultative group** would be formed to formulate principles of joint response tactics.
 - South Korea would **receive Intel from the U.S.** regarding nuclear advancements.
 - The U.S. will strengthen South Korea's **nuclear deterrence capabilities** through joint military training programs and an annual intergovernmental simulation.

3. (c)

Statement 1 and 3 are correct only:

- Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are devices that are **designed and constructed in an improvised manner** using commonly available materials. They can be made using anything from fireworks to military-grade explosives and **can be detonated remotely or by a person nearby**. Hence **statement 2 is not correct**.
- IEDs are often used as a weapon by insurgent or terrorist groups to target military, government, or civilian targets.

4. (a)

In News: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the 4th Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) of 928 with an import substitution value worth Rs 715 crore.

Statement 1 is correct: A positive indigenisation list of Line Replacement Units (LRUs) /sub-systems/assemblies/subassemblies/components has been notified by the **Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence**, as part of the efforts to achieve self-reliance in defence manufacturing and minimise imports by Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).

Statement 2 is not correct: The Government has liberalised and allowed **FDI under automatic routes up to 74% and up to 100% through Government routes** wherever it is likely to result in access to modern technology.

5. (a)

Pair one is correctly matched: In pursuance of **India's Act East Policy**, Exercise 'Samudra Shakti' was conceived in **2018** as a bilateral maritime exercise between India and Indonesia.

Pair two is not correctly matched: Mitra Shakti is a bilateral exercise between India and Sri Lanka.

Pair three is not correctly matched: Desert Eagle II is a bilateral exercise between India and UAE.

Pair four is not correctly matched: Maitree is a bilateral exercise between India and Thailand.

6. (b)

The **National Investigation Agency (NIA)** has arrested three persons in connection with the raids conducted as part of a nationwide drive codenamed '**Operation Dhvast**', in the terrorist-gangster-drug smugglers network cases.

Major Points

- The latest searches were part of the continuing NIA action against terror networks as well as their funding and support infrastructure, with respect to which it has been probing three cases since August 2022.
- The cases are connected with conspiracies related to targeted killings, terror funding of pro-Khalistan outfits, extortion, etc.

7. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Navy has **16 conventional submarines in service**. These are seven Russian Kilo-class submarines, four German-origin HDW submarines and five French Scorpene-class submarines.

- **India's submarine fleet is based at two locations:** Visakhapatnam on the east coast and Mumbai on the west coast.

Statement 2 is correct: Kalvari Class: INS Kalvari is the first of the six Scorpene class submarines built under **Project 75**. The Submarine was commissioned in 2017.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Which of the following best describes 'Laundromat countries', which was recently in news:
- (a) A group of countries that are being accused of Money Laundering by FATF.
 - (b) A group of countries that buy Russian oil and sell processed products to European countries.
 - (c) A group of countries that are accused of high-volume Drug trafficking.
 - (d) None of the above
2. With reference to ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Consider the following statement:
- 1. It is a political and economic union of ten member states in Southeast Asia.
 - 2. It aims to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region.
 - 3. ASEAN+3 includes India, China and Japan.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1,2 and 3
3. With reference to the World Press Freedom Index, consider the following statements:
- 1. It is published annually by the international NGO Reporters Without Borders (RSF).
 - 2. India has been ranked 161 in 2023 Index which is below Pakistan's ranking.
- 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 Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Consider the following statements:
- 1. It was established at the G7 Summit of 1989 in Paris.
 - 2. It currently has 13 members and India is not a member country.
 - 3. At the end of every plenary meeting, it comes out with only one kind of list i.e. blacklist of countries.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1 and 3 only
5. 'Jordanian initiative' that was recently in the news, relates to which of the following?
- (a) UN reforms
 - (b) Israel Palestine conflict
 - (c) Co-operation of leading oil-producing countries
 - (d) Syria's return to the Arab League
6. Which of the following is **not** a member of the Arab League?
- 1. Nigeria
 - 2. Egypt
 - 3. Jordan
 - 4. Ethiopia
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 3 and 4 only
 - (d) 1 and 4 only

7. What does the phrase “Persona Non Grata” mean, which was recently seen in the news?
- It is a grant provided to Nations by the World Bank.
 - It is a phrase used to describe refugees given citizenship in any country.
 - It refers to the practice of a state prohibiting a diplomat from entering the country as a diplomat.
 - It is the Industrial term associated with establishment of new factories in Green areas.
8. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)?
- It emerged in 1996 with Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan as the members.
 - India and Pakistan were given full membership at the time of signing of charter in 2002.
 - Varanasi is declared as the first “Cultural and Tourism Capital” of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation for 2022-23.
- Choose the correct answer using the code given below
- 1 and 2 only
 - 3 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
9. Consider the following statements:
- Uzbekistan in the Samarkand SCO Summit, handed over the rotating presidency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to India.
 - Samarkand is declared as the first “Cultural and Tourism Capital” of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation for 2022-23.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
10. Consider the following statements with reference to Papua New Guinea:
- It shares a land border with Indonesia.
 - Its near neighbors are Australia and Solomon Island.
 - It is one of the countries along the Ring of Fire.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
11. Consider the followings statements:
- Rohingya are largely comprising Muslims who predominantly live in the Western Myanmar province of Rakhine.
 - India is a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
12. Mand-Pishin Border Sustenance Marketplace has been inaugurated recently between which of the following countries?
- China and Pakistan
 - Pakistan and Iran
 - Saudi Arabia and Oman
 - Iran and Afghanistan

- 13.** Consider the following statements regarding the Group of Seven (G7):
1. It is an intergovernmental organisation of seven countries that are the world's most industrialized and developed economies.
 2. Canada holds the presidency of the G7 in 2023.
 3. The group meets annually and India is a special invitee to the 2023 summit.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 14.** Consider the following statements, with reference to the Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC):
1. It was launched during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Fiji in November 2014.
 2. Exchange of business delegations between India and Pacific Islands Countries is one of the objectives of the forum.
- 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.** Consider the following statements, with reference to Pacific Island Nations:
1. The region includes Indonesian, Philippine, and Japanese archipelagoes.
 2. The Pacific Islands create a triangle, starting at New Guinea, stretching to Hawaii, and then down to New Zealand.
 3. Papua New Guinea is the largest by landmass and population.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 16.** Which of the following statements regarding the Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) is **not correct**?
- (a) It was launched during PM Modi's visit to Fiji in 2014.
 - (b) FIPIC includes 14 island countries.
 - (c) FIPIC III Summit was held in Papua New Guinea in 2023.
 - (d) No FIPIC summit is yet conducted in India.
- 17.** Which of the following is **not** part of the Pacific Island Countries (PICs)?
1. Samoa Island
 2. Papua New Guinea
 3. Mauritius
 4. The Bahamas
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 3 and 4 only (d) All are PICs

EXPLANATIONS

1: (b)

The “laundromat” countries are countries that buy Russian oil and sell processed products to European countries, thus sidestepping European sanctions against Russian Oil. The five countries (India, China, Turkey, UAE and Singapore) are identified as ‘laundromats’ for Western countries by the Centre for

Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

2. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: It is a political and economic organization.

Founded in: 1967 by the five South-East Asian nations of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. **10 Members at Present:** Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Statement 2 is correct: The ASEAN Declaration states that the aims and purposes of the Association are: (1) to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and (2) to promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries in the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter.

Statement 3 is not correct: ASEAN Plus Three: It is a forum that functions as a coordinator of co-operation between the ASEAN and the three East Asian nations of China, South Korea, and Japan. **ASEAN Plus Six:** The group includes ASEAN Plus Three as well as **India, Australia, and New Zealand.**

3. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Global media watchdog **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** publishes the **yearly report on press freedom in countries across the world.**

- It Evaluates the **environment for journalism** in 180 countries and territories and is published on **World Press Freedom Day (3 May).**
- RSF is an **international NGO** whose self-proclaimed aim is to defend and promote media freedom.
- It is **headquartered in Paris**, it has **consultative status with the United Nations.**

Statement 2 is correct: India and Neighbourhood: India is ranked 11 spots down from last year i.e. at 161st, Bangladesh is ranked 163rd, Afghanistan 152nd, Pakistan 150th, Sri Lanka 135th, Thailand 106th, and Bhutan 90th.

4. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: FATF was established at the **G7 Summit of 1989 in Paris.**

Statement 2 is not correct: The FATF currently has **39 members.** India is a member country.

Statement 3 is not correct: At the end of every plenary meeting, FATF comes out with **two lists of Countries.** As for the black list, it means countries designated as 'high-risk jurisdictions subject to call for action'. The grey countries are designated as "jurisdictions under increased monitoring", working with the FATF to counter criminal financial activities.

5. (d)

Jordanian initiative:

- Jordan recently hosted regional talks that included envoys from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt, and Syria.
- They agreed on a framework called the "Jordanian initiative", that would **slowly bring Syria back into the Arab fold.**
- All **13 of the 22 member states** that attended the session endorsed the decision.
 - The Arab League generally tries to reach **agreements by consensus** but sometimes **opts for simple majorities.**
- **Syria's membership at Arab League:**
 - **Syria's membership in the Arab League** was suspended **12 years ago** early on in the **uprising-turned-conflict**, which has **killed nearly a half million people** since March 2011 and **displaced** half of the country's pre-war population of 23 million.

6. (d)

Arab League

- **About:**
 - The Arab League or the League of Arab States is a regional organization in the Arab world, which is located in Northern Africa, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, and Western Asia.

- The Arab League was formed in **Cairo** on 22 March **1945**.
- **Members:**
 - It currently has 22 member states; Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, **Egypt**, Iraq, **Jordan**, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.
- **Goal:**
 - The League's main goal is to "draw closer the relations between member states and coordinate collaboration between them, to safeguard their independence and sovereignty, and to consider in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries".

7. (c)

Persona non grata is a Latin phrase which means **"unwelcome person."** As a legal term, it refers to the **practice of a state prohibiting a diplomat** from entering the country as a diplomat, or censuring a diplomat already resident in the country for conduct of the status of a diplomat.

- The designation received diplomatic meaning at the **1961 Vienna Convention** for Diplomatic Relations.
- **Article 9 of the treaty** mentions that a country can declare any member of a diplomatic staff persona non grata at any time and without having to explain its decision.

8. (d)

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

- **About:**
 - It is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation of Eurasian Nations with a secretariat in Beijing.
- **Aim:**
 - It is a political, economic and military organisation that aims at maintaining peace, security and stability in the region.
- **Origin: Journey from Shanghai Five to SCO**
 - Shanghai Five emerged in 1996 from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks between 4 former USSR republics and China.
 - Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five. Hence statement 1 is correct
 - With the accession of **Uzbekistan** to the group in 2001, the Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO.
 - The SCO Charter was signed in 2002 and entered into force in 2003.
- **Inclusion of India & Pakistan:**
 - **India and Pakistan** both were initially observer states.
 - Both were given full membership in 2017. Hence statement 2 is not correct.
- **Varanasi - Cultural and Tourism Capital of SCO:**
 - The holy city of Varanasi, showcasing India's culture and traditions over the ages, is the **first "Cultural and Tourism Capital"** of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation for **2022-23**.
 - It is a new initiative by the eight-member organisation to promote **people-to-people contacts and tourism** among the member states.
 - The title of 'Cultural and Tourism Capital' will be rotated among the member states. Hence statement 3 is correct

9. (a)

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO):

- **The Uzbekistan President chaired** the 22nd SCO summit of Samarkand.
 - Uzbekistan in this summit handed over the **rotating presidency** of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to India. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

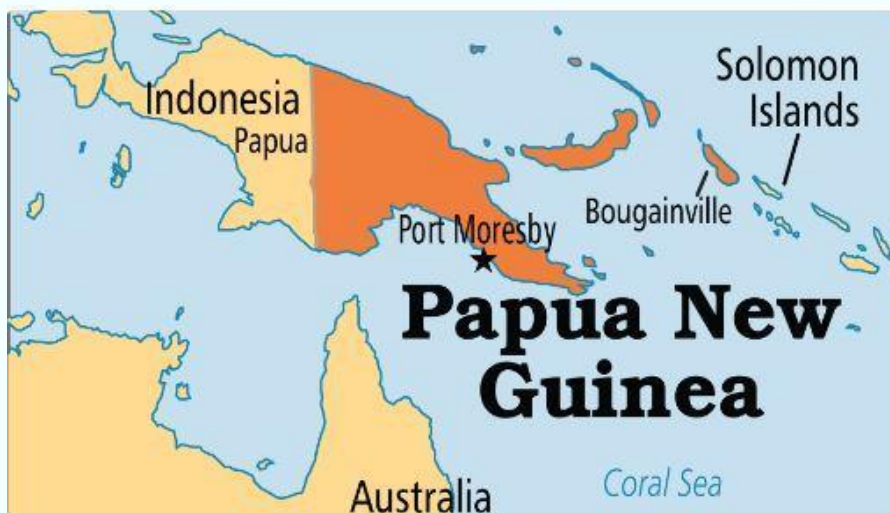
- **Varanasi - Cultural and Tourism Capital of SCO:**

- The holy city of Varanasi, showcasing India's culture and traditions over the ages, is declared the **first "Cultural and Tourism Capital"** of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation **for 2022-23**. Hence **statement 2 is not correct**.
- It is a new initiative by the eight-member organisation to promote **people-to-people contacts and tourism** among the member states.
 - The title of 'Cultural and Tourism Capital' will be rotated among the member states.

10. (d)

Statement 1, 2 and 3 are correct: The **Independent State** of Papua New Guinea in the **South Pacific** shares a **land-border with Indonesia**; its other near neighbors are **Australia to the south and Solomon Islands to the east**. It is located just south of the **Equator**.

- Papua New Guinea is one of the countries along the **Ring of Fire, a belt of active volcanoes and earthquake epicenters bordering the Pacific Ocean**; up to 90% of the world's earthquakes and some 75% of the world's volcanoes occur within the Ring of Fire.



11. (a)

In News: Recently a report titled 'A Shadow of Refuge: Rohingya Refugees in India' was released.

Statement 1 is correct: Rohingya, an **ethnic group**, mostly **Muslim**, hail from the **Rakhine province** of west Myanmar, and speak a **Bengali dialect**.

- Myanmar has classified them as "resident foreigners" or "associate citizens."

Statement 2 is not correct: India is **not a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol**.

- All foreign undocumented nationals are governed as per the provisions of The Foreigners Act, of 1946, The Registration of Foreigners Act, of 1939, The Passport (Entry into India) Act, of 1920, and The Citizenship Act, of 1955

12. (b)

In a bid to boost cross-border trade, **Pakistan and Iran inaugurated the first border market at the Mand-Pashin crossing point of the Pakistan-Iran border**.

- The Mand-Pishin Border Sustenance Marketplace, is **one of the six border markets** to be constructed along the Pakistan-Iran border.
- It would enhance **cross-border trade, foster economic growth** and open up new avenues of opportunity for local businesses.

13. (c)

Group of Seven

- **About:**

- It is an intergovernmental organisation of seven countries that are the world's most industrialized and developed economies. Hence statement 1 is correct.

- **Present Members:**

- France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, United States of America, Canada, Japan and the European Union (EU). Japan holds the presidency of the G7 in 2023. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

- **Annual meets:**

- It **meets annually** to discuss issues of common interest like international security, energy policy and global economic governance.

- Representatives of the European Union are always present at the annual meeting of the heads of state and government of the G7.

- It does not have a formal constitution or a fixed headquarters and the decisions taken by leaders during annual summits are non-binding.

- **G7's Hiroshima summit 2023**

- The Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) recently met in Hiroshima for the annual Summit.
- **India** is a special invitee to the summit. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

14. (c)

Both Statements 1 and 2 are correct: The Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) was launched during Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi's visit to **Fiji in November 2014**.

- FIPIC includes **India and 14 of the island countries** – Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- The FIPIC initiative marks a serious effort to expand India's engagement in the Pacific region.
- **Objectives**
 - Provide necessary information and facilitation regarding prospects of Trade and Investment.
 - Facilitate meetings between the concerned businessmen from both sides.
 - **Exchange of business delegations between India and Pacific Islands Countries.**
 - Online & Offline Matchmaking Services.
 - Organising Events / Trade Fairs.

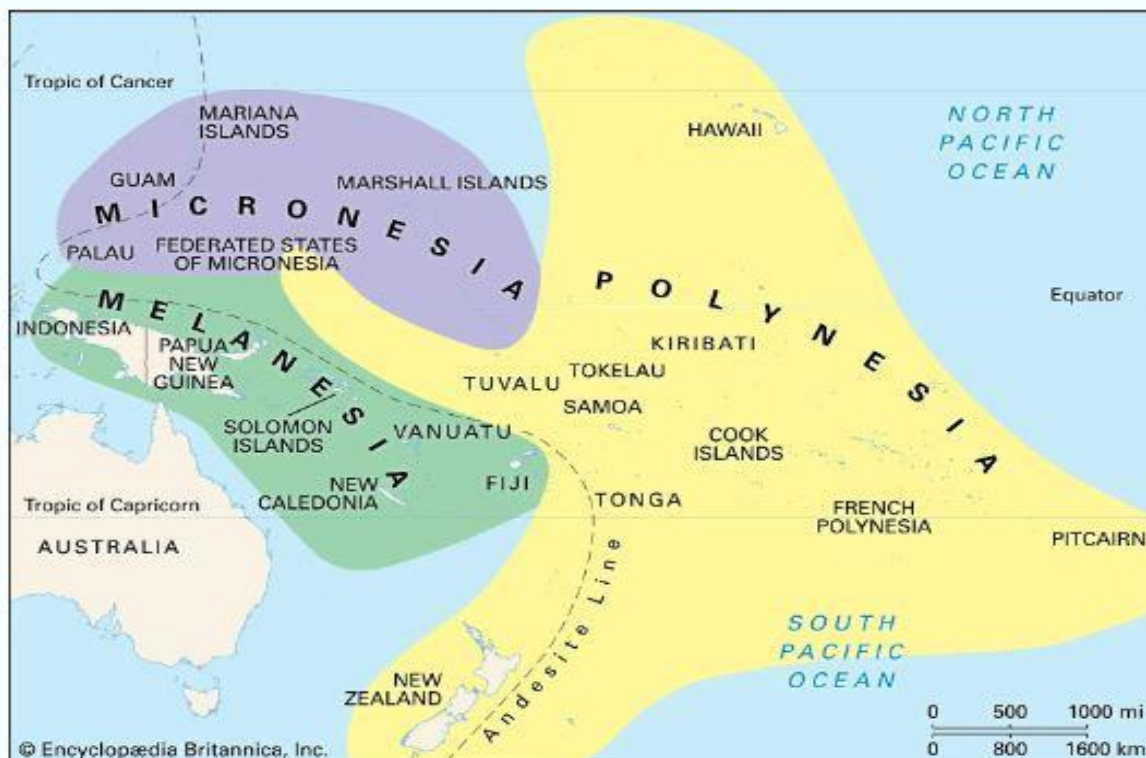
15. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Pacific Islands is an area geographic region of the Pacific Ocean comprising **three ethnogeographic groupings: Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia**.

- The region is made up of independent states, associated states, and parts of non-Pacific countries. The Pacific Islands do not include Australia, the Aleutian Chain islands, or the Indonesian, Philippine, and Japanese archipelagoes.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct: The Pacific Islands create a **triangle**, starting at New Guinea, stretching to Hawaii, and then down to New Zealand. New Zealand and Papua New Guinea make up about 90% of the Pacific Islands' total square mileage.

- **Papua New Guinea is the largest** by landmass and population and Nauru is the smallest nation.



16. (d)

About the FIPIC

- The Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) was launched during PM Modi’s visit to Fiji in November 2014. Hence statement (a) is correct.
- FIPIC includes **14 island countries**: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu – that are located in the Pacific Ocean, to the northeast of Australia. **Hence statement (b) is correct.**
- **Significance for India:**
 - India’s larger focus is on the **Indian Ocean** where it has sought to play a major role and protect its strategic and commercial interests.
 - The FIPIC initiative then marks a serious effort to **expand India’s engagement in the Pacific region** as well.
 - Despite their relatively small size and considerable distance from India, many of these islands have large exclusive economic zones (EEZs).
- **Summits:**
 - FIPIC III Summit was recently held in Papua New Guinea. **Hence statement (c) is correct.**
 - FIPIC-I, in 2014, took place at Suva, Fiji’s capital city.
 - **FIPIC-II was held in 2015 in Jaipur, India. Hence statement (d) is incorrect.**

17. (c)

Pacific Island Countries (PICs)

- Pacific Island Countries (PICs) is a **cluster of 14 island nations** dotting the Southwestern Pacific:
 - The Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.
- All these islands are located at the crossroads of strategically important **maritime trade corridors**.

1. With the present state of development, Artificial Intelligence can effectively do which of the following?
1. Bring down electricity consumption in industrial units.
 2. Create meaningful short stories and songs.
 3. Disease diagnosis.
 4. Text-to-Speech Conversion.
 5. Wireless transmission of electrical energy.
- Select the correct answer using the codes given below:
- (a) 1, 2, 3 and 5 (b) 1, 3 and 4
(c) 2, 4 and 5 (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
2. Consider the following statements with reference to Mpox:
1. It is a bacterial disease that can spread from person to person.
 2. It was first identified in humans in Denmark.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. Consider the following statements regarding carbon dating:
1. Carbon dating is a widely-used method applied to establish the age of organic material.
 2. The dating method makes use of a particular isotope of carbon called C-12, is radioactive, and decays at a rate that is well known.
- 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. 'Erythritol', is associated with major health concerns, is an example of which of the following?
- (a) Food preservatives (b) Fruit-ripening substances
(c) Dye used in Textile industries (d) Non-sugar Sweeteners
5. Consider the following statements:
1. Spurious liquor is characterised by the liquid mixture containing a higher percentage of methyl alcohol.
 2. The adverse effects of alcohol consumption, from the hangover to cancer, are due to acetaldehyde.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 only (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. With reference to dengue, consider the following statements:
1. Dengue is found in tropical and sub-tropical climates worldwide, mostly in urban and semi-urban areas.
 2. There is evidence of the possibility of maternal transmission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

7. Consider the following statements regarding World Health Statistics:

1. The report is an annual compilation of health and health-related indicators published by the WHO since 2005.
2. 2023 report indicates the improvement in Child mortality, Maternal mortality & Non-communicable diseases (NCD).

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. Which among the following can be the possible result of Wolf-dog Hybridisation?

1. It may lead to immense reduction of certain adaptations in wolves.
2. It may cause the break-up of wolf packs and disruption of social structure.
3. These scenarios could result in extinction of the wolf population via hybridisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. Consider the following statements:

1. In humans the genome consists of 23 pairs of chromosomes.
2. Chromosomes are located only in the Nucleus of the cell.

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. What are 'Pratyush' and 'Mihir', often mentioned in the news?

- (a) Anti-ballistic Missiles
- (b) Supercomputers
- (c) Submarines
- (d) None of the above

11. With reference to narco analysis test, consider the following statements:

1. A drug called sodium pentothal is injected into the body of the accused.
2. Blood pressure, pulse rate, respiration, change in sweat gland activity, blood flow, etc., are measured while the suspect is being questioned.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. Consider the following statements, with reference to the Gaganyaan Mission:

1. It aims to launch human beings (three crew members) to low earth orbit and bring them back safely to earth.
2. The Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3) is the launch vehicle for the mission.

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

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

- 13.** Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding 'XPoSat' that was recently in news:
1. It is meant to study various dynamics of bright astronomical X-ray sources in extreme conditions.
 2. The spacecraft will carry two scientific payloads named POLIX and XSPECT.
- 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.** Consider the following statements, with reference to the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System or NavIC:
1. NavIC signals come to India at a 90-degree angle.
 2. It can reach devices located even in congested areas, dense forests, or mountains.
- 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.** Consider the following pairs:
- | | Satellite-based navigation systems | Country |
|----|---|----------------|
| 1. | Galileo | Russia |
| 2. | Beidou | Japan |
| 3. | Global Positioning System (GPS) | U.S.A |
- How many pairs given above are correctly matched?
- (a) Only one pair
(b) Only two pairs
(c) All three pairs
(d) None
- 16.** With reference to BrahMos Missile, consider the following statements:
1. It is a joint venture between India and France.
 2. Its range was originally capped at 400 km as per obligations of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).
 3. It is capable of being launched from land and sea.
- How many statements given above are correct?
- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None
- 17.** Recently Hysterectomy was seen in the news, it is related to which of the following ?
- (a) Eyes (b) Heart
(c) Liver (d) Uterus
- 18.** Amphibian chytridiomycosis is caused by which of the following?
- (a) Algae (b) Fungi
(c) Virus (d) Bacteria
- 19.** With reference to the exoplanets, consider the following statements:
1. An exoplanet is any planet beyond the solar system.
 2. The free-floating exoplanets orbit only stars.
 3. Massive giant exoplanets are those having a mass equivalent to Jupiter.

How many statements given above are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Energy consumption solutions using AI aim to make the manufacturing process more efficient by forecasting energy demand, and in particular, by anticipating machinery usage and predicting malfunction. Thus, bringing down the electricity consumption in the industrial units.

- Although AI can create stories and songs, the term 'meaningful' is open to interpretation. But as per the UPSC official answer key **statement 2 is not correct** which means AI cannot create meaningful short stories and songs.
- Medical diagnostics are a category of medical tests designed to detect infections, conditions, and diseases. **AI is on par with human experts when it comes to making medical diagnoses** based on images. The integration of AI into current technical infrastructure speeds up the discovery of essential medical data from a variety of sources that are personalized to the patient's needs and the treatment process.
- Artificial intelligence-based software can detect the **text-to-speech (TTS) assistive technology** that uses AI to translate information written in a human-readable form in one language into audio, voice, or speech with a human accent. Such systems turn text into audio or speech output using AI-driven algorithms as the input.
- Wireless power transmission (WPT) is the efficient transmission of electric power from one point to another through a vacuum or an atmosphere without the use of wire or any other substance. The power can be transmitted using inductive coupling for short range, resonant induction for mid-range, and electromagnetic wave power transfer for high range. The basic concept behind the **electromagnetic approach of WPT is magnetic induction and not AI. Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

2. (d)

In News: The World Health Organization (WHO) said that Mpox was no longer a global health emergency.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct: Mpox is an infectious disease caused by the **monkeypox virus**.

- It can cause a painful rash, enlarged lymph nodes, and fever. It can spread from person to person or occasionally from animal to person.
- It was discovered in Denmark (1958) in monkeys kept for research and the first reported human case of Mpox was a nine-month-old boy in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC, 1970)**.
 - In 2022, the disease's name was changed by WHO from '**monkeypox**' to '**mpox**' to reduce the racial and sexual stigma surrounding it.

3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Carbon dating is a widely-used method applied to establish the age of organic material, things that were once living. Living things have carbon in them in various forms.

Statement 2 is not correct: The dating method makes use of the fact that a particular **isotope of carbon called C-14**, with an atomic mass of 14, is radioactive, and decays at a rate that is well known.

- **Carbon-14 is radioactive** and reduces to one-half of itself in about 5,730 years. This is what is known as its 'half-life'.

4. (d)

The World Health Organization (WHO) has released a new guideline on **non-sugar sweeteners (NSS)**, which recommends against the use of NSS to control body weight or reduce the risk of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Common NSS include acesulfame K, erythritol, aspartame, advantame, cyclamates, neotame, saccharin, sucralose, stevia and stevia derivatives. As per the recent study, the artificial sweetener, erythritol (sold singly or combined with other artificial sweeteners such as stevia), can induce thrombosis (clotting), thus having potential to cause heart attack or stroke over three years. Saccharine was used in both World Wars for sugar rationing. In laboratory animals, it was found to induce bladder cancer. Aspartame is toxic to patients who suffer from a rare disorder called phenylketonuria. It has been blamed for brain tumours and chronic fatigue syndrome.

5. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: In the beverages consumed for **recreational purposes**, the alcohol in question is almost **always ethanol**. Technically, **ethanol is a psychoactive drug that**, in low doses, reduces the level of neurotransmission in the body, leading to its typical intoxicating effects.

- Spurious liquor contains a higher percentage of methyl alcohol which is poisonous. Consumption of such liquor may cause blindness, other serious health problems and even death.
- In many cases, **such liquor is typically a home-made liquor**, such as arrack, to which methanol was added to strengthen the intoxicating effects or to increase its bulk volume.

Statement 2 is correct: The World Health Organization has found that **no level of its consumption is safe for health**. Long-term use leads to **dependence, heightens the risk of some cancers and heart disease, and may eventually cause death**.

6. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Dengue Virus (DENV)

- Dengue is a viral infection caused by the **dengue virus (DENV)**, transmitted to humans through the bite of infected mosquitoes.
- **DENV is a pathogenic arthropod-borne flavivirus (arbovirus)**, it is a single-stranded and positive-sense RNA molecule belonging to the family **Flaviviridae**.

Statement 2 is correct: Transmission

- **Transmission through the mosquito bite:** The virus is transmitted to humans through the bites of infected female mosquitoes, primarily the **Aedes aegypti mosquito**. Other species within the Aedes genus can also act as vectors, but their contribution is secondary to Aedes aegypti.
- **Human-to-mosquito transmission:** Mosquitoes can get infected by people who are viremic with DENV. This can be someone who has a symptomatic dengue infection, also people who show no signs of illness as well (they are asymptomatic).
- Human-to-mosquito transmission can occur up to 2 days before someone shows symptoms of the illness, and up to 2 days after the fever has resolved.
- **Maternal transmission:** There is evidence of the possibility of maternal transmission (from a pregnant mother to her baby).

7. (a)

World Health Statistics

- The report is an annual compilation of health and health-related indicators, which has been published by the WHO since 2005. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The World Health Statistics reports present the most recent health statistics for the WHO Member States and each edition supersedes the previous one.

World Health Statistics 2023:

- **Non-communicable diseases (NCD):**

- After 2015, the rate of progress has worsened and the burden of NCDs has grown immensely. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**
 - The world is also facing an ever-growing threat of **non-communicable diseases (NCD)** and climate change, the paper said.
- Without faster progress, no regions will achieve the **SDG target for NCD mortality** by 2030 — and half still won't by 2048, the global health body pointed out.

- **Achievements:**

- Population **health has notably improved** globally since 2000.
 - **Child mortality** has halved,
 - **Maternal mortality** has fallen by a third,
 - The incidence of many infectious diseases — including human immunodeficiency virus, tuberculosis and malaria — has dropped.
- The **risks from dying prematurely from NCDs and injuries** have declined and global life expectancy at birth rose from 67 years in 2000 to 73 years in 2019.

8. (d)

Statement 1, 2 and 3 are correct: The first ever genetic detection of wolf-dog hybridization in Indian savannahs claimed that wolf (*Canis lupus*)-dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*) hybridisation **may lead to immense reduction of certain adaptations in wolves** eventually causing a drop in wolf populations.

- Such hybridisation is complex among canid species. Both sexes of canid hybrids are fertile, in contrast to the other mammalian species where males are sterile with very few exceptions. **This makes the introgression of the dog genome into wolves and vice versa possible.**
- High population turnover and loss of breeding members may cause the **break-up of wolf packs and disruption of social structure**. Such factors can also further increase hybridisation rates.
- These scenarios could drive these wild populations into a **hybridisation vortex** which eventually results in **extinction via hybridisation**.

9. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid (DNA) is the **information molecule for all living organisms**. All of the DNA of an organism is called its genome.

- In humans, the genome consists of 23 pairs of chromosomes located in the cell's nucleus, as well as a small chromosome in the cell's mitochondria. Hence Statement 2 is not correct.
- A genome contains all the information needed for an individual to develop and function.

10. (b)

A supercomputer is a computer that performs at or near the **highest operational rate for computers**.

- These computers **leverage a memory block along with multiple central processing units** grouped into 'compute nodes' — sometimes tens of thousands of nodes.
- Currently India's most powerful, civilian supercomputers — **Pratyush and Mihir** — with a combined capacity of 6.8 petaflops are housed at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, and the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), Noida, respectively.
- The new supercomputers too will be housed at the IITM and NCMRWF.
- The **fastest high-performance computing system** in the world is currently the Frontier-Cray system at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, United States.

11. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: In a 'narco' or narco analysis test, a drug called **sodium pentothal** is injected into the body of the accused, which transports them to a hypnotic or sedated state in which their **imagination is neutralised**.

- In this hypnotic state, the accused is understood as being incapable of lying and is expected to divulge information that is true.

Statement 2 is not correct: A polygraph test is carried out on the assumption that **physiological responses** triggered when one is lying are different from what they otherwise would be.

- Rather than injecting drugs into the body, **polygraph tests attach instruments** like cardio-cuffs or sensitive electrodes to the suspect and measure variables such as blood pressure, pulse rate, respiration, change in sweat gland activity, blood flow, etc., while the suspect is being questioned.

12. (d)

Both Statement 1 and 2 are correct: Gaganyaan Mission

- **About:** The Gaganyaan mission aims to demonstrate the capability to launch **human beings (three crew members)** to **low earth orbit** and bring them back safely to earth by landing them in either the Bay of Bengal or the Arabian Sea.
 - **Low-Earth orbit (often known as LEO)** encompasses Earth-centered orbits with an altitude of 2,000 km or less.
- **Objective:** To demonstrate indigenous capability to undertake human space flight mission to LEO.
- **Launch Vehicles:** The **Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3)** is the launch vehicle for the Gaganyaan mission.
 - All systems in the **LVM3 launch vehicle** are reconfigured to meet human rating requirements and named **Human Rated LVM3 (HLVM3)**.

13. (c)

XPoSat mission

- **About:**
 - It is India's first, and only the world's second polarimetry mission.
 - The Indian Space Research Organisation is collaborating with the Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bengaluru, an autonomous research institute, to build the X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat).
- **Purpose:**
 - It is meant to **study various dynamics** of bright astronomical X-ray sources in extreme conditions. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **XPoSat's payloads:** The spacecraft will carry two scientific payloads in a low earth orbit.
- **POLIX:**
 - The primary payload POLIX (Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays) will measure the polarimetry parameters (degree and angle of polarisation).
- **XSPECT:**
 - The XSPECT (X-ray Spectroscopy and Timing) payload will give spectroscopic information (on how light is absorbed and emitted by objects).
 - It would observe several types of sources, such as X-ray pulsars, blackhole binaries, low-magnetic field neutron stars, etc.
 - **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

14. (c)

Both Statement 1 and 2 are correct: NavIC is better than GPS in some aspects. While GPS can get you within 20 metres of your target, **NavIC is more accurate and can get you even closer—within 5 metres.**

- For individual users, this might not be significant but for military equipment like guided missiles, it is crucial.
 - However, unlike GPS, which can be used anywhere in the world, NavIC is regional and can only be used within India and up to 1,500 km from its borders.

- NavIC uses satellites in high geo-stationary orbit — the satellites move at a constant speed relative to Earth, so they are always looking over the same region on Earth.
- NavIC signals come to India at a 90-degree angle, making it easier for them to reach devices located even in congested areas, dense forests, or mountains.

15. (a)

There are **four global satellite-based navigation systems** — the **American Global Positioning System GPS**, the Russian GLONASS (GLObalnaya NAVigatsionnaya Sputnikovaya Sistema), the **European Galileo**, and the **Chinese Beidou**. Japan has a four-satellite system that can augment GPS signals over the country, similar to India's GAGAN (GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation).

16. (a)

In News : India-Russia defence Joint Venture BrahMos Aerospace has embarked on a glorious milestone as it completed 25 years .

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : **BrahMos** is a joint venture between **India's** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and **Russia's** NPO Mashinostroyeniya.

- The missile derives its name from the Brahmaputra and Moskva rivers.
 - The BrahMos JV was formed in 1998 and the first successful launch of the missile took place in 2001.
 - The range of the BrahMos was originally limited to **290 km** as per obligations of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) of which Russia was a signatory. Following India's entry into the club in June 2016, plans were announced to extend the range initially to 450 km and subsequently to 600 km.

Statement 3 is correct : BrahMos is a **two-stage missile** with a solid propellant booster engine.

- The missile is capable of being launched from **land, sea, sub-sea and air against surface and sea-based targets** and has been long inducted by the Indian armed forces.

17. (d)

In News : The Union Health Ministry recently urged State governments to audit hysterectomy trends in public and private hospitals, in response to a Supreme Court petition arguing that women from marginalised locations are at risk of unjustified hysterectomies for economic gains and exploitation.

- Hysterectomy is an operation to remove the uterus.
- **The criteria for getting a hysterectomy:** The highest percentage of hysterectomies were to treat excessive menstrual bleeding or pain (51.8%); 24.94% for fibroids; 24.94% for cysts and 11.08% for uterine disorder or rupture, according to NFHS-5 data.

18. (b)

Fungal Disease: Amphibian chytridiomycosis is an **infectious fungal disease** that can be **fatal to amphibians**.

- Chytridiomycosis is a skin disease in amphibians caused by either of two species of amphibian chytrid fungus. They are called Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis and Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans.

19. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: An exoplanet is any planet beyond the solar system.

Statement 2 and 3 are not correct: Most orbit other stars, but **free-floating exoplanets**, called rogue planets, **orbit the galactic center and are untethered to any star**.

- Massive giant exoplanets are those having a mass greater than **four times that of Jupiter**.

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. It is a natural gum originally consisting of the hardened sap of the Acacia tree. It is harvested commercially from wild trees, mostly in Sudan and throughout the Sahel region. It is soluble in water, edible, and used primarily in the food industry and soft-drink industry as a stabilizer. Which of the following gums is described above?
- (a) Guar gum (b) Xanthan gum
(c) Gum arabic (d) Gum Tragacanth
2. Consider the followings statements
1. The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) has a target of a 70% reduction in particulate matter concentration in cities by 2026.
2. India is committed to reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% by 2070.
- 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. 2023 is the year for the Global Stocktake. It will provide the periodic review of which of the following?
- (a) Burden of Noncommunicable diseases
(b) Food security
(c) Climate action
(d) Natural calamities
4. What is greenwashing?
- (a) It refers to misleading the general public into believing that companies are doing more for the environment than they actually are.
(b) It is a set of environment conservation policy framework framed by the industries.
(c) It is the method widely-used to establish the age of organic material.
(d) None of the above
5. With reference to the Hammerhead shark, consider the following statements:
1. Scalloped hammerheads have a distinct T-shaped head.
2. They are found worldwide in warmer waters along coastlines and continental shelves.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Consider the following statements with reference to Permafrost.
1. It is any ground that remains completely frozen for at least 10 years.
2. It is most common in regions with high mountains and in Earth's higher latitudes.
3. It is made of a combination of soil, rocks, and sand that are held together by ice.
- 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
7. With reference to the Forest Rights Act, 2006, consider the following statements:
1. For the first time the Forest Rights Act recognises and secures Community Rights.

2. It provides Right to intellectual property and traditional knowledge.
 3. There is no mention of rights on forest land and rehabilitation for traditional forest dwellers.
- 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

8. Consider the followings statement with reference to Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update:

1. It is published annually by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
2. According to recent data, there is a 66% chance of exceeding the 1.5°C threshold in at least one year between 2023 and 2027.

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. The recently released 'State of the Global Climate 2022 report' is published by which of the following?

- (a) World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
(b) Climate Action Network
(c) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
(d) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

10. Consider the following statements, with reference to the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM):

1. Its primary objective is to avert 'carbon leakage'.
2. CBAM will initially apply to imports from the Chemical and Textile sector.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with reference to the People's Biodiversity Register (PBR):

1. It serves as a comprehensive record of locally available Bio-resources including the landscape and demography of a particular area or village.
2. It is prepared by the Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) as per Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
3. Uttarakhand was the first major metropolitan city in India to make a detailed PBR.

Choose the correct answer using the code given below:

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

12. Consider the following statements, with reference to Axolotls:

1. It is an aquatic species of salamander.
2. It is listed as critically endangered in the wild by IUCN.
3. The species faces threats due to urbanization in Mexico City.

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

1: (c)

- Gum arabic is a natural gum originally consisting of the hardened sap of two species of the Acacia tree.
- The gum is harvested commercially from wild trees, mostly in Sudan (80%) and throughout the Sahel region, from Senegal to Somalia.
- It is soluble in water, edible, and used primarily in the food industry and soft-drink industry as a stabilizer (which helps bind together food and drink ingredients).

2. (d)

In News: Delhi Chief Minister announced a 14-point action plan to reduce air pollution during the summer months with a focus on controlling dust pollution.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in January, 2019 with an aim to improve air quality in 131 cities (non-attainment cities and Million Plus Cities) in 24 States/UTs by engaging all stakeholders.

- The programme envisages to achieve reductions up to 40% or achievement of National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter₁₀ (PM₁₀) concentrations by 2025-26.
- India updated its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – plans to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, promising to **reduce the emissions intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030**, from the **2005** level, and achieve 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.

3. (c)

Global Stocktake:

- **2023 is the year for the Global Stocktake.**
 - Global Stocktake is essentially a periodic review of global climate action which aims to assess whether current efforts will enable us to reach the objectives set out in the Paris Agreement.
 - This is the first Global Stocktake year since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015 and the report has been underway for the past two years.
 - It is set to be released in September of 2023.
 - The Stocktake will help align efforts on climate action, including measures that need to be put in place to bridge the gaps in progress.

4. (a)

What is 'greenwashing'?

Greenwashing refers to misleading the general public into believing that companies, sovereigns or civic administrators are doing more for the environment than they actually are.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The hammerhead sharks are a group of sharks that form the family Sphyrnidae.

- List of Species include: Winghead shark, Scalloped bonnethead, Scalloped hammerhead, Carolina hammerhead, Scoophead, Great hammerhead, Bonnethead, Smalleye hammerhead and Smooth hammerhead.
- They are named as their heads are flattened and laterally extended into a "hammer" shape called a cephalofoil. This shape differs between species; examples are: **a distinct T-shape in the great hammerhead and a rounded head with a central notch in the scalloped hammerhead.**

Statement 2 is correct: Distribution: Hammerheads are found worldwide in warmer waters along coastlines and continental shelves.

6. (b)

In News: According to a new study, with rising global temperatures, thawing permafrost is likely to destabilise thousands of industrial sites and linked contaminated areas in the Arctic.

Statement 1 is not correct: Permafrost is essentially any ground that stays frozen — **0 degree Celsius or lower** — for at least **two years straight**.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct: These permanently frozen grounds are most common in regions with **high mountains and in Earth's higher latitudes—near the North and South Poles**.

- They are often found in Arctic regions such as Greenland, Alaska (the United States), Canada, Russia, and Eastern Europe.
- It is composed of “a **combination of soil, rocks, and sand** that are held together by ice. The soil and ice in permafrost stay frozen all year long.”
 - However, although the ground remains perennially frozen, permafrost regions aren't always covered with snow

7. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: For the **first time Forest Rights Act recognises and secures Community Rights** or rights over common property resources of the communities in addition to their individual rights.

Statement 2 is correct: The Act encompasses Rights of Self-cultivation and Habitation which are usually regarded as **Individual rights; and Community Rights** as Grazing, Fishing and access to Water bodies in forests, **Habitat Rights** for PVTGs, Traditional Seasonal Resource access of Nomadic and Pastoral community, access to biodiversity, **community right to intellectual property and traditional knowledge**, recognition of traditional customary rights and right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forest resource for sustainable use.

Statement 3 is not correct: Allocation of Forest Land: It also provides rights to allocation of forest land for **developmental purposes** to fulfil basic infrastructural needs of the community. In conjunction with the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Settlement Act, 2013 **FRA protects the tribal population from eviction without rehabilitation and settlement**.

8. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Recently, the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** issued the Global Annual to Decadal Climate Update. It is produced annually in May and summarizes the predicted future of the global climate over the next year and the next five years.

Statement 2 is correct: Global temperatures are likely to surge to record levels in the next five years, fuelled by heat-trapping greenhouse gases and a naturally occurring El Niño event.

- The annual mean global near-surface temperature for each year between 2023 and 2027 is predicted to be between 1.1°C and 1.8°C higher than the 1850-1900 average.
 - There is a **66% chance** that the annual average near-surface global temperature between **2023 and 2027** will be **more than 1.5°C** above pre-industrial levels for at least one year.

9. (a)

Recently, the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** has released the **State of the Global Climate Report 2022**.

- **It focuses on key climate indicators:**
 - greenhouse gases, temperatures, sea level rise, ocean heat and acidification, sea ice and glaciers. It also highlights the impacts of climate change and extreme weather.
- **Greenhouse gases & rising temperature:**
 - It shows the **planetary scale changes** on land, in the ocean and in the atmosphere caused by record levels of heat-trapping greenhouse gases.
 - It has warned that **at least one of the next four years** could be **1.5 degrees hotter** than the pre-industrial average.

- **About World Meteorological Organization (WMO):**

- It is an intergovernmental organization with a membership of 193 Member States and Territories.
- The Secretariat, headquartered in Geneva.

10. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: CBAM is one of the elements of the **EU Green Deal**, the goal of which is to reduce **GHG emissions by 55% by 2030**.

- CBAM is aimed at **equalizing the price of carbon paid for EU** products operating under the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) and imported goods.
- It refers to a phenomenon where a **EU manufacturer moves carbon-intensive production to countries outside the region with less stringent climate policies**. Its primary objective is to avert 'carbon leakage'.

Statement 2 is not correct: The CBAM will initially apply to imports of the following goods, these **sectors have a high risk of carbon leakage and high carbon emissions**.

- Cement
- Iron and steel
- Aluminium
- Fertilisers
- Electricity

11. (a)

Statements 1 and 2 are correct:

- The campaign was launched by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- It was launched with the objective of documentation and preservation of India's rich biological diversity. It serves as a comprehensive record of locally available Bio-resources including the landscape and demography of a particular area or village.
- As per Biological Diversity Act, 2002, the Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) is to prepare People's Biodiversity Register in which the biological diversity including preservation of habitats, conservation of land races, folk varieties & cultivars, domesticated stocks and breeds of animals and microorganisms and chronicling of knowledge relating to biological diversity of the area is documented.

Statement 3 is not correct: Kolkata became the first major metropolitan city in India to prepare a detailed register of biodiversity.

12. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Family: The axolotl is a species of salamander (lizard-like amphibians).

- **Habitat:** Even though **they are amphibians, axolotls remain aquatic** throughout their lives. Hence, the common name, 'axolotl', of Aztec origin, has been variously interpreted as 'water dog', 'water twin', 'water sprite', or 'water slave'.

Statement 2 is correct: Status: It is listed as **critically endangered** in the wild by IUCN and is listed under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Statement 3 is correct: Threats: Axolotl faces threats due to **urbanization in Mexico City** and consequent water pollution, as well as the introduction of invasive species such as tilapia and perch.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Consider the following statements with reference to Bluesky, recently seen in the news
1. It is a high-altitude astronomy station.
 2. It is developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration(NASA).
- 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. What is the Kudumbashree model, recently seen in the news?
- (a) Task force of volunteers under Namami Gange.
(b) The largest self-help group network in the country.
(c) Type of the sculpture art from Tamil Nadu.
(d) New initiative under G20 Presidency of India.
3. Consider the following statements, with reference to International Booker Prize:
1. It is given every year to an English language book translated into foreign language.
 2. The prize recognises the work of the author only.
 3. Novels and collections of short stories are both eligible for the prize.
- 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
4. Consider the following statements, with reference to Joint Malnutrition Estimates:
1. Stunting among children under five years in India has increased.
 2. The prevalence of obesity has marginally decreased in India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. With reference to India's Higher Education, consider the following statements:
1. In India it denotes the tertiary level education that is imparted after graduation.
 2. All the institutions of higher education fall under the purview of the Ministry of Education.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1: (d)

In News: Bluesky has come to the fore as a potential claimant to Twitter's throne.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : Bluesky is a **micro-blogging platform** and **social web** built on the **AT Protocol (Authenticated Transport Protocol)**.

- The CEO of Bluesky is Jay Graber, a software engineer with a background in cryptocurrency.
 - Bluesky was launched in 2019 by former Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey, who chose Ms. Graber to lead the project.

- Bluesky might be classified as a Twitter competitor due to its founding team but it is different in terms of its structure, as it is meant to form part of a decentralised ecosystem.
- It aims to “**develop and drive large-scale adoption** of technologies for open and decentralized public conversation.”

2. (b)

Kudumbashree is the largest self-help group network in the country.

- Kudumbashree operates at the grassroots level, organizing women into neighbourhood groups (NHGs), which then form larger community-level and ward-level organizations.
- It has a three-tier structure for its women community network, with Neighbourhood Groups (NHGs) at the lowest level, Area Development Societies (ADS) at the middle level, and Community Development Societies (CDS) at the local government level.

3. (a)

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct: The International Booker Prize is given every year to a **foreign language book translated into English** and published in Britain or Ireland.

- From 2016 onwards, the prize equally recognises the work of both author and translator.

Statement 3 is correct: Novels and collections of short stories are both eligible for the prize.

4. (d)

Both Statement 1 and 2 are not correct: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organisation (WHO) and World Bank have released **Joint Malnutrition Estimates**.

Reduction in Stunting: Corresponding with global and regional trends, India continues to show a reduction in stunting and recorded **1.6 crore fewer stunted children under five years in 2022 than in 2012**.

- Stunting among children under five years in India **dropped from a prevalence rate of 41.6% in 2012 to 31.7% in 2022** with the numbers dropping from 52 lakh to 36 lakh.
- This was accompanied by India's share of the global burden of stunting declining from **30% to 25% in the past decade**.
 - **Wasting and Obesity Increased:** However, wasting continues to remain a concern and so does growing levels of obesity.
- The overall prevalence of wasting in 2022 was 18.7% in India, with a share of 49% in the global burden.
- The prevalence of obesity marginally increased in a decade from 2.2% in 2012 to 2.8% in 2022 thereby contributing to 8.8% of the global share.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The term 'higher education' with respect to India denotes the tertiary level education that is **imparted after 12 years of schooling** (10 years of primary education and 2 years of secondary education).

- The structure of Indian Higher Education is three-layered, consisting of Universities, Colleges, and Courses.

Statement 2 is correct: All these institutions fall under the purview of the **Ministry of Education**.

