

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) can be defined as the legal tender issued by the Reserve Bank of India.
2. Wholesale Digital Currency (CBDC-W) is designed for restricted access to select financial institutions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Context:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that the **first pilot in the Digital Rupee, Wholesale segment (e₹ -W)** will commence on November 1, 2022.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : The Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) can be defined as the **legal tender issued by the Reserve Bank of India**. CBDC is the same as a sovereign currency and is exchangeable one-to-one at par with the fiat currency, the regulator mentioned. The RBI has proposed to issue two versions of Digital Rupee – general purpose or retail (CBDC-R) and wholesale (CBDC-W). Retail CBDC can be used by all including the private sector, non-financial consumers, and businesses. **Wholesale CBDC is designed for restricted access to select financial institutions.**

[Q] Recently National Unity Day was observed in India ,it is related to which of the following personalities ?

- (a) Mahatma Gandhi
- (b) Jawaharlal Nehru
- (c) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- (d) BR Ambedkar

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News :** The Prime Minister of India paid homage to Sardar Patel at the Statue of Unity and participated in the **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas-related events** .

- Every year, October 31 is marked as National Unity Day or Rashtriya Ekta Diwas in India to observe **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary**.
 - It was introduced by the Government of India in 2014.

[Q] Which of the following is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)?

1. Saudi Arabia
2. Iraq
3. Qatar
4. Bahrain

Select the correct answer using the code given below

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

- (d) 1,2,3 and 4

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Context:** India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member countries are **expected**

to start negotiations for a free trade agreement next month.

- GCC is a **union of six countries** in the Gulf region — Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.
 - It was established by an agreement concluded in 1981 among Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE in view of their special relations, geographic proximity, similar political systems based on Islamic beliefs, joint destiny and common objectives.
 - The Secretariat is located in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
 - It is a political, economic, social, and regional organisation according to its charter.



Image Courtesy: [TH](#)

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding the International conference for Election Management Bodies (EMBs), 2022:

1. It was hosted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) .
2. It was held under the aegis of the United States’ ‘Summit for Democracy’ platform.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] The Chief Election Commissioner addressed an international conference for EMBs hosted by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Statement 1 is not correct : The two-day international conference was hosted by the Election Commission of India (ECI) in New Delhi

Statement 2 is correct : The conference was held under the aegis of the United States’ ‘Summit for Democracy’ platform.

‘Summit for Democracy’, was an initiative of the US President hosted in December 2021.

- It brings together government, civil society, and the private sector leaders in a shared effort.

[Q] Which of the following amendments was/were recently notified by the Ministry of

Electronics and IT (MeitY) to the Information Technology Rules, 2021?

1. The amendment imposes a legal obligation on intermediaries to take reasonable efforts to prevent users from uploading harmful/unlawful content.
2. Grievance Appellate Committee(s) will be established to allow users to appeal against decisions taken by intermediaries on user complaints.
3. Users will not have the right to approach courts for any remedy.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News :** Recently, The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) has notified amendments to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 (IT Rules, 2021).

Key changes effected in the rules are as under:

- Currently, intermediaries are only required to inform users about not uploading certain categories of harmful/unlawful content. These amendments impose a legal obligation on intermediaries to take reasonable efforts to prevent users from uploading such content. The new provision will ensure that the intermediary's obligation is not a mere formality. **(Statement 1 is correct)**
- The amendment requires intermediaries to respect the rights guaranteed to users under the Constitution, including a reasonable expectation of due diligence, privacy and transparency.
- Grievance Appellate Committee(s) will be established to allow users to appeal against the inaction of, or decisions taken by intermediaries on user complaints. **(Statement 2 is correct)**
- However, users will always have the right to approach courts for any remedy. **(Statement 3 is not correct)**

[Q] Campaigns like 'warrior moms' & 'Kids First', which were recently in the news, are related to which of the following?

- (a) Kids stuck in a war zone
- (b) Protecting children from sexual offences
- (c) Protecting children from Climate Change
- (d) Prenatal development

[ANS] c

[SOL] **COP27 & voices and needs of kids**

- The annual United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), will soon begin in the **Egyptian** resort town of **Sharm el-Shaikh**.
- Several organisations such as '**Our Kids' Climate, Parents For Future, Warrior Moms**' will be calling on world leaders to make sure that the health, futures and rights of children are central to the Cop27 agenda, discussions and negotiations.
 - The delegation from **South Africa, Botswana, Ghana, India, Brazil and the United Kingdom** will be heading to Sharm-el-Sheikh in Africa to put the voices and needs of kids at the forefront of the delegates' minds.
 - They would also like to remind world leaders and politicians that they are parents too, and it is every parent's foremost duty to protect their children and give them a healthy future.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding SCO's Council of Heads of Government (CHG) Meeting of 2022:

1. It was the 21st meeting hosted under the chairmanship of India in New Delhi.
 2. CHG approves the budget, considers and decides upon issues related to economic spheres.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] The 21st Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) was recently held in **Nur-Sultan** in virtual format under the **chairmanship of Kazakhstan**. Hence statement 1 is incorrect.

- **Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation:**
 - **Heads of State Council:**
 - It is the supreme SCO body that decides its internal functioning and its interaction with other States & international organisations.
 - It also considers contemporary international issues.
 - **Council of Heads of Government (CHG):**
 - It approves the budget, considers and decides upon issues related to economic spheres of interaction within SCO. Hence statement 2 is correct.
 - **Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs:**
 - It considers issues related to day-to-day activities.
 - **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS):**
 - It was established to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism.
 - **SCO Secretariat:**
 - It is based in Beijing.
 - It provides informational, analytical & organisational support.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Coronal holes do not appear throughout the solar cycle.
2. Senna spectabilis is an exotic tree and it was introduced as an ornamental species and for use as firewood from South and Central America.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] About Senna spectabilis

- Senna spectabilis is an exotic tree and it was introduced as an ornamental species and for use as firewood from South and Central America.
- It has become highly invasive in the Sigur plateau in both the core and buffer zones of the MTR.

About Coronal Hole

- It is a patch of the Sun's atmosphere with much lower density than elsewhere.

- In ultraviolet views of the Sun, coronal holes appear as dark splotches.
- These are regions where the **Sun's magnetic field lines** are **connected directly to interplanetary space**, allowing **solar material to escape out** in a **high-speed stream of solar wind**, leaving a dark **"hole"** near the surface of the Sun.
- Coronal holes appear **throughout the solar cycle**, but can last for much longer periods of time during solar minimums, when the Sun is less active.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Srijan portal is one stop shop online portal for augmenting indigenisation efforts of Defence Public Sector Undertakings.
2. Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) has been launched in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Recently, the Prime Minister of India **laid the foundation stone** for the C-295 transport aircraft manufacturing facility in **Vadodara, Gujarat**.

Statement 1 is correct: Pursuant to 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' announcement, the Department of Defence Production/Ministry of Defence/Government of India has developed this portal named, **Srijan Defence Portal**, as "Opportunities for Make in India in Defence". The main objective of the portal is to partner the private sector in indigenisation efforts of Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and the Armed Forces. The portal will be a non-transactional online marketplace platform.

Statement 2 is correct: Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC) aims at supporting Startups/MSMEs/Innovators to create prototypes and/or commercialize products/solutions in the area of National Defence and Security. It has been launched by the Ministry of Defence in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. At present, an non-resident Indians (NRI) settled in foreign land cannot become an elector in the electoral roll in India.
2. A person who is not a citizen of India is not eligible for registration as a voter in the electoral rolls 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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Recently, the Union government told the Supreme Court (SC) that it was considering ways to **facilitate non-resident Indians (NRI), especially migrant labourers**, to cast their votes remotely.

Statement 1 is not correct: An overseas elector is a person who is a citizen of India and who has

not acquired citizenship of any other country and is otherwise eligible to be registered as a voter and who is absenting from his place of ordinary residence in India owing to his employment, education or otherwise is eligible to be registered as a voter in the constituency in which his place of residence in India as mentioned in his passport is located. According to the provisions of **Section 20A of the Representation of People Act, 1950**, an NRI settled in foreign land **can become** an elector in the electoral roll in India.

Statement 2 is correct: A person who is not a citizen of India is not eligible for registration as a voter in the electoral rolls in India. Even those who have ceased to be citizens of India on acquiring the citizenship of another country are not eligible to be enrolled in the electoral rolls in India.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Only the Greater One-Horned Rhino is found in India which is also the largest of the rhino species.
2. The Ganges river dolphins can only live in freshwater and are essentially blind.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct: About Gangetic River dolphin

● **Discovery:**

- The Ganges river dolphin was officially **discovered in 1801**.
- They were declared as the **National Aquatic Animal of India in 2009**.

● **Freshwater species:**

- The Gangetic river dolphin is one of the **four freshwater dolphin species in the world**.
- The other three are the **baiji**, now likely extinct from the Yangtze River in China, the **bhulan** of the Indus in Pakistan and the **boto** of the Amazon River in Latin America.

● **Habitat:**

- Ganges river dolphins once lived in the **Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of Nepal, India, and Bangladesh**.
- But the species is **extinct from most of its early distribution ranges**.
- The distribution range of the Ganges river dolphins in India covers seven states namely, **Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal**.

● **Characteristics:**

- The **Ganges river dolphins can only live in freshwater** and are essentially blind.
- They are **frequently found alone** or in small groups, and generally a mother and calf travel together.
- **Females are larger than males** and give birth once every two to three years to only one calf.
- The Dolphin **cannot breathe in the water**. It **surfaces every 30-120 seconds** to breathe in fresh air **as it is a mammal**.
- Navigation and hunting through a highly developed '**sonar system**', using **echolocation (ultrasonic sounds)**.

● **Different names:**

- They are also known as **Susu, Hihu, Blind dolphin, Ganga river dolphin, side**

swimming dolphin and South Asian river dolphin.

- They **hunt by emitting ultrasonic sounds**, which bounces off of fish and other prey, enabling them to see an image in their mind.

- **IUCN Status**

- Ganges river dolphins are listed as **Endangered in the IUCN Red List**.

Statement 2 is correct: Only the Greater One-Horned Rhino is found in India which is also known as the Indian rhino and is the largest of the rhino species.

- **Assam accounts for its largest population** in India and had at least five rhino-bearing areas till the 1980s.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. The maximum number of Biosphere Reserves in Asia are present in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal combined.

2. The International Day for Biosphere Reserves' is celebrated every year on November 3rd since the establishment of UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Both statements are incorrect.

- **Biosphere reserves in Asia:**

- There are 12 BRs in India, four in Sri Lanka, and three in the Maldives.
- Some of the countries in South Asia do not yet have any or enough biosphere reserves.

- **Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal do not have biospheres as yet.**

- In most, if not all cases, the political will is certainly there, but there is a lack of know-how and financial resources.

- **November 3** will be the **first 'The International Day for Biosphere Reserves'**, to be celebrated beginning 2022.

- The UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) was formed in 1971.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding Aadhar:

1. Aadhar details can not be used as proof of identity.

2. Aadhar is a proof of citizenship.

3. The linking of voter IDs and Aadhaar may stop bogus voting.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Aadhar:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.**

- Aadhaar is accepted as Proof of Identity and Proof of Address for an Aadhaar Holder.
- Centre issued the Aadhaar and Other Laws (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019, which allowed banks and telecom operators to collect Aadhaar details as proof of identity.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect.**
 - Aadhaar is only a proof of residence and **not a proof of citizenship**.
- **Statement 3 is correct. Need for Linking Aadhar with voter IDs**
 - To streamline electoral rolls and the process of registration of migrated voters without duplication in the rolls
 - To curb the menace of multiple enrolments of the same person in different places.
 - It will help clean up electoral rolls and facilitate elector registration in the location at which they are “ordinarily resident”.
 - **Government is attempting to stop bogus voting.**
 - The possibility of electors whose names appear in more than one electoral roll or at times more than once in the same electoral roll can be removed.

[Q] With reference to the Black Sea Grain Initiative, consider the following statements:

1. It is a deal brokered by the United Nations (UN) and Russia.
2. The deal was to provide for a safe maritime humanitarian corridor for Ukrainian exports from three of its key ports, namely, Chornomorsk, Odesa and Yuzhny/Pivdennyi.

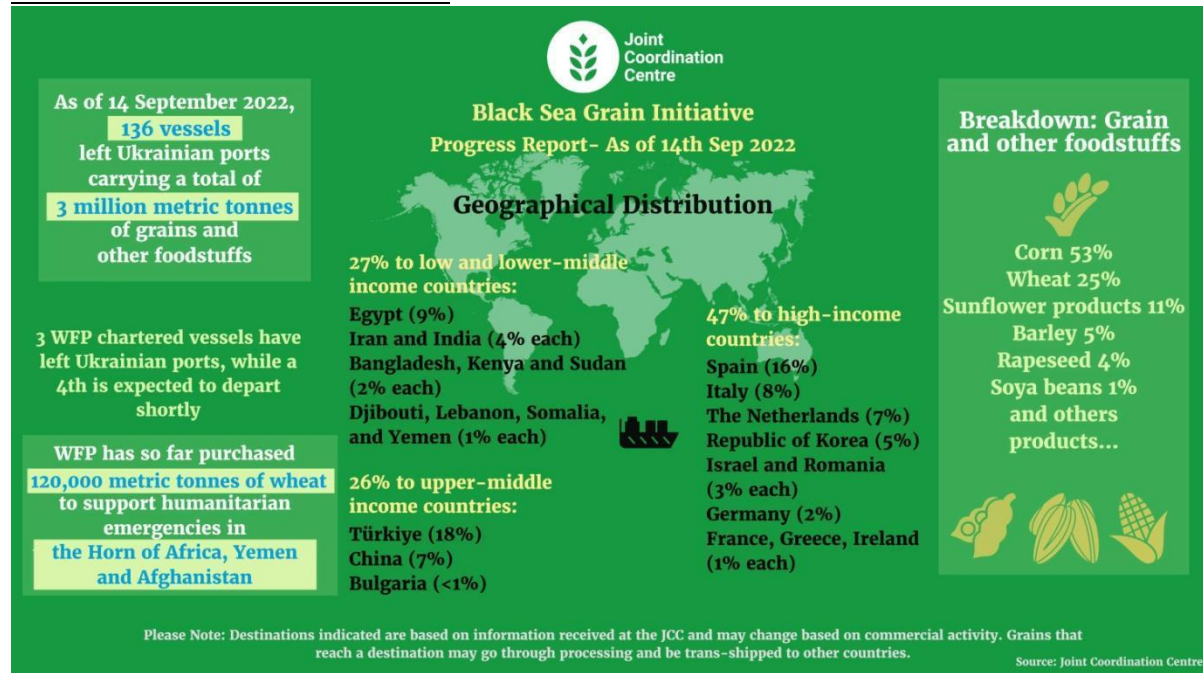
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Russia recently re-joined the Black Sea Grain deal.

About Black Sea Grain Initiative



- The deal was brokered by the **United Nations (UN) and Turkey**.
- The deal was to provide for a **safe maritime humanitarian corridor** for **Ukrainian exports** (particularly for food grains) from three of its key ports, namely, **Chornomorsk, Odesa and Yuzhny/Pivdennyi** in the **Black Sea**.

- It aims to **tackle rising food prices** due to the geopolitical conflict.
- **Joint Coordination Centre (JCC):**
 - The deal put in place a Joint Coordination Centre (JCC), comprising **senior representatives from Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and the UN** for oversight and coordination.
 - **All commercial ships** are required to **register directly with the JCC** to ensure appropriate monitoring, inspection and safe passage.

Significance of the deal

- **Approximately 9.8 million tonnes of grains** have been shipped since the initiative was commenced.
- **People hoarding the grain** in the hope of selling it for a sizable profit owing to the supply crunch were **now obligated to sell**.
- The initiative has also been **credited for having made a huge difference to the global cost of living crisis**.

[Q] Consider the following:

1. International Atomic Energy Agency
 2. Bank for International Settlements
 3. Permanent Court of Arbitration
- India is a member of which of the above?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3

[ANS] d

[SOL] Recently, the Government of India made comments in reference to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Statement 1 is correct: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an intergovernmental organization that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy and to inhibit its use for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons. India is a member of IAEA.

Statement 2 is correct: The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) is an international organisation which fosters international monetary and financial cooperation and serves as a bank for central banks. Sixty-three central banks and monetary authorities are currently members of the BIS including Reserve Bank of India.

Statement 3 is correct: The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) is a non-UN intergovernmental organization located in The Hague, Netherlands with 122 contracting parties. The PCA has developed into a modern, multi-faceted arbitral institution perfectly situated to meet the evolving dispute resolution needs of the international community. India is member of PCA. India ratified the 1899 convention in 1950.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. The Organization for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) is the implementing body in cases of violation of the convention.
2. The Chemical Weapons Convention is administered by the Organisation for the Prohibition

of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)**

- **About:**
 - Came into force in 1975 and the Convention was negotiated by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Aim:**
 - Treaty prohibits the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological weapons.
- **No implementing authority:**
 - There is **no implementation body of the BTWC**, allowing for blatant violations as seen in the past. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**

Chemical Weapons Convention, 1997

- **About:**
 - It is an arms control treaty that allows for the stringent verification of compliance by State Parties.
- **Genesis:**
 - It was adopted by the **Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on 3rd September 1992** after 12 years of negotiations.
- **Administration & prohibition:**
 - It is administered by the **Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - It prohibits the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of CWs by state parties.

[Q] Which of the following can cast a vote during elections in India?

1. Undertrial Prisoners
2. Convicts out on bail
3. People under preventive detention
4. Convicts serving their sentence in jails

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 4 only
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Following can cast vote in India:**

- **Option 2 is correct but 1 is incorrect:**
 - While **convicts out on bail could vote**, under trials, whose innocence or guilt has not been conclusively determined, and those confined in civil persons were deprived of their right to vote.
- **Option 4 is incorrect.**

- Recently a petition challenged the provision in the election law that imposes a **blanket ban on under trials, persons confined in civil prisons and convicts** serving their sentence in jails **from casting their votes**.
- **Option 3 is correct**
- While prisoners are not allowed to vote, **people under preventive detention** can cast their votes through postal ballots.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Cordyceps militaris is a high-value parasitic fungus.
2. The wild Cordyceps militaris is found in the eastern Himalayan belt.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** Cordyceps militaris is a species of fungus in the family Cordycipitaceae, and the type species of the genus Cordyceps. It was originally described by Carl Linnaeus in 1753 as Clavaria militaris.

Statement 2 is correct: Wild Cordyceps mushrooms are found in the eastern Himalayan belt.

[Q] With reference to the volcanoes, consider the following statements:

1. Mauna Loa is one of five volcanoes that together make up the Big Island of Hawaii
2. The Barren Island volcano is an active volcano located in the east of Great Nicobar.

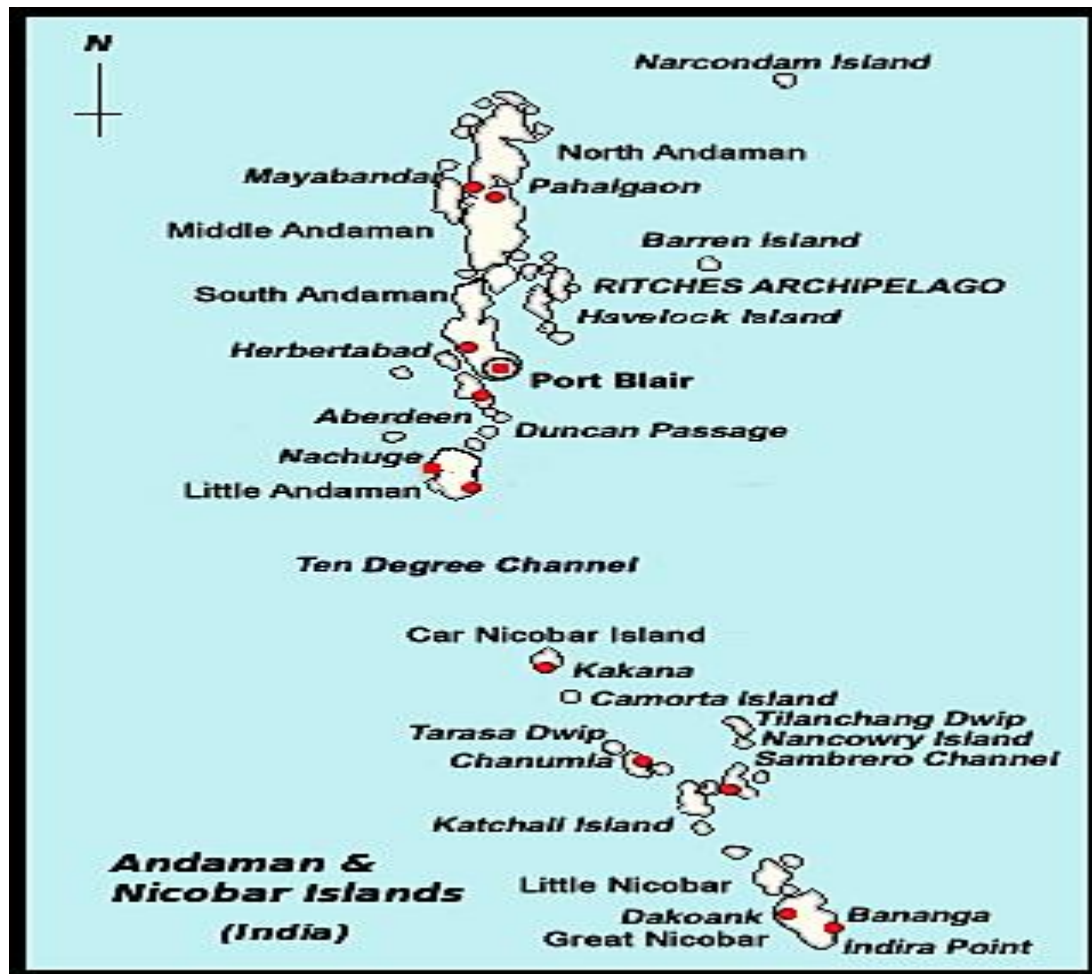
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** Mauna Loa is one of five volcanoes that together make up the Big Island of Hawaii, which is the southernmost island in the Hawaiian archipelago. It's not the tallest (that title goes to Mauna Kea) but it's the largest and makes up about half of the island's land mass. Mauna Loa last erupted 38 years ago. In written history, dating to 1843, it erupted 33 times.

Statement 2 is not correct: Barren Island is an island located in the Andaman Sea. It is the only confirmed active volcano in the Indian subcontinent, and the only active volcano along a chain of volcanoes from Sumatra to Myanmar. It is located around 135 km northeast of Port Blair, the capital of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, southern part of Andaman Island in Andaman Sea.

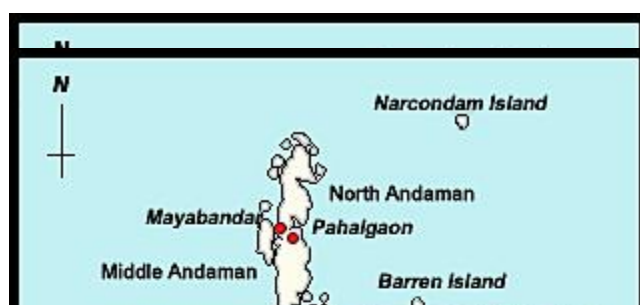


[Q] Recently seen in the news, Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent does not encompass which country?

- (a) Myanmar
- (b) Iraq
- (c) Thailand
- (d) Pakistan

[ANS] b

[SOL] Recently, a new report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was released highlighting the cultivation of Poppy in Afghanistan.



Golden Triangle:

- It includes the regions of **Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand**.
- It is Southeast Asia's main opium-producing region and one of the oldest narcotics supply routes to Europe and North America.

Golden Crescent:

- It includes **Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan**.
- It is a principal global site for opium production and distribution.

[Q] On which of the following grounds can the Governor be removed by the President of India?

1. He is out of sync with the policies and ideologies of the Union Government or the party in power at the Centre.
2. The Union Government has lost confidence in him.
3. Appointment of more favorable persons to this post.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] d

[SOL] **President's power in case of removal of Governor:**

- **Not an arbitrary power:**
 - In its judgment, the Supreme Court, while noting that the President can remove the Governor from office has noted that the **power to remove can't be exercised in an "arbitrary, capricious or unreasonable manner"**.
 - The power will have to be exercised in rare and exceptional circumstances for valid and compelling reasons.
- **A Governor cannot be removed on the ground that:**
 - He is **out of sync with the policies and ideologies** of the Union Government or the party in power at the Centre. **Hence option 1 is incorrect.**
 - Nor can he be removed on the ground that the **Union Government has lost confidence in him**. **Hence option 2 is incorrect.**
 - Thus, a change in central government cannot be a ground for removal of Governors, or to appoint more favorable persons to this post. **Hence option 3 is incorrect.**
- **Can be challenged:**
 - A decision to remove a Governor can be challenged in a court of law.

[Q] Exercise KHANJAR is conducted by India with which of the following countries?

- (a) Kyrgyz Republic
- (b) Tajikistan
- (c) Turkmenistan
- (d) Uzbekistan

[ANS] a

[SOL] Joint Special Forces **Exercise KHANJAR** has now become an annual affair.

- The sixth 'Khanjar' exercise was conducted between Indian and Kyrgyz Special Forces in March, 2019 in Bishkek.
- Fifth exercise was conducted in India in CIJW School, Varaingte (Mizoram) in 2018.
- **India - Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise, 2022:**

- The 9th Edition of this exercise was recently concluded in April 2022.
- Besides sharing special skills and techniques between participating Special Forces contingents, the joint training further strengthened the existing bond between India and Kyrgyzstan.

[Q] With reference to Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY), consider the following statements:

1. It has been designed to incentivise employers for the generation of new employment only.
2. The Government of India is paying the Employer's contribution i.e. 12% for a period of five years to the new employees.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) **upheld the Employees' Pension (Amendment) Scheme, 2014** of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) as "legal and valid".

Statement 1 is correct: The Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY) scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment. It has been designed to incentivise employers for the generation of new employment.

Statement 2 is not correct: Under the scheme, the Government of India is paying the Employer's contribution i.e. **12% for a period of three years** to the new employees earning wages less than or equal to Rs. 15,000/- through EPFO. The beneficiaries registered up to 31st March 2019 will continue to receive the benefit for 3 years from the date of registration under the scheme i.e. up to 31st March 2022.

[Q] With reference to the National Mission on Natural Farming, consider the following statements:

1. The mission aims to popularize integrated agriculture-animal husbandry models based on foreign cows and global resources.
2. At the national level, NMNF is steered through a National Steering Committee (NSC) under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Recently, the Union Agriculture Minister **launched a portal** on the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) for the benefit of the farming community.

Statement 1 is not correct: National Mission on Natural farming aims at creating institutional capacities for documentation and dissemination of best practices, make practicing farmers as partners in promotion strategy, ensure capacity building and continuous handholding and finally attracting farmers to natural farming willingly on the merit of the system.

- To promote alternative system of farming for freedom from external purchased inputs, cost reduction and thereby increasing income of farmers

- **To popularize integrated agriculture-animal husbandry models based on desi cow and local resources.**
- To collect, validate and document Natural Farming practices being practiced in various parts of the country and to encourage participatory research with farmers on further up scaling
- To undertake activities for awareness creation, capacity building, promotion and demonstration of Natural Farming.
- To create standards, certification procedure and branding for Natural Farming products for national and international markets.

Statement 2 is not correct: At the national level, NMNF is steered through a National Steering Committee (NSC) under the **Chairmanship of Hon'ble Agriculture Minister**. NSC will be the policy making body providing overall direction and guidance to Mission, monitor and review its progress and performance. NSC will be empowered to lay down and amend operational guidelines. The NSC will meet at least twice a year. The National Steering Committee will be assisted by a National Executive Committee (NEC), constituted at the level of the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW), that will guide the National Mission on Natural Farming. NEC shall sanction the proposals from central lead agencies and from states, oversee the implementation of the Mission, undertake monitoring, surveillance and suggest mid-course correction (if needed).

[Q] With reference to the Food and Agriculture Organization, consider the following statements:

1. It is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
2. The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) is released by the Food and Agriculture Organization.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Food and Agriculture Organization**

- **About:**
 - It is a specialized agency established by the **United Nations in 1945** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
 - It is **headquartered in Rome, Italy**.
 - It strives to provide information and support sustainable agriculture through legislation and national strategies, with a goal of alleviating hunger.
 - It works to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives.
- **Major Publications released:**
 - The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA).
 - The State of the World's Forests (SOFO).
 - The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI).

[Q] Which of the following statements is **not correct** regarding the Constitution of India (103rd

Amendment) Act?

- (a) It provides for a 10% reservation in education and government jobs in India
- (b) It inserted Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6) in the Constitution.
- (c) These reservations will also apply to minority educational institutions
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] c

[SOL] 103rd Amendment Act

- **About:**

- The Parliament amended **the Constitution of India (103rd Amendment) Act, 2019** to provide for a **10% reservation in education and government jobs** in India for a section of the **General category candidates**. **Hence statement (a) is correct.**

- **Introduction of Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6):**

- The amendment introduced economic reservation by amending Articles 15 and 16. It inserted Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6) in the Constitution to allow reservation for the economically backward in the unreserved category. **Hence statement (b) is correct.**

- **Article 15(6):**

- Up to 10% of seats may be reserved for EWS for admission in educational institutions. Such reservations will not apply to minority educational institutions. **Hence statement (c) is incorrect.**

- **Article 16(6):**

- It permits the government to reserve up to 10% of all government posts for the EWS.

[Q] Consider the following statement:

1. An affidavit is a written statement made under oath that is typically used in legal proceedings.
 2. The law does not permit the practice of submitting affidavits in a sealed cover.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Affidavit:

- An affidavit is a written statement made under oath that is typically used in legal proceedings. When a person swears to be truthful in creating the affidavit, they are called an affiant. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- Affidavits are a vital part of court proceedings since they provide a written account of the details surrounding the case, which can make it easier for judges to make decisions.

- **Sealed cover affidavits:**

- The Supreme Court was recently urged to consider laying down a law on the practice of governments submitting affidavits in a sealed cover.

- **Statute:**

- The **law permits the submission of confidential material** to the court in some cases. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

- **The Evidence Act** also allows the privilege of non-disclosure of some documents and communications.

- In addition, **courts can order** some contents to be kept confidential.

[Q] With reference to Snakebite Envenoming, consider the following statements:

1. It is classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a High-Priority Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD).
2. According to a study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India has the highest number of snakebite cases in the world.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] A study published in **Nature Communications** recently estimated that a vast majority of snakebite deaths globally – up to 64,100 of the 78,600 deaths – occur in India.

Statement 1 is correct: Snakebite Envenoming is classified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a High-Priority Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD). It is a potentially life-threatening disease that typically results from the injection of a mixture of different toxins (venom) following the bite of a Venomous Snake and can also be caused by having venom sprayed into the eyes by certain species of snakes that have the ability to spit venom as a defence measure. It is a particularly important public health problem in rural areas of tropical and subtropical countries situated in Africa, the Middle-East, Asia, Oceania and Latin America.

Statement 2 is correct: According to a new study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India has the highest number of snakebite cases in the world, accounting for nearly 50% of the global snakebite deaths.

[Q] With reference to Global Programme to End Child Marriage, consider the following statements:

1. It is a global programme launched by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), together with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
2. The programme promotes the rights of adolescent girls to avert marriage and pregnancy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] The **steering committee of a global programme to end child marriage** is on a visit to India to witness state interventions which have **helped reduce the prevalence** of child marriage.

Statement 1 is correct: In 2016, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), together with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), launched a global programme to tackle child marriage in 12 of the most high-prevalence or high-burden countries: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.

Statement 2 is correct: The UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage promotes the rights of adolescent girls to avert marriage and pregnancy, and enables them to achieve their aspirations through education and alternative pathways. The Global Programme supports households in demonstrating positive attitudes, empowers girls to direct their own

futures, and strengthens the services that allow them to do so, including sexual and reproductive health and social protection programmes.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Air Quality Index (AQI) was launched in 2014 as part of the Swachh Bharat campaign.
2. The Air Quality Index measures the only Particulate Matters in the air.
3. The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is a set of anti-air pollution measures followed in the major metropolitan cities of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] About Air Quality Index (AQI)



● **Background**

- It was launched by the **central government in 2014** as part of the **Swachh Bharat campaign**.

- **IIT Kanpur** and the **Expert Group** recommended an AQI scheme.

● **Meaning**

- AQI is a number, which is a **measure of air quality**.
- The **higher the AQI, the worse the air**.

● **Pollutants**

- The pollutants measured include **PM 10, PM 2.5, Nitrogen Dioxide, Ozone, Carbon, etc.**

● **There are six categories of AQI:**

- Good (0-50)
- Satisfactory (50-100)
- Moderately polluted (100-200)

- Poor (200-300)
- Very Poor (300-400)
- Severe (400-500)
- **The colour-coded AQI index** was launched in India in 2014, and it helps the public and the government understand the condition of the air and what subsequent measures are to be taken to combat the situation, based on its severity.
- The GRAP is a **set of anti-air pollution measures** followed in the capital and its vicinity according to the severity of the situation.
- **It classifies the air quality in the Delhi-NCR under four different stages:**
 - Stage 1 - "poor" (AQI 201-300)
 - Stage 2 - "very poor" (AQI 301-400)
 - Stage 3 - "severe" (AQI 401-450)
 - Stage 4 - "severe plus" (AQI above 450).

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) was established in 2019 under the leadership of the United Nation.
2. The Sendai Framework was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct:** The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) – established in 2019 **under the leadership of the Government of India** and with the support UNDRR is a multi-stakeholder global partnership of national governments, UN agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks, the private sector, and academic institutions. CDRI aims to promote the resilience of infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks, thereby ensuring sustainable development.

Statement 2 is correct: The Framework was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, on March 18, 2015. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 outlines seven clear targets and four priorities for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks: (i) Understanding disaster risk; (ii) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk; (iii) Investing in disaster reduction for resilience and; (iv) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

[Q] Which of the following statements are correctly stating the difference between National Population Register (NPR) & Census?

1. NPR involves a detailed questionnaire whereas Census collects basic demographic &

biometric data.

2. While the census is legally backed by the Census Act, 1948, the NPR is a mechanism outlined in the Citizenship Act, 1955.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Difference between National Population Register (NPR) & census:**

- The census involves a **detailed questionnaire**.
 - There were 29 items to be filled up in the 2011 census aimed at eliciting the particulars of every person, including age, sex, marital status, children, occupation, birthplace, mother tongue, religion, disability and whether they belonged to any Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe.

- On the other hand, the NPR collects **basic demographic data** and **biometric particulars**.

Hence statement 1 is incorrect.

- While the census is legally backed by the **Census Act, 1948**, the NPR is a mechanism outlined in a set of rules framed under the **Citizenship Act, 1955**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

[Q] With reference to Guru Nanak Dev, consider the following statements:

1. He started writing the Guru Granth Sahib.
2. He advocated the 'Saguna' (the practice of devotion to God in form) form of bhakti.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] The celebrations of the **553rd Prakash Parv (Prakashotsav) of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji** are going on across India.

Statement 1 is correct: Guru Nanak Dev was born on April 15, 1469, at Rai Bhoi Ki Talwandi, near Lahore, which is in the Sheikhupura district of modern-day Pakistan. He was born into a middle-class Hindu family and raised by his parents, Mehta Kalu and Mata Tripta. He was the first of the 10 Sikh Gurus and the founder of Sikhism in the 15th century. He started writing the Guru Granth Sahib and completed 974 hymns.

Statement 2 is not correct: He advocated the '**Nirguna**' (**devotion to and worship of formless divine**) form of bhakti and advocated the existence of one God and taught to reach out God through meditation and other pious practices. He set up rules for congregational worship (Sangat) involving collective recitation. His verses also preach selfless service to humanity, prosperity and social justice for all, irrespective of differences. Guru Nanak travelled across South Asia and the Middle East to spread his teachings.

[Q] With reference to Unified Payments Interface (UPI), consider the following statements:

1. UPI is an instant payment system developed by the National Payments Corporation of India.
2. UPI still has to make improvements to be better than Immediate Payment Service (IMPS).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] A recent survey has revealed that even 6 years after demonetisation, **people prefer cash transactions**, especially in real estate deals.

Statement 1 is correct: Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is an instant payment system developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), an RBI regulated entity. UPI is built over the IMPS infrastructure and allows you to instantly transfer money between any two parties' bank accounts.

Statement 2 is not correct: UPI is providing additional benefits to IMPS in the following ways:

- Provides for a P2P Pull functionality
- Simplifies Merchant Payments
- Single APP for money transfer
- Single click two factor authentication

[Q] Consider the following statements stating links between National Population Register (NPR) & Aadhar:

1. Both NPR & Aadhar involves gathering personal particulars, including biometric data.
2. Those already enrolled for Aadhaar need not give their biometric details again during NPR.
3. In case of discrepancy between Aadhaar and NPR data, the latter would prevail.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Link between NPR & Aadhar**

- There was a conflict between the Union Home Ministry, which administers the NPR, and UIDAI.
- Impression was left that there was duplication of work, as **both involved gathering personal particulars, including biometric data. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Ultimately, they agreed that both databases will exist with different objectives and that each will use the other's biometric data.
- Those already enrolled for Aadhaar need not give their biometric details again during NPR. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- At the same time, data captured for NPR would be sent to UIDAI for "**de-duplication**".
- In case of discrepancy between Aadhaar and NPR data, the latter would prevail. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

[Q] With reference to National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.
2. It comes under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) was set up in March 2007 under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005, an Act of Parliament. Thus, it is a statutory body.

Statement 2 is correct: NCPCR comes under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Women & Child Development**, Government of India. The Child is defined as a person in the 0 to 18 years age group.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding India's relationship with Russia:

1. Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) is being built in India with Russian cooperation.
2. India's "Act Far-East" policy is an important part of its partnership with Russia.
3. "Exercise Shakti" is a joint, biennial military exercise conducted by India and Russia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **India-Russia**

- **Statement 1 is correct:**

- Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) is being built in India with Russian cooperation.

- It is the largest nuclear power station in India, situated in Kudankulam in the Tirunelveli district of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

- **Statement 2 is correct:**

- **In 2019** India announced a commitment to an "**Act Far-East**" policy.

- This policy is an important part of a **special and privileged strategic partnership with Russia**.

- India has also made significant investments in the Russian far east in the fields of **pharmaceuticals and diamonds**.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:**

- **INDRA NAVY** is a joint, biennial military exercise conducted by India and Russia.

- The exercise is tasked with boosting cooperation and interoperability between the Russian and Indian navies.

- The exercise involves live firing drills, as well as air defence and anti submarine operations.

- Additionally, counterpiracy, terrorism and drug smuggling operations are carried out.

- **Shakti Exercise** is a bilateral exercise between the armies of **India and France**.

[Q] Which of the following statements is *not correct* regarding the appointment of judges?

- (a) The Judges of both the Supreme Court and the High Court are appointed by the President.
- (b) There is no constitutional provision that mentions or defines the collegium system.

- (c) There are no official minutes of collegium proceedings.
(d) None of the above.

[ANS] d

[SOL] Collegium System

- **About:**
 - It is a novel mechanism devised to ensure a democratic system of appointment and transfer of judges.
 - It came into existence through Second and Third Judges Case judgments.
 - There is no such law or constitutional provision that mentions or defines the collegium system. **Hence statement (b) is correct.**
- **Constitutional Provisions Backing it:**
 - **Article 124(2):**
 - The Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President after consultation with such a number of the Judges of the Supreme Court and of the High Courts in the States as the President may deem necessary for the purpose.
 - **Article 217:**
 - The Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the CJI and the State Governor, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the Chief Justice, the Chief Justice of the High Court. **Hence statement (a) is correct.**
- **Criticisms:**
 - Critics have pointed out that the system is **non-transparent**, since it does not involve any official mechanism or secretariat.
 - There is **no public knowledge of how and when a collegium meets**, and how it takes its decisions.
 - There are **no official minutes of collegium proceedings**. **Hence statement (c) is correct.**

[Q] The Prarambh Mission was seen in the news, it is related to:

- (a) Skill development among the youth
(b) Indigenisation of Defence equipments
(c) Private sector participation in Space
(d) Curbing Human Trafficking

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option c is correct:** Vikram-S is India's first privately developed rocket and is all set to be launched as part of the Prarambh space mission. The Prarambh mission is aimed at carrying three payloads into space, including a 2.5-kilogram payload that has been developed by students from several countries. Skyroot's launch vehicles are named 'Vikram' as a tribute to the founder of the Indian space program and renowned scientist Vikram Sarabhai.

[Q] The "Pseudohelice annamalai" was recently discovered, they are the species of:

- (a) Fishing Cat
(b) Turtles
(c) Crabs
(d) Mushroom

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option c is correct:** Researchers have discovered a new species of estuarine crab at the mangroves of Parangipettai near the Vellar River estuary in Cuddalore district.

About Pseudo Helice annamalai"

- The species has been named **Pseudohelice annamalai** in recognition of **Annamalai University's 100 years of service** in education and research.
- This is the first ever record of this genus, Pseudo Helice, collected from high intertidal areas in front of the Centre of Advanced Studies (CAS) .
 - So far, only two species – Pseudo Helice subquadrata and Pseudohelice latreilli – have been confirmed within this genus.
- **Description :** It is distinguished by dark purple to dark grey colouring, with irregular light brown, yellowish brown, or white patches on the posterior carapace with light brown chelipeds.
 - The new species is small and has a maximum width of up to 20 mm.
 - This species is not aggressive and can move fast like other intertidal crabs. As many as 17 species of intertidal crabs have been recorded in the same region,
- **Habitat :** The species inhabits muddy banks of mangroves, and the burrows were located near the pneumatophores of Avicennia mangroves.
- **Distribution :** The species discovered is distributed around the Indian subcontinent and the eastern Indian Ocean

[Q] Justice Verma Committee that was recently in news, was constituted for which of the following?

- (a) Freedom of Press
- (b) Violence against Women
- (c) Regulation of Media
- (d) Eco-tourism

[ANS] b

[SOL] Justice Verma Committee:

- It was constituted to recommend **amendments to the Criminal Law** so as to provide for **quicker trial and enhanced punishment for criminals accused of committing sexual assault against women.**
- The committee was in news recently for its judgment on '**two finger test**':
 - The Committee in 2013 has recommended the **discontinuation of the two-finger test** which is conducted to determine the laxity of the vaginal muscles.

[Q] The 'two-finger test' was recently banned for which of the following reasons?

1. The test is based on the assumption that a sexually active woman cannot be raped.
2. The test does not have any evidential value in the investigation as the Doctor does not give his/her opinion about rape.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] The two-finger test:

- The two-finger test is an **invasive, unscientific and regressive practice** where two

fingers are inserted in the vagina to assess the laxity of vaginal muscles and examine the hymen.

- The two-finger test or per vaginum examination is conducted on **alleged victims of sexual assault and rape** to determine whether they are habituated to sexual intercourse.
- **Issues:**
- **Invalid for sexually active women:**
- The test is based on the incorrect assumption that a **sexually active woman cannot be raped**. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
- **No evidential value in the investigation:**
- In the case of sexual assault, the doctor is required to mention marks of resistance and sign(s) of recent intercourse.
- **Doctor does not give his/her opinion about rape**, as rape is a legal term and not a medical diagnosis.
- It is for the **investigating officer to conclude** after their investigation whether or not rape was committed.
- Therefore, it is undesirable to conduct the **two-finger test (on a victim of sexual assault)**, which has no evidential value in the investigation. **Hence option 2 is correct.**
- **More victimisation:**
- The test instead **re-victimises and re-traumatises women** who may have been sexually assaulted and is an affront to their dignity.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. India contributes about ninety percent of the world's Pashmina.
2. Shahtoosh is the fine undercoat fibre obtained from the Tibetan Antelope.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct: Pashmina:** It is obtained from breeds of **mountain goats (capra hircus)** found in the **Changthang Plateau in Tibet and parts of Ladakh, in the Himalayan region of India.**

- **India contributes** only about **1% of the world's Pashmina**, but the **Pashmina produced in India** is considered the **best of the lot and occupies a unique position.**
- Manufacture of Pashmina is a largely unorganised cottage/handicraft industry providing **employment and livelihood to approximately 6 lakh** people, most notably to local skilled villagers and artisans in Kashmir.

Statement 2 is correct: Shahtoosh: It is the fine undercoat fibre obtained from the Tibetan Antelope, known locally as 'Chiru', a species living mainly in the northern parts of the Changthang Plateau in Tibet.

- As they offer high levels of smoothness and warmth, Shahtoosh shawls became a highly expensive commodity.

[Q] With reference to mangrove cover, consider the following statements:

1. Mangrove forests require high oxygen levels to survive.
2. The mangrove cover in India has decreased in 2021 as compared to the mangrove cover assessed in 2019.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Recently, the **UAE and Indonesia launched** the “**Mangrove Alliance for Climate**” on the sidelines of the UN climate summit COP27, being held in Sharm El Sheikh in **Egypt**.

Statement 1 is not correct: Mangroves are small trees and shrubs which grow along the coastlines. These trees thrive in salty water and form unique forests on the edge of land and the sea. They also grow in swamps. Mangrove forests can survive extreme weather conditions and require low oxygen levels to survive. Sundarbans in West Bengal is the largest mangrove forest in the world.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Forest Survey of India (FSI) assessed Mangrove Cover of the country in three density classes i.e. very Dense, Moderately Dense and Open Mangrove Cover on biennial basis and published the findings in the India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per the ISFR 2021, the mangrove cover in the country has increased by 17 sq. km. in 2021 as compared to the mangrove cover assessed in 2019.

[Q] With reference to Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U), consider the following statements:

1. PMAY(U) adopts a demand driven approach wherein the Housing shortage is decided based on demand assessment by States.
2. Bhuvan is a web-based application which provides the facility of geotagging images of houses built under the PMAY-U.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Recently, the Union Ministry of Finance has **approved an advance of Rs. 13,000 crore** for the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna-Gramin (PMAY-G) scheme from the Contingency Fund of India.

Statement 1 is correct: Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U) is a flagship Mission of Government of India being implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). It was launched on 25th June 2015 and addresses urban housing shortage among the EWS/LIG and MIG categories including the slum dwellers by ensuring a pucca house to all eligible urban households by the year 2022, when Nation completes 75 years of its Independence. PMAY(U) adopts a demand driven approach wherein the Housing shortage is decided based on demand assessment by States/Union Territories.

Statement 2 is correct: Bhuvan is an Indian Geo Platform developed by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). It is a web-based application which allows users to access various map related services. The application also provides facility of geotagging of images of houses built or being constructed under the PMAY-U.

[Q] National Education Day is celebrated on November 11th every year, to commemorate the contributions of which Indian National Movement Leader?

- (a) Sardar VallabhBhai Patel
- (b) Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan
- (c) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
- (d) B R Ambedkar

[ANS] c

[SOL] Recently, the Prime Minister of India paid tributes to Maulana Azad on his birth anniversary.

Option c is correct: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was a firm believer in the coexistence of religions.

- His dream was that of a unified independent India where Hindu and Muslims cohabited peacefully.
- Although this vision of Azad was shattered post partition of India, he remained a believer.
- He was the **founder of the Jamia Milia Islamia Institution** in Delhi along with fellow khilafat leaders which has blossomed into a renowned University today.
- His birthday, November 11, is celebrated as **National Education Day** in India.

[Q] “Transport 4 All Challenge” initiative was launched by which of the following ministries?

- (a) Ministry of Road Transport & Highways
- (b) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- (c) Ministry of Rural Development
- (d) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

[ANS] b

[SOL] About Transport 4 All Challenge

- It is an initiative of the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**, Government of India.
- **Aim:**
 - To bring together cities, citizens, and startups to develop solutions that improve public transport to better serve the needs of all citizens.
 - Focuses on digital innovation and invites cities, citizens, and innovators to join hands to develop contextual digital solutions to improve formal as well as informal public transport to better serve the mobility needs of all citizens.
- **Three Stages of the Challenge**
 - The Transport4All through Digital Innovation Challenge comprises three stages:
 - **Stage I PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION:** Cities, with the support of NGOs, identify key recurring problems that citizens and public transport operators face
 - **Stage II SOLUTION GENERATION:** Startups develop prototypes of solutions to improve public transport with inputs from cities and NGOs
 - **Stage III PILOT TESTING:** Cities engage Startups for large-scale pilots and refine the solutions based on citizen feedback

[Q] With reference to the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda, consider the following statements:

1. He was a 16th century chieftain of the Vijayanagara empire
2. He has been credited for abolishing the practice of Bandi Devaru.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Both the statements are correct:** The Prime Minister unveiled the 108-feet high bronze statue of Bengaluru founder **Nadaprabhu Kempegowda**. It is installed at the **Kempegowda International Airport**.

About Nadaprabhu Kempegowda

- Nadaprabhu Kempegowda, a **16th century chieftain of the Vijayanagara empire**.
- He is credited with laying the **foundation of what is today known as Bengaluru city in 1537**.
 - It is said that he conceived the idea of a new city while hunting with his minister, and later marked its territory by erecting towers in four corners of the proposed city.
- He is also known to have **developed around 1,000 lakes in the city** to cater to drinking and agricultural needs.
- Kempegowda's initial plan for the city was to have temples, a fort, water tanks, and a cantonment. After receiving permission from emperor Achyutharaya, the chieftain built the **Bangalore Fort and town in AD 1537**.
- He is revered, especially by the Vokkaliga community that is **dominant in Old Mysuru** and other parts of **southern Karnataka**.
- Kempegowda has been credited for abolishing the practice of **cutting the fingers of the left hand of an unmarried woman** during a custom known as **Bandi Devaru**.

[Q] Which of the following institutions in India qualify as Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs)?

1. Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India
2. Central Depository Services Ltd. and the National Securities Depository Ltd.
3. Multi Commodity Exchange Clearing Corporation

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Market Infrastructure Institutions

- **What are the MIIs?**
 - **Stock exchanges, depositories and clearing houses** are all Market Infrastructure Institutions and constitute a key part of the nation's vital economic infrastructure.
- **Specific institutions in India that qualify as MIIs:**
 - Among stock exchanges:
 - The SEBI lists seven, including the BSE, the NSE, the Multi Commodity Exchange of India and the Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
 - There are two depositories:
 - Charged with the safekeeping of securities and enabling their trading and transfer — **that are tagged MIIs:**
 - The Central Depository Services Ltd. and the National Securities Depository Ltd. **Hence option 2 is correct.**

- **Clearing houses:**
- The regulator also lists seven clearing houses including the Multi Commodity Exchange Clearing Corporation. **Hence option 3 is correct.**
- Clearing houses, for their part, help validate and finalise securities trades and ensure that both buyers and sellers honour their obligations.

[Q] Recently launched app 'Mrida' is related to which of the following?

1. It is a gaming app.
2. The app is launched to promote behavioural change among farmers.
3. It is released in all the Indian languages to reach a larger population.

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Mrida

- A new gaming app, 'Mrida', has been launched to promote behavioural change among farmers.
- Apart from English, the app will be released in Marathi and Odiya to reach a larger population of farmers in the two states.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. The Governor of a State has the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment under Article 161 of the Constitution.
2. The advice of the State Cabinet is not binding on the Governor in matters relating to the remission of sentences.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Pardoning Power of Governor: Article 161:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:**
 - The Governor of a State shall have the power to grant pardons, reprieves, respites or remissions of punishment or to suspend, remit or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence against any law relating to a matter to which the executive power of the State extends.
- **Statement 2 is not correct:**
 - The **advice of the State Cabinet is binding on the Governor** in matters relating to **commutation/remission of sentences under Article 161.**

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding Acharya Kriplani who was recently in news:

1. He was involved in Salt Satyagraha and the Quit India Movement.

2. He held the presidency of the Indian National Congress during the transfer of power in 1947. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Acharya Kriplani - Contribution to India's freedom struggle:**

- Acharya Kripalani was a prominent **Indian educator, social activist, and politician** in both **pre-and post-independence India**.
- **Pre-independence:**
 - Kripalani was prominently involved over a decade in **top Congress party affairs**, and in the organisation of the **Salt Satyagraha and the Quit India Movement**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - He was a close associate of Mohandas K. Gandhi and a longtime supporter of his ideology.
 - Kripalani served in the **interim government of India (1946-1947)** and the **Constituent Assembly of India**.
- **Congress presidency:**
 - He was an Indian politician noted particularly for holding the **presidency of the Indian National Congress** during the **transfer of power in 1947**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Post-independence:**
 - Kripalani was a harsh critic of both Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi.
 - He opposed Nehru's policies, which he thought were against Gandhian values, and later opposed Indira's policies too.
 - He joined the economically right-wing Swatantra Party later in life.

[Q] LCH 'Prachand', which was recently in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) It is the only attack helicopter in the world that can land and take off at an altitude of 5,000 metres.
- (b) It is designed and manufactured by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- (c) The multi-role attack helicopter operates both in desert terrains and high-altitude sectors.
- (d) All are correct

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) 'Prachand'**

- **About:**
 - The LCH is the only attack helicopter in the world that can land and take off at an altitude of 5,000 metres (16,400 ft), which makes it ideal to operate in the high altitude areas of the Siachen glacier. **Hence option (a) is correct.**
 - It was officially renamed "Prachand".
- **Development:**
 - It is designed and manufactured by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) under project LCH. **Hence option (b) is correct.**
 - It was conceptualised after the 1999 Kargil conflict.
 - The multi-role attack helicopter operates both in desert terrains and high-altitude sectors. **Hence option (c) is correct.**

- **Features:**

- This twin-engine helicopter is armed with anti-tank guided missile

[Q] Wangala Festival, also known as the festival of '100 drums', is a harvest festival celebrated by which of the following Tribes in India?

- (a) Munda
- (b) Bhil
- (c) Garo
- (d) Santhal

[ANS] c

[SOL] Wangala Festival is the winter harvesting festival for the people of the Garo Tribe in Meghalaya. During this festival, people pay their respects to '**Misi Sanljong**' or '**Pattigipa Ra'rongipa**' or the **Sun God**!

- The popular belief is that the dance form performed during the Wangala festival was initially performed by water creatures.
- The celebrations of the Wangala Festival honour the Sun God and also mark the end of the long harvest season. It also signifies the onset of the winter season. For the Garo tribe in Meghalaya, the festival of 100 drums is also a way of preserving and promoting their cultural identity.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. A currency manipulator is a designation applied by the World Trade Organization (WTO).
2. Putting a country under the Currency Monitoring List would mean that the country is artificially lowering the value of its currency to gain an unfair advantage over others.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **India** is among the few countries recently **removed** from the United States Currency Monitoring List which is released by the **Department of Treasury**.

- A currency manipulator is a designation applied by US government authorities to countries that engage in "**unfair currency practices**" for a trade advantage.
- Putting a country under the Currency Monitoring List would mean that the **country is artificially lowering the value of its currency to gain an unfair advantage over others**.
 - This is because the **lower value of the currency will lead to a reduction of the export costs** from that country.

[Q] Which of the following statements is **not correct**?

- (a) Government of India has notified millets as nutri-cereals by including them under the

POSHAN Mission Abhiyan.

(b) Government of India has decided to mark 2023 as the National Year of Millets.

(c) United Nations, at the behest of the Government of India, declared 2023 the International Year Millets.

(d) None of the above

[ANS] b

[SOL] POSHAN Abhiyan

● In 2018, the government decided to mark the national year of millets and had also notified millets as nutri-cereals by including them under the POSHAN Mission Abhiyan. **Hence statement (a) is correct.**

International Year of Millets - 2023

● **About:**

○ The United Nations, at the behest of the Government of India, declared **2023 the International Year Millets. Hence statement (c) is correct.**

● **Aim:**

○ The aim is to create awareness and increase production & consumption of millets.

● **India's National Year of Millets & proposal to UN:**

○ In 2018 the government of India had decided to mark the **National Year of Millets.**

Hence statement (b) is incorrect.

■ India pitched the proposal to the United Nations for declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets.

■ **With the support of 72 other countries**, India's initiative to promote millet was recognized and the United Nations General Assembly has recently declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution:

1. The Ninth Schedule contains a list of central and state laws which cannot be challenged in courts.

2. Laws placed under the Ninth Schedule can be challenged on the ground of violating the basic structure of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] c

[SOL] Ninth Schedule:

● **About:**

○ The Ninth Schedule contains a list of central and state laws which cannot be challenged in courts. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

○ Currently, 284 such laws are shielded from judicial review.

■ Most of the laws protected under the Schedule concern agriculture/land issues.

● **So are laws in the Ninth Schedule completely exempted from judicial scrutiny?**

○ While the Ninth Schedule provides the law with a "safe harbour" from judicial review, **the protection is not blanket.**

○ The Supreme Court ruled in a verdict that while laws placed under the Ninth Schedule **cannot be challenged on the grounds of violation of fundamental rights**, they can be

challenged on the ground of **violating the basic structure of the Constitution**. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.

○ **Basic structure test:**

■ The court clarified that the laws cannot escape the “basic structure” test if inserted into the Ninth Schedule after 1973, as it was in 1973 that the basic structure test was evolved in the Kesavananda Bharati case as the ultimate test to examine the constitutional validity of laws.

[Q] With reference to Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
2. APEDA is mandated with the responsibility of export promotion of the Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Beverages also.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] India’s agriculture exports have grown 16.5% year-on-year in April-September, and look set to **surpass the record \$50.2 billion** achieved in 2021-22 (April-March).

Statement 1 is not correct: The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act passed by the Parliament in December, 1985. The Act (2 of 1986) came into effect from 13th February, 1986 by a notification issued in the Gazette of India: Extraordinary: Part-II [Sec. 3(ii): 13.2.1986]. It was set up by the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**. The Authority replaced the Processed Food Export Promotion Council (PFEPC).

Statement 2 is correct: APEDA is mandated with the responsibility of export promotion and development of the following scheduled products:

- Fruits, Vegetables and their Products.
- Meat and Meat Products.
- Poultry and Poultry Products.
- Dairy Products.
- Confectionery, Biscuits and Bakery Products.
- Honey, Jaggery and Sugar Products.
- Cocoa and its products, chocolates of all kinds.
- Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Beverages.
- Cereal and Cereal Products.
- Groundnuts, Peanuts and Walnuts.
- Pickles, Papads and Chutneys.
- Guar Gum.
- Floriculture and Floriculture Products.
- Herbal and Medicinal Plants.
- De-oiled rice bran.
- Green pepper in brine.
- Cashew Nuts and Its Products.

Basmati Rice has been included in the Second Schedule of APEDA Act. In addition to this,

APEDA has been entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring the import of sugar as well.

[Q] Recently the Vice President of India inaugurated the completed conservation work of 'Hall of Dancers'. It is present in which of the following?

- (a) Kamakhya Temple complex
- (b) Namgyal Monastery
- (c) Angkor archaeological complex
- (d) Borobudur Temple

[ANS] c

[SOL] 'Hall of Dancers' at Cambodian city of Siem Reap

- **Inauguration of 'Hall of Dancers':**

- After addressing the EAS summit, the **Vice President inaugurated** the completed conservation work of 'Hall of Dancers' in Ta Prohm Temple.

- It is located in the **Angkor archaeological complex** in the **Cambodian city of Siem Reap**.

- **India - Cambodia collaboration Project:**

- The Hall of Dancers is part of a **\$4-million collaborative project** between **India and Cambodia** for the **preservation and restoration of cultural heritage in Cambodia**.

- The restoration work at the sprawling and quiet Buddhist monastery of Ta Prohm has been completed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

- Restoration work commenced in the year 2011.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. The concept of East Asia Grouping was first promoted in the year 2000 by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.
2. India is one of the founding members of the East Asia Summit.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **About:**

- The East Asia Summit (EAS) is the Indo-Pacific's premier forum for strategic dialogue.
- It is the only leader-led forum at which all key Indo-Pacific partners meet to discuss political, security and economic challenges facing the region, and has an important role to play in advancing closer regional cooperation.

- **Origin:**

- The concept of East Asia Grouping was first promoted in 1991 by the then Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.

- **Members:**

- The EAS has 18 members - the ten ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) along with Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.

- **India:**

- India is one of the founding members of the East Asia Summit.

- **Lead & the Chair position:**

- ASEAN leads the forum, and the chair position rotates between ASEAN Member States annually.

[Q] With reference to Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS), consider the following statements:

1. These schools are for tribal students — one each in every sub-district that has at least a 10,000-odd Scheduled Tribe population.
2. The grants were given to the State Governments for construction of schools and recurring expenses under Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] The Union government is pushing to set up **740 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** for tribal students.

Statement 1 is not correct: Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) for tribal students — one each in every sub-district that has **at least a 20,000-odd Scheduled Tribe population**, which must be 50% of the total population in that area. The government is persisting with its mission despite the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice and Ministry noting this year that the population criteria was “impractical” and needed an “immediate review”.

Statement 2 is correct: The schools focus not only on academic education but on the all-round development of the students. Each school has a capacity of 480 students, catering to students from Class VI to XII. Hitherto, grants were given for construction of schools and recurring expenses to the State Governments under Grants under Article 275 (1) of the Constitution. A National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS) was set up in 2018-19 and entrusted with the management of the State Education Society for Tribal Students (SESTS), which would run the EMRS on the ground.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding an international platform:

1. It is the Indo-Pacific's premier forum for strategic dialogue.
2. It has 18 members - the ten ASEAN countries along with Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.
3. The 17th Summit of this was recently held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

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

- (a) BRICS
- (b) East Asia Summit (EAS)
- (c) Eastern Economic Forum
- (d) The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

[ANS] b

[SOL] The East Asia Summit (EAS)

- The Vice President of India recently addressed the 17th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

- **About:**

- The East Asia Summit (EAS) is the Indo-Pacific's premier forum for strategic dialogue.
- It is the only leader-led forum at which all key Indo-Pacific partners meet to discuss

political, security and economic challenges facing the region, and has an important role to play in advancing closer regional cooperation.

- **Origin:**
 - The concept of East Asia Grouping was first promoted in 1991 by the then Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.
- **Members:**
 - The EAS has 18 members - the ten ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) along with Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.
- **India:**
- India is one of the founding members of the East Asia Summit.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding the Perform, Achieve, Trade (PAT) scheme:

1. It was established by the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency.
 2. The Energy Savings Certificates (ESCerts) were introduced in India under the PAT 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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Perform, Achieve, Trade (PAT)**

- The Perform, Achieve, Trade (PAT) scheme was established by the National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- NMEEE is one of the eight national missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) launched by the Government of India in the year 2008.
- The Union Ministry of Power and Bureau of Energy Efficiency were entrusted with the task of preparing the implementation plan for the NMEEE.
- **ESCerts:**
 - Under the PAT Scheme, the Energy Savings Certificates (ESCerts) were introduced in India in 2012 by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE). **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

[Q] With reference to the General Network Access (GNA), consider the following statements:

1. It is a non-discriminatory access to the inter-State transmission system for an estimated maximum injection and for a consumer to draw for a specified period.
2. It will untangle the current webs in the system and ensure that a generator focuses only on producing power and the consumer on buying it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Experts have recently **flagged issues** regarding General Network Access (GNA) regulations.

- The new connectivity regulation is slated to be opened from **December 1, 2022**. GNA means **open access to the inter-State transmission system**. This is in keeping with the

concept of “one nation, one grid”.

● The GNA as a transmission service **provides more flexibility and the possibility of open access to the buyers and sellers of power** in terms of scheduling, subject to grid constraints, and does not suffer from the rigidity of the current point-to-point open access mechanism.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. National Green Tribunal has been established during the Tenth Five year plan.
2. Tribunal is bound by the Code of Civil Procedure.

Which of the above statement(s) given above is/are **not correct**?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] The National Green Tribunal was established on 18.10.2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources.

- The Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice.
- New Delhi is the Principal Place of Sitting of the Tribunal and Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai shall be the other four places of sitting of the Tribunal.

[Q] Which of the following statements are correct regarding the United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) recent reports & projections:

1. As of 2022, more than half the world's population lives in Asia.
2. India's population growth is stabilising and it is growing at 0.7% per year.
3. China is currently experiencing a “youth bulge” with the largest ever adolescent and youth population.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Recently, the United Nations Population Fund, stated that the world's population has reached 8 billion.

- **India's “youth bulge”:**
 - UNFPA has noted that India has its largest ever adolescent and youth population.
 - According to UNFPA projections, India will continue to have one of the youngest populations in the world till 2030 and is currently experiencing a demographic window of opportunity, a “youth bulge” that will last till 2025. **Hence statement 3 is incorrect.**
 - It noted that India's fertility rate has hit 2.1 births per woman — replacement-level fertility — and is falling.
- **India surpassing China:**
 - As of 2022, more than half the world's population lives in Asia, China and India being the two most populous countries with more than 1.4 billion people each. **Hence statement 1 is**

correct.

- According to the United Nations Population Fund, while India's population growth is stabilising, it is "still growing at 0.7% per year" and is set to surpass China in 2023 as the world's most populous country. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- China's population is no longer growing and "may start declining as early as 2023", the UN stated.

[Q] Consider the following megalithic sites which were recently in news:

1. Pandava Gullu or Pandavula Banda, also known as 'Pillared dolmen' of the megalithic era.
2. 'Devara Yeddhū', a megalith resembling a bull's horn.

The sites given above are home to which of the following states in India?

- (a) Kerala
- (b) Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Maharashtra
- (d) Tamil Nadu

[ANS] b

[SOL] Megalithic structures in Andhra Pradesh:

- **Significance of the region:**
 - Compared to other districts, the erstwhile combined Chittoor district (Tirupati district was carved out of it in April 2022) has an array of megalithic structures, found almost in every mandal.
 - This could be an indication to the presence of humans living in groups during the megalithic period (300–500 BC) in this region.
- **Mallayyagaripalle's 'pillared dolmen':**
 - **Location:**
 - The most prominent one is the '**pillared dolmen' of the megalithic era**, found at **Mallayyagaripalle, nestling on a hillock** between Chandragiri and Dornakambala, 20 km from Tirupati.
 - **Timeline:**
 - The structure locally referred to as '**Pandava Gullu' or 'Pandavula Banda'** in memory of the Pandavas, is estimated to be 2,500 years old.
 - **Burial chamber:**
 - The Mallayyagaripalle structure is a cist burial chamber.
 - Such chambers are built by arranging slabs neatly broken from huge stones at a time when there were no proper tools.
 - **Monument at Kullur:**
 - There is another endangered megalith monument in Palem village near Kallur, which resembles a bull's horn.
 - It is locally called '**Devara Yeddhū**'.
 - **Other:**
 - **A menhir:** a tall or grand structure erected in memory of a dead person – found at Boyapalle.
 - '**Slab circles**': An arrangement of three or seven slabs in a circular fashion, found in Eguva Gunthalacheruvu of Annamayya district.

[Q] With reference to Munda Rebellion, consider the following statements:

1. The cause was the unfair land-grabbing practices by colonial and local authorities that

demolished the tribal conventional land system.

2. The British government did not prohibit the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals after suppressing the rebellion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Recently, the President of India visited **Ulihatu village in Jharkhand** on the **Janjatiya Gaurav Divas** and paid her respects before the statue of **Bhagwan Birsa Munda**.

Statement 1 is correct: Munda Rebellion was the tribal movement led by Munda against the oppressions of the British Raj. The movement was referred to as 'Ulgulan' or the 'Great Tumult' and aimed to establish Munda raj. The cause of the Munda revolt was the 'unfair land grabbing practices by colonial and local authorities that demolished the tribal conventional land system'. Munda used traditional symbols and language to rouse people and urged them to destroy the dikus. Dikus was the name given to the outsiders like the British, moneylenders and traders and it was believed that the dikus were responsible for all the miseries.

Statement 2 is not correct: Birsa Munda was arrested by the British in March 1900 while he was sleeping with his tribal guerilla army at Jamkopai forest in Chakradharpur (Jharkhand). Birsa died of cholera in jail at the age of 25 and with his death, the Munda rebellion movement faded out. After his death, the British government introduced the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 1908, which prohibited the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals (Dikus). The British learned the lesson not to interfere with the faith and beliefs of the tribals in India and after that, they kept a lenient attitude towards the tribals of India.

[Q] With reference to the Indian Biological Data Center (IBDC), consider the following statements:

- 1. IBDC is the first national repository for life science data in India supported by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).
- 2. It houses the 'Brahm' High-Performance Computing (HPC) facility.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct: The 'Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC)' is the first national repository for life science data in India. IBDC is mandated to archive all life science data generated from publicly funded research in India. The data center is supported by the Government of India (GOI) through the Department of Biotechnology (DBT). It is being established at the Regional Centre of Biotechnology (RCB), Faridabad in the national capital region in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), India. In times to come, IBDC is envisaged to emerge as a major data repository for all life science data emerging from India.

Statement 2 is correct: It has been established at Regional Centre of Biotechnology (RCB),

Faridabad with a data 'Disaster Recovery' site at National Informatics Centre (NIC), Bhubaneswar. It has a data storage capacity of about 4 petabytes and houses the 'Brahm' High Performance Computing (HPC) facility. The computational infrastructure at IBDC is also made available for researchers interested in performing computational-intensive analysis.

[Q] With reference to the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, 1996, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to extend Part IX of the Constitution to the areas listed under the Fifth Schedule.
2. The PESA Act enables Gram Sabhas to legally recognise the right of tribal communities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] About:

- PESA allows gram panchayats to decide matters related to minor forest produce, land and small water bodies along with the implementation of government schemes and maintaining records of migrant labourers for curbing bonded labour in these scheduled areas.

- **Background:**

- The **73rd and the 74th Amendments** to the Indian Constitution passed in **1992** took the **three-tier Panchayati Raj governance structure** to **rural and urban parts of the country**

- It came into force in April **1993**.

- However, **scheduled areas**, predominantly inhabited by the **tribal population**, were **exempted** from the new amendments.

- Given **low human development indicators**, there was a huge demand to empower local governance in the scheduled area as well.

- Thus Parliament enacted special legislation called **Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) in 1996**

- It came into force on 24th December **1996**.

- **Objectives:**

- To **extend the provisions of Part IX** of the Constitution relating to the Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas with **certain modifications**.

- To provide **self-rule** for the bulk of the tribal population.

- To have **village governance** with **participatory democracy** and to make the Gram Sabha a nucleus of all activities.

- To evolve a **suitable administrative framework** consistent with traditional practices.

- To **safeguard and preserve** the **traditions and customs** of tribal communities.

- **Applicability:**

- It is now applicable in the **Fifth Schedule areas**, which deals with the **administration of the districts** dominated by the **tribal communities**.

- It is in force in 10 states of the country.

- **Six States** namely Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Telangana have notified PESA Rules.

- The **remaining four States** namely Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha should also frame PESA Rules and **start implementing them soon**.

- The **Gram Sabhas under PESA Act** were entrusted with **wide-ranging powers to:**

- Enforce prohibition or to regulate or restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant.
- Ownership of minor forest produce.
- Prevent alienation of land in the Scheduled Areas and to take appropriate action to restore any unlawfully alienated land of a Scheduled Tribe.
- Manage village markets by whatever name is called.
- Exercise control over money lending to the Scheduled Tribes.
- Exercise control over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors.
- Control over local plans and resources for such plans including tribal sub-plans.

[Q] “Bali Leaders’ Declaration” was recently signed by which of the following Multilateral Organizations?

- (a) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
- (b) Association of Southeast Asian Nations
- (c) G20
- (d) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

[ANS] c

[SOL] The G20 summit was recently concluded in Bali, Indonesia.

● **Bali Leaders’ Declaration:**

○ **War in Ukraine:**

■ The declaration stated that the war in Ukraine is causing economic difficulties and insecurity worldwide.

■ It also termed the threat of using nuclear weapons in the war as “inadmissible”.

■ **Most members** strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and stressed it is causing **immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities** in the global economy -

- Constraining growth,
- Increasing inflation,
- Disrupting supply chains,
- Heightening energy and food security and
- Elevating financial stability risks, **said the declaration.**

○ **Threats to security:**

■ The G20 declaration also called upon the international community to “step up” efforts to counter

- Money laundering,
- Terrorism financing and
- Proliferation financing

● The declaration also urged the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and FATF Style Regional Bodies to “lead global action” to respond to these threats.

[Q] Which of the following defence equipment/ technologies are imported by India from Israel?

1. S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems
2. Heron MK II, a state-of-the-art UAV
3. Air defence systems SPYDER-MR

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

(d) 3 only

[ANS] c

[SOL] India's defence imports:

- **Option 1 is incorrect:**
 - **S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile systems:**
 - It is a mobile, surface-to-air missile (SAM) system developed by Russia in the 1990s.
- **Option 2 is correct:**
 - **Heron MK II:**
 - Induction of Heron MK II, a state-of-the-art UAV that can fly at a height of 35,000 feet, cover a radius of 1000 km, see through dense clouds, work in bad weather and fly for 45 hours.
 - It's learnt that MK IIs are being deployed in Leh.
 - MK II can also be used for search and rescue operations.
- **Option 3 is correct:**
 - **The SPYDER** is an Israeli short and medium range mobile air defence system.

[Q] With reference to Stagflation, consider the following statements:

1. Increased government spending can mitigate the effects of stagflation.
 2. Stagflation needs solutions beyond the conventional monetary or fiscal policy tools.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Recently, the Union Finance Ministry told the Supreme Court (SC) that demonetisation in 2016 led to a **phenomenal growth in digital transactions, shrunk fake currency and saw more income tax payers.**

Statement 1 is not correct: Stagflation is an economic phenomenon marked by a combination of recession and high inflation with high unemployment. An economy is said to be in stagflation when the country's GDP (Gross Domestic Product) is growing at a slow rate, even as inflation is rising. Increased government spending is good for the economy, but it can lead to scarcity in some goods and inflation will follow.

Statement 2 is correct: If the central bank increases interest rates in a bid to tame inflation, then it could increase the cost of borrowings and reduce the aggregate demand, worsening the slowdown. On the other hand, if it cuts interest rates to induce growth, this could make inflation worse. Stagflation therefore calls for solutions beyond the conventional monetary or fiscal policy tools.

[Q] Recently seen in news, Mangarh Dham, is located at which of the following?

- (a) Gujarat
- (b) Rajasthan - Madhya Pradesh Border
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Gujarat-Rajasthan border

[ANS] d

[SOL] The courageous tribal martyrs **led by Govind Guru** fought the British rulers in the early 20th century.

Mangarh Dham:

- Mangarh Dham is known for the massacre of tribals by the British Indian Army in 1913.
- It is located in the district on the **Gujarat-Rajasthan border**, a region with a large tribal population.
- Social reformer Govind Guru led the gathering of tribals and forest dwellers in 1913 in Mangarh against the British Raj.

[Q] With reference to the NITI Aayog, consider the following statements:

1. It is an executive body setup in 2013 to replace the Planning Commission.
2. The Chief Executive Officer appointed by the Prime Minister is the chairperson of NITI Aayog.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] About:

- It was set up in 2015 to **replace Planning Commission**.
- It is an **Executive Body** (acts as a **think tank** and **advisory** body)
- **Objective:**
 - To foster the spirit of **Cooperative and Competitive federalism** through structured support initiatives on a continuous basis.
- **Composition of NITI Aayog:**
 - **Chairperson:** Prime Minister of India
 - **Governing Council** consists of the Chief Ministers of all the States and Lt. Governors of Union Territories in India.
 - The NITI Aayog's governing council is the premier body tasked with evolving a shared vision of national priorities and strategies with the involvement of the States and Union Territories.
 - It presents a platform to discuss **inter-sectoral, inter-departmental** and **federal issues**.
 - **Regional Councils** will be created to address particular issues and possibilities affecting more than one state.
 - These will be **formed for a fixed term and summoned by the PM**.
 - These will be **chaired by the Chairperson of the NITI Aayog** or his **nominee**.
 - **Special invitees:** Eminent experts, specialists with relevant domain knowledge, which will be nominated by the Prime Minister.
- **Full-time organizational framework:**
 - Prime Minister as the Chairperson:
 - Vice-Chairperson (appointed by the Prime Minister)
 - **Members:**
 - Full-time
 - Part-time members on a rotational basis: Maximum of 2 members from foremost universities, leading research organizations, and other innovative organizations in an ex-officio capacity.
 - **Ex Officio members:**
 - Maximum of 4 members of the Council of Ministers which is to be nominated by the Prime Minister.

○ **Chief Executive Officer:**

- The CEO will be appointed by the Prime Minister for a fixed tenure. He will be in the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.

[Q] With reference to the Red-Crowned Roofed Turtle , consider the following statements:

1. It is native to India and Bangladesh and inhabits large swift-flowing rivers
2. The International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) Red List classifies it as Vulnerable.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News:** India has put forward a proposal to better protect a species of freshwater reptile called the red-crowned roofed turtle (Batagur kachuga) under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Statement 1 is correct : Red-Crowned roofed turtles are **native to India and Bangladesh**, and are at a high risk of extinction. It inhabits large swift-flowing rivers with sandy bottoms.

Statement 2 is not correct : Red-Crowned roofed turtles are classified as **Critically Endangered** under the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List.

[Q] Which of the following is/are correct regarding National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme(NMMSS)?

1. It is the Centrally sponsored scheme which was launched in 2008.
2. Students whose parental income from all sources is not more than Rs. 3,50,000/- per annum are eligible to avail the scholarship.
3. Students of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan(KVS) and residential schools are not entitled for the scholarship.

Select the correct answer using the code given ' below:

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News:** The last date for submission of applications for NMMSS for the year 2022-23 is 30th November 2022.

Statement 1 is not correct : It is the **Central Sector Scheme** which was launched in 2008, after

getting approval from CCEA, with the objective to award scholarships to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop out at class VIII and encourage them to continue their education at secondary stage.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct : Students whose parental income from all sources is not **more than Rs. 3,50,000/- per annum** are eligible to avail the scholarships. The students must have a minimum of 55% marks or equivalent grade in Class VII examination for appearing in the selection test for award of scholarship (relaxable by 5% for SC/ST students).

- The students should be studying as regular students in a Government, Government-aided and local body school.
- Students of **NVS, KVS and residential schools** are **not entitled** for the scholarship. There is reservation as per State Government norms.

[Q] Cerebrotendinous xanthomatosis (CTX) recently seen in the news ,it is

- (a) It is a mosquito-borne illness.
- (b) It is transmitted through the bite of an infected animal.
- (c) It is a condition where a baby's skin turns blue.
- (d) It is a lipid storage disease characterized by infantile-onset diarrhea.

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News :Recently, **Hyderabad researchers** found a remedy to stop progression of rare genetic disease.

- Cerebrotendinous xanthomatosis (CTX) is **a lipid storage disease characterized by infantile-onset diarrhea**, childhood-onset cataract, adolescent- to young adult-onset tendon xanthomas, and adult-onset progressive neurologic dysfunction.

[Q] With reference to the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF), consider the following statements:

1. It was established to provide long-term capital to India's infrastructure sector.
2. Its first bilateral fund has been proposed between India and China .

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News : The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs has urged the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) to expand its operations and explore ways to crowd in private capital for projects under the National Infrastructure Pipeline, PM Gati Shakti and National Infrastructure Corridor.

Statement 1 is correct : NIIF is anchored by the Government of India and is a collaborative investment platform for international and Indian investors

- It invests across Infrastructure and Growth Equity.
- It is established to provide long-term capital to India's infrastructure sector.
- It has developed into an internationally credible and commercially viable investment platform, backed by several highly respected global and domestic investors who have invested alongside the Government of India in NIIF Funds.

Statement 2 is not correct : NIIF's first bilateral fund - an "**India Japan Fund**" with contribution from GoI has been proposed through an MoU between National Investment and Infrastructure

Fund Limited (NIIFL) and Japan Bank for International Development (JBIC)

[Q] With reference to Baliyatra , consider the following statements:

1. It commemorates the 2,000-year-old maritime and cultural links between ancient Kalinga and Southeast Asia.
2. It begins on Kartik Purnima and its origin can be traced back more than 1,000 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News: Recently, the Prime Minister In his **address to the Indian diaspora in Bali** on the side-lines of the **G20 summit** mentioned the **annual Baliyatra on the banks of the Mahanadi in Cuttack**, which celebrates the **ancient trade relations between India and Indonesia**.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : Baliyatra, literally ‘voyage to Bali’, one of the country’s largest open-air fairs that commemorates the 2,000-year-old maritime and cultural links between ancient Kalinga and Southeast Asia.

- The origins of the festival, which begins on Kartik Purnima (full moon night in the month of Kartik) can be traced back more than 1,000 years

[Q] With reference to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), consider the following statements:

1. Its genesis was under the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe after World War II.
2. It has more than 80 member nations.
3. India has been a member nation since 1992.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct:** The forerunner of the OECD was the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), which was formed to administer American and Canadian aid under the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe after World War II. The Convention transforming the OEEC into the OECD was signed at the Chateau de la Muette in Paris on 14 December 1960 and entered into force on 30 September 1961. It is a forum and its members are countries which describe themselves as committed to democracy and the market economy, providing a platform to compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practices and coordinate domestic and international policies of its members.

Statements 2 and 3 are not correct: OECD has 38 member countries. India is not a member of OECD. Although, India is one of those non-member economies with which the OECD has working relationships in addition to its member countries.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding the Press Council of India (PCI):

1. Press Council of India was established under the PCI Act of 1978.
2. PCI is chaired by an independent member nominated by the media outlets operating in India.
3. National Press Day in India is observed on the 16th of November in honor of the foundation of PCI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Press Council of India (PCI)

- **Statute:**

- The PCI was established under the **PCI Act of 1978** for the purpose of preserving the freedom of the press and of maintaining and improving the standards of **newspapers and news agencies** in India. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- **Responsibilities:**

- The Press Council of India is responsible for examining the quality of reportage from the Indian media, while also keeping a check on other journalistic activities.

- **Functions:**

- Helping newspapers maintain their independence;
- Build a code of conduct for journalists and news agencies;
- Help maintain “high standards of public taste” and foster responsibility among citizens; and
- Review developments likely to restrict flow of news.

- **Chairperson & members:**

- The Press Council of India is traditionally chaired by a retired Supreme Court Judge and 28 additional members of which 20 are members of the media outlets operating in India. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

- Five members are nominated from the Houses of the Parliament and the remaining three represent cultural, legal and literary fields.

- **National Press Day:**

- National Press Day is observed on 16th of November in honor of the Press Council of India. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

[Q] With reference to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), consider the following statements:

1. It was established by an Executive order for fixation/revision of tariffs for telecom services.
2. It provides a fair and transparent policy environment which promotes a level playing field.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Recently, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) **released its**

recommendations on ‘Regulatory Framework for Promoting Data Economy Through Establishment of Data Centres (DCs), Content Delivery Networks (CDNs), and Interconnect

Exchanges (IXPs) in India'.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was established with effect from 20th February 1997 by an **Act of Parliament**, called the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997, to regulate telecom services, including fixation/revision of tariffs for telecom services which were earlier vested in the Central Government.

Statement 2 is correct: TRAI's mission is to create and nurture conditions for growth of telecommunications in the country in a manner and at a pace which will enable India to play a leading role in emerging global information society. One of the main objectives of the TRAI is to provide a fair and transparent policy environment which promotes a level playing field and facilitates fair competition.

[Q] With reference to ASTRA missile, consider the following statements:

1. It has been designed and developed by the Indian Air Force (IAF).
2. The Astra Mk-1 is a beyond visual range surface-to-air missile (SAM).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] The Indian Air Force (IAF) needs a **revised guiding document** to help it navigate ahead smoothly.

Statement 1 is not correct: ASTRA missile has been designed and developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** for deployment on fighter jets like Sukhoi-30 MKI and Tejas of the IAF and the Mig-29K of the Navy.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Astra Mk-1 is a beyond visual range (BVR), **air-to-air** missile (AAM). The missile can travel at speeds more than four times that of sound and can reach a maximum altitude of 20 km, making it extremely flexible for air combat. While the range for Astra Mk-1 is around 110 km, the Mk-2 with a range over 150 km is under development and Mk-3 version with a longer range is being envisaged.

[Q] Which of the following statements is **not correct**?

- (a) Financial market deals with the purchase and sale of different types of investments, financial services and loans.
- (b) Money market and capital market are two major types of financial markets in India.
- (c) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is working to enhance financial consumer protection.
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] d

[SOL] **More about the Financial Market:**

- The Financial Market is a place where **financial products and services are bought and sold** on a **regular basis**.
- It deals in the purchase and sale of different types of **investments, financial services, loans**, etc.
- **Financial markets in India:**
 - There are two main types of financial markets in India where the majority of trading is happening.

- The first one is the money **market** and the second one is the capital **market**.
- Banks and financial institutions are a part of the financial market.
- **Financial Consumer Protection (FCP):**
- Financial Consumer Protection (FCP) includes determining what is required to help consumers gain the confidence, knowledge, information, security and choices they need to enable them to fully participate in financial markets.
- **OECD's principles:**
- The OECD is working on how to **enhance financial consumer protection**, which includes determining what is required to help consumers gain the **confidence, knowledge, information, security and choices** they need to enable them **to fully participate in financial markets**.
- OECD's principles deal with three cross-cutting themes — financial well-being, digitalisation and sustainable finance.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding the No Money For Terror (NMFT) conference:

1. The third NMFT Conference was hosted by the Ministry of Home Affairs of India in New Delhi.
2. The second NMFT Conference blacklisted South Africa as a global attempt to prevent illicit funding for terrorism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] No Money For Terror (NMFT) conference

- **NMFT in India:**
- It was the **third** Ministerial 'No Money for Terror (NMFT)' Conference on 18th and 19th of November. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The conference was hosted by the **Ministry of Home Affairs in New Delhi.**
- The Conference intended to bring together **representatives of 75 countries and international bodies** for extended deliberations over two days.
- **Aim:**
- It aims to progress the discussions on combating terrorist financing held by the international community in the previous two Conferences in **Paris (2018) and Melbourne (2019).**
- **Statement 2 is not correct:** There is no such mechanism of Blacklisting/Greylisting.

[Q] With reference to Kyoto Protocol, consider the following statements:

1. The Kyoto Protocol binds industrialised countries to limit and reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets.
2. It only binds developed countries, and places them under the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities”.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Recently, India submitted its **long-term climate action strategy** to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at the UN Climate Conference (**COP27**).

Statement 1 is correct: The Kyoto Protocol was adopted on 11 December 1997. Owing to a complex ratification process, it entered into force on 16 February 2005. Currently, there are 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. In short, the Kyoto Protocol operationalizes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by committing industrialised countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets. The Convention itself only asks those countries to adopt policies and measures on mitigation and to report periodically.

Statement 2 is correct: The Kyoto Protocol is based on the principles and provisions of the Convention and follows its annex-based structure. It only binds developed countries, and places a heavier burden on them under the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities”, because it recognizes that they are largely responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere. In its Annex B, the Kyoto Protocol sets binding emission reduction targets for 37 industrialized countries and economies in transition and the European Union. Overall, these targets add up to an average 5 per cent emission reduction compared to 1990 levels over the five year period 2008–2012 (the first commitment period).

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. A loan becomes a Non-performing asset (NPAs) when the principal or interest payment remains overdue for two quarters in a year.
2. Project Sashakt was related to addressing the bad loans problem in India's banking 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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct:** A loan becomes an NPA when the **principal or interest payment remains overdue for 90 days**.

Types of NPA

● **Sub Standard:** A sub-standard asset is one that is classified as an NPA for a period not exceeding twelve months.

● **Doubtful:** A doubtful asset is one that has remained as an NPA for a period exceeding twelve months.

● **Loss:** A loss asset is one where loss has already been identified by the bank or an external institution, but it is not yet completely written off, due to its recovery value, however

little it may be.

Statement 2 is correct: Project Sashakt aims to strengthen the credit capacity, credit culture and credit portfolio of public sector banks. Project Sashakt was proposed by a panel led by PNB chairman Sunil Mehta to help consolidate stressed assets. Bad loans of up to ₹ 50 crore will be managed at the bank level, with a deadline of 90 days. For bad loans of ₹ 50-500 crore, banks will enter an inter-creditor agreement, authorizing the lead bank to implement a resolution plan in 180 days, or refer the asset to NCLT. For loans above ₹ 500 crore, the panel recommended an independent AMC, supported by institutional funding through the AIF.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Great knot species breeds in northeast Siberia.
2. They are listed as an 'Critically endangered' species by the IUCN.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **About Great knot**

- **Scientific Name:** *Calidris tenuirostris*
- It is a small wader.
- It is the largest of the calidris species
- **Habitat:** Grassland, Marine Neritic, Marine Intertidal, Marine Coastal/Supratidal.
 - This species breeds in northeast Siberia, Russia, wintering mainly in Australia, but also throughout the coastline of South-East Asia and on the coasts of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula.
- **Threats Information:** Loss of intertidal stopover habitats in the Yellow Sea region is thought to be a key driver in the population declines of shorebirds
 - It is also potentially threatened by climate change.
 - Recent evidence shows a very rapid population decline caused by the **reclamation of non-breeding stopover grounds**, and under the assumption that further proposed reclamation projects will cause additional declines in the future.
- **Protection Status:** It is listed as an '**endangered**' species by the IUCN.
 - It is listed in Appendix I of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

[Q] 'Gatekeeper training model' that was recently in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Mental Health
- (b) Higher Education
- (c) Prevention of pollution
- (d) Cyber Security

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Gatekeeper Training**

- It is a WHO-recommended suicide prevention strategy. It aims to equip individuals with skills to be the first responder for someone in emotional distress and potentially suicidal.
- **GateKeeper Model in India:**
 - **Gatekeepers:**
 - Gatekeepers are existing people who are in close contact with the prisoners and can provide help for the prisoners.
 - They could be other convicted prisoners, prison staff who will be able to identify and support prisoners needing psychological help.
 - People having a psychological problem or at risk of suicide can access the gatekeeper, who can bridge the gap between them and professional services. This is of particular benefit in at-risk suicidal prisoners.
 - **Objective:**
 - In this model, selected inmates, trained to identify prisoners at risk of suicide, would refer them to treatment or supportive services.

[Q] Which of the following is located on the Great Nicobar island?

1. Indira Point
2. World's first cucumber conservation area
3. Dr. Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Great Nicobar island:**

- **India's southernmost point:**
 - **Indira Point on the southern tip of Great Nicobar Island** is India's southernmost point, less than 150 km from the northernmost island of the Indonesian archipelago. **Hence, option 1 is correct.**
- **Protected area:**
 - Great Nicobar is home to two national parks and a biosphere reserve.
- **Inhabitants:**
 - The island is inhabited by the Shompen and Nicobarese tribal peoples, along with ex-servicemen from Punjab, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh who were settled on the island in the 1970s.
- **Option 2 is incorrect:**
 - The Lakshadweep Islands administration has announced the creation of the world's first conservation area — 239 sq. km — for endangered sea cucumbers. The announcement came after reports of smuggling of sea cucumbers and other vulnerable marine species for sale in east Asia.

- **Option 3 is incorrect:**

- Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary is an estuarine mangrove habitat, which is declared as the bird sanctuary, and located along the **Mandovi River, Goa, in India.**
- The sanctuary is named after Salim Ali, the **eminent Indian ornithologist.**

[Q] Which of the following statements is correct regarding Sufism Orders in India?

- (a) In India, Chisti Order was introduced by Khawaja Abdul Chishti.
- (b) Qadri order emphasized an observance of the laws of Shariat.
- (c) The Pirs of Naqshbandi order supported the concept that God and His creation are one.
- (d) The Suhrawardi order of the sufis became popular in the North Western part of India.

[ANS] d

[SOL] Rana Safvi's '**In Search of the Divine**' delves into the fascinating roots of Sufism.

Option (a) is not correct: It originated outside India and its founder saint was **Khawaja Abdul Chisti**. In India, it was introduced by **Khawaja Muinuddin Chishti**. Muinuddin Chishti was born in Persia. He visited different places of Islamic learning in Central Asia and, finally, reached India in 1200 A.D. He settled himself at Ajmer and became very popular all over Northern India.

Option (b) is not correct: **Naqshbandi order** emphasized an observance of the laws of Shariat and denounced all innovations which were added afterwards to Islamic doctrines.

Option (c) is not correct: The Pirs of **Qadri order** supported the concept of Wahadat al Wajud (this doctrine postulates that God and His creation are one).

Option (d) is correct: The Suhrawardi order of the sufis became popular in the North Western part of India.

[Q] With reference to the Olive Ridley Turtles, consider the following statements:

1. Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is the world's largest nesting beach for Olive Ridley Turtles.
2. They are known for their unique mass nesting called Arribada.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **About Olive Ridley turtles**

- **Scientific name:** *Lepidochelys olivacea*; also known as the **Pacific ridley** sea turtle.

- **Location:** Found in warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans.

- **Features:**

- One of the **smallest sea-turtles** on the earth.
- **Olive green** colour of their shell.
- They can grow up to **two-and-a-half feet** in length and weigh **30-45 kilograms**.
- **Food:** Mainly **shrimp, crab, molluscs, fish and crabs**.
- Known for their unique mass nesting called **Arribada** (which means '**arrival by the sea**' in Spanish), where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- They hatch in **45 to 60 days**.
- **Gender:** determined by the **temperature** at which they are hatched.
 - A **male** turtle is born if the egg hatches at a temperature **below 29** degrees Celsius.
 - Above that, the hatchling is a **female**.

Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary

- It is a marine wildlife sanctuary **located in Odisha.**
- It is the **world's largest nesting beach for Olive Ridley Turtles.**
- It extends from **Dhamra River** mouth in the north to **Brahmani river** mouth in the south.
- Gahirmatha was declared a **turtle sanctuary in 1997** by Odisha after considering its ecological importance and as part of efforts to save the sea turtles.

[Q] With reference to the PM-KISAN Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Central Sector scheme implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
2. Marginal farmers and all Institutional landholders are eligible for the benefit under the scheme.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] About PM-KISAN scheme

- **Objective:**
 - Under the scheme an income support of 6,000/- per year in three equal installments will be provided to all land holding farmer families. The family includes husband, wife and minor children.
 - The fund will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.
- **Funding:**
 - It is a **Central Sector scheme** with 100% funding from Government of India. It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.**
- **Identification of beneficiaries**
 - State Government and UT administration will identify the farmer families which are eligible for support as per scheme guidelines.
- **Eligibility:**
 - Small and marginal farmers are eligible for PMKSNY.
 - Farmer families that hold cultivable land can apply for the benefits of this plan.
 - A beneficiary should be an Indian citizen.
 - Farmers from both rural and urban regions can be enlisted.
- **Exclusion Categories:** The following categories of beneficiaries of higher economic status **shall not be eligible for benefit under the scheme:**
 - All Institutional Landholders.
 - Farmer families in which one or more of its members belong to the following categories
 - Former and present holders of constitutional posts
 - Former and present Ministers/ State Ministers and former/present Members of Lok Sabha/ Rajya Sabha/ State Legislative Assemblies/ State Legislative Councils, former and present Mayors of Municipal Corporations, former and present Chairpersons of District Panchayats.
 - All serving or retired officers and employees of Central/ State Government Ministries /Offices/Departments and its field units Central or State PSEs and Attached offices

/ Autonomous Institutions under Government as well as regular employees of the Local Bodies
(Excluding Multi Tasking Staff / Class IV / Group D employees)

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding U.N.'s Peacekeeping missions (UNPK):

1. India is the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN Peacekeeping Mission.
2. India recently proposed an initiative for women peacekeepers of ASEAN member states in UNPK operations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] United Nations Peacekeeping mission

- **About:**

- The U.N. Peacekeeping mission is a joint effort between the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support, and aims to assist host countries to transition from situations of conflict to peace.

- **Aim:**

- U.N. Peacekeepers provide security as well as political and peace building support to conflict-ridden countries.

- **Role of women in Indian Peacekeeping:**

- India has been sending women personnel on UN Peacekeeping Missions. In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN Peacekeeping Mission.

Hence statement 1 is correct.

- **India-ASEAN Initiative for women in UNPK operations:**

- India recently proposed an initiative for women peacekeepers of ASEAN member states in UNPK operations. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

- It includes the conduct of **tailor-made courses for women peacekeepers of ASEAN member states** at the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping in India.

- It also includes the conduct of a **'Table Top Exercise' in India for women officers** from ASEAN incorporating facets of UNPK challenges.

[Q] With reference to Free Trade Agreement (FTA), consider the following statements:

1. FTA is an agreement between the countries or regional blocks to reduce or eliminate trade barriers.
2. It includes goods but not intellectual property till now.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Recently, the External Affairs Minister of India met with his UAE counterpart and noted that bilateral trade has **shown appreciable growth** under the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**.

Statement 1 is correct: FTA is an agreement between the countries or regional blocks to reduce or eliminate trade barriers, through mutual negotiations with a view to enhancing trade.

Statement 2 is not correct: It includes goods, **services, investment, intellectual property, competition, government procurement** and other areas.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Article 324 of the Constitution envisages the enactment of a law to provide for the procedure for the appointments of election commissioners.

2. Chief Election commissioner & other Election commissioners are removed from office only through a special majority of the Parliament.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Composition of Election Commission of India**

- **About:**

- The Election Commission of India consists of the chief election commissioner and a number of other election commissioners, as fixed by the President.

- Originally the commission had only a Chief Election Commissioner.

- It currently consists of the Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.

- **Statement 1 is correct:**

- **Article 324** of the Constitution, dealing with the appointment of election commissioners, had **envisaged the enactment of a law to provide for the procedure for such appointments**, but the government had not done this yet.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:**

- The CEC, **like an apex court judge**, can be removed from office **only through a special majority of the Parliament** whereas the **Election Commissioners** depend on the **“pleasure” of the President to stay in office**.

[Q] With reference to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), consider the following statements:

1. It was founded in 1967 by the South-East Asian nations of Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Singapore and Cambodia.

2. The First ASEAN Summit was held in Bali, Indonesia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):**

- **About:**
 - It is a **political and economic organization** aimed primarily at **promoting economic growth and regional stability** among its members.
- **Foundation:**
 - It was founded in **1967** by the **five South-East Asian nations of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.**
 - Brunei Darussalam joined in 1984, Vietnam in 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999, making up ten Member States of ASEAN.
- **Current members:**
 - Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
- **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.**
- **ASEAN Summit:**
 - It is the highest policy-making body in ASEAN comprising the Head of States or Government of ASEAN Member States.
 - Summit is **held twice annually.**
 - The **First ASEAN Summit was held in Bali, Indonesia in 1976.**

[Q] The 'Champions of the Earth Award' was seen in the news recently, it is given by which of the following organizations?

- (a) World Wide Fund for Nature
- (b) Conservation International
- (c) International Union for Conservation of Nature
- (d) United Nations Environment Programme

[ANS] d

[SOL] Indian wildlife biologist **Dr. Purnima Devi Barman** is among the honourees of this year's **Champions of the Earth award.**

Option c is correct: **About Champions of the Earth award**

- **UNEP's Champions of the Earth** honours individuals, groups, and organizations whose actions have a transformative impact on the environment.
- The annual Champions of the Earth award is the **UN's highest environmental honour.**
- It recognizes outstanding leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector.
- Since its **inception in 2005**, the annual Champions of the Earth award has been awarded to trailblazers at the forefront of efforts to protect our natural world.
- The Champions of the Earth award will celebrate visionaries in three categories:
- Inspiration and action
- Entrepreneurial vision
- Science and innovation

[Q] Which of the following statements is incorrect regarding the phenomena of upwelling?

- (a) Upwelling is when nutrient-rich sea waters rise towards the surface.
- (b) Excessive upwelling may boost ocean acidity.
- (c) Upwelling intensity is increased under El Niño influence.

(d) All are correct.

[ANS] c

[SOL] El Niño:

- **About:**

- El Niño is the warming of seawater in the central-east Equatorial Pacific that occurs every few years.
- During El Niño, surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific rise, and trade winds – east-west winds that blow near the Equator – weaken.
- Normally, easterly trade winds blow from the Americas towards Asia. Due to El Niño, they falter and change direction to turn into westerlies, bringing warm water from the western Pacific towards the Americas.

- **How does El Niño affect the phenomena of upwelling?**

- The phenomena of upwelling, where nutrient-rich waters rise towards the surface, is **reduced under El Niño**. This in turn reduces phytoplankton.

- **Hence, statement (b) is correct & (c) is incorrect.**

- Thus, fish that eat phytoplankton are affected, followed by other organisms higher up the food chain.
- **Statement (b) is correct.** Excessive upwelling boosts ocean acidity in a way that directly threatens shell-forming creatures such as pteropods (free-swimming sea snails and slugs) and many more animals affected by low water-oxygen levels.

[Q] Which of the following is/are established by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960?

1. Central Zoo Authority
2. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau
3. National Board for Wildlife & State Board for Wildlife
4. Animal Welfare Board of India

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] Key provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

- **About:**

- **The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 (hereinafter PCA Act, 1960)** is the first enacted law for safeguarding the rights and protecting the animals from pain and suffering inflicted by humans.

- **Some of the main features of the Act are as follows:**

- **Definition:**

- The Act has established the definition of animals to include any living creature other than human beings and different forms of animals.

- **Animal Welfare Board of India:**

- One of the features that the Act specifies is the establishment of the Animal Welfare Board of India. **Hence option 4 is correct.**

following boards are set up under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:

- **National Board for Wildlife & State Board for Wildlife:**

- It is a statutory body established under the Act that is responsible for advising the government on wildlife conservation, reviewing and approving various projects relating to wildlife, promoting the conservation and development of wildlife.
- A separate State Board for Wildlife has also been directed to be set up in each state under the said Act.
- **Central Zoo Authority:**
 - It is yet another body incorporated under the Act.
- **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau:**
 - It was constituted under the Act to fight the ever-growing crime rates against wildlife in the country. **Hence options 1, 2 and 3 are incorrect.**

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding the Arittapatti Biodiversity Heritage Site, that was recently in news:

1. It is the first Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) notified in Andhra Pradesh.
2. The Anaikondan tank, built during the reign of Pandiyan kings, is part of Arittapatti Village.
3. The village Arittapatti consists of a chain of seven barren granite hillocks.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Arittapatti Biodiversity Heritage site

- **About:**
 - The state government notified **193.215 hectares of area** spread across **Arittapatti and Meenakshipuram villages** in **Madurai district** as 'Arittapatti Biodiversity Heritage Site'.
 - The declaration was made under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
 - This is the **first Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS)** notified in Tamil Nadu. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- **Wildlife:**
 - Arittapatti village, known for its ecological and historical significance, **houses around 250 species of birds** including **three flagship raptor species** -
 - Laggar Falcon, Shaheen Falcon, and Bonelli's Eagle – and wildlife such as Indian pangolin, python, and slender loris.
 - It is also home to wildlife such as the Indian Pangolin, Slender Loris and pythons.
- **Heritage structures:**
 - The village Arittapatti consists of a **chain of seven barren granite hillocks**. The distinctive landscape of rocky hills acts as a watershed and supports 72 lakes, 200 natural spring pools, and three check dams.
 - The **Anaikondan tank**, built during the reign of **Pandiyan kings in the 16th century** is one among them. **Hence statements 2 and 3 are correct.**
 - The site also features various megalithic structures, Tamil Brahmi inscriptions, Jain Beds, and 2,200-year-old rock-cut temples, lending it historical value.

[Q] With reference to Election Commission of India, consider the following statements:

1. It is a constitutional body founded on 25th January 1952.
2. The body is limited to administration of elections to the Lok Sabha, the offices of the

President and Vice President in the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct:** It was established in accordance with the Constitution on 25th January 1950 (celebrated as national voters' day).

Statement 2 is not correct: The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, and **State Legislative Assemblies** in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country. It is not concerned with the elections to panchayats and municipalities in the states. For this, the Constitution of India provides for a separate State Election Commission.

[Q] Nyingma School/sect is related to which of the following schools of Buddhism?

- (a) Theravada Buddhism
- (b) Mahayana Buddhism
- (c) Vajrayana Buddhism
- (d) None of the above

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Nyingma School/sect:**

- This Vajrayana tradition involves use of ritual, symbols and tantric practices to achieve nirvana.
- Buddhism can be broken down into three main schools. They are:
 - Theravada Buddhism,
 - Mahayana Buddhism, and
 - Vajrayana Buddhism.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding Guru Tegh Bahadur:

1. He was the ninth guru of the Sikhs
2. He introduced the concept of warrior saints.
3. November 24th is commemorated as the Shaheedi Divas in honour of his martyrdom.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Guru Tegh Bahadur**

- November 24th is commemorated as the Shaheedi Divas of **Guru Tegh Bahadur**. Hence **statement 3 is correct**.
 - He was the **ninth guru of the Sikhs**, who stood up against forcible conversions by the Mughals, and was executed on the orders of Aurangzeb in 1675. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.
 - Tegh Bahadur was born in Amritsar on April 21, 1621, to **Mata Nanki and Guru Hargobind**.
- **Guru Hargobind** was the **sixth Sikh guru**, who raised an army against the Mughals and

introduced the concept of warrior saints. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

[Q] Which of the following best describes the labour force participation rate (LFPR)?

- (a) It is the percentage of the working-age (15 years or older) population that is asking for a job.
- (b) It refers to the total number of employed people as a percentage of the working-age population.
- (c) It is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.
- (d) All are correct.

[ANS] a

[SOL] **The labour force participation rate (LFPR):**

- **Definition:**
 - The LFPR essentially is the percentage of the working-age (15 years or older) population that is asking for a job; it represents the “demand” for jobs in an economy.
 - It includes those who are employed and those who are unemployed.
- **The Employment Rate (ER):**
 - **Definition:**
 - The ER refers to the total number of employed people as a percentage of the working-age population.
 - **The worker-population ratio (WPR):**
 - **Definition:**
 - The WPR is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is an agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide.
2. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), India has seen a **steady decline in the prevalence** of child marriage from 47.4% in 2005 to 23.3% in 2021.

Statement 1 is not correct: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the United Nations **sexual and reproductive health agency**. Its mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

Statement 2 is not correct: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is an agency of the United Nations **responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide**. The agency is among the most widespread and recognizable social welfare organizations in the world, with a presence in 192 countries and territories. UNICEF's activities include providing immunizations and disease prevention, administering treatment for children and mothers with HIV, enhancing childhood and maternal nutrition, improving sanitation, promoting education, and providing emergency relief in response to disasters.

[Q] With reference to Aspirational District Programme, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to effectively transform 112 most under-developed districts across the country.
2. Districts are ranked based on 5 broad socio-economic themes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Recently, States have approached the NITI Aayog, seeking its help to set up their **own public policy institutions** to boost development and drive inclusive growth.

Statement 1 is correct: Launched by the Hon'ble PM in January 2018, the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) **aims to quickly and effectively transform 112 most under-developed districts across the country**. The broad contours of the programme are Convergence (of Central & State Schemes), Collaboration (of Central, State level Nodal Officers & District Collectors), and Competition among districts through monthly delta ranking; all driven by a mass movement.

Statement 2 is correct: The ranking is based on the incremental progress made across 49 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) under **5 broad socio-economic themes** - Health & Nutrition, Education, Agriculture & Water Resources, Financial Inclusion & Skill Development and Infrastructure. The delta-ranking of Aspirational Districts and the performance of all districts is available on the Champions of Change Dashboard.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Mohenjo Daro was discovered by archeologists Rakhaladas Banerji and Sir John Marshall.
2. It was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **About Mohenjo-daro**

- **Location:**
 - Mohenjo-Daro or the “**Mound of the dead**” lies in Larkana district of Sindh (Pakistan), about 5 km away from the Indus.
- **Contribution of discovery:**
 - It was discovered by archeologists **Rakhaladas Banerji and Sir John Marshall**.
- **Significance of the site:**
 - It is one of the **largest of the Indus Valley Civilization sites**.
- **Construction marvel:**
 - The site is famous for its elaborate **town planning with street grids** with brick pavements, developed water supply, drainage, and covered sewerage systems, homes with toilets, and monumental buildings.
 - Its excavations revealed findings like the Great Bath, Great Granary, a large assembly hall, temple-like structure, the seal of Pashupati and a bust of a bearded man.
 - It is the most glaring example of town planning in the Harappan civilization.
 - **The city is divided into citadel and lower city.**

- It is clear that the citadel (for such it evidently was) carried the religious and ceremonial headquarters of the site.
- In the lower town were substantial courtyard houses indicating a considerable middle class.
 - **Relationship with Harappa:**
 - Its relationship with Harappa, however, is uncertain – i.e., if the two cities were contemporaneous centres or if one city succeeded the other.
- **Sculptures:**
 - Aesthetically the most notable work of figurative art from the city is a famous bronze of a young dancing girl, naked save for a multitude of armlets.
 - Among innumerable terra-cottas the most expressive are small but vigorous representations of bulls and buffalo.
- **Decline:**
 - The evidence suggests that Mohenjo-daro suffered more than once from devastating floods of abnormal depth and duration.
 - The civilization went into decline in the middle of the second millennium BC for reasons that are believed to include catastrophic climate change.
- **Legacy:**
 - Mohenjo-daro was designated a **UNESCO World Heritage site** in 1980.

[Q] Which of the following statements is incorrect regarding the phenomena of upwelling?

- (a) Upwelling is when nutrient-rich sea waters rise towards the surface.
- (b) Excessive upwelling may boost ocean acidity.
- (c) Upwelling intensity is increased under El Niño influence.
- (d) All are correct.

[ANS] c

[SOL]

El Niño:

- **About:**
 - El Niño is the warming of seawater in the central-east Equatorial Pacific that occurs every few years.
 - During El Niño, surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific rise, and trade winds – east-west winds that blow near the Equator – weaken.
 - Normally, easterly trade winds blow from the Americas towards Asia. Due to El Niño, they falter and change direction to turn into westerlies, bringing warm water from the western Pacific towards the Americas.

- **How does El Niño affect the phenomena of upwelling?**
 - The phenomena of upwelling, where nutrient-rich waters rise towards the surface, **is reduced under El Niño**. This in turn reduces phytoplankton.
 - **Hence, statement (b) is correct & (c) is incorrect.**
 - Thus, fish that eat phytoplankton are affected, followed by other organisms higher up the food chain.
 - **Statement (b) is correct.** Excessive upwelling boosts ocean acidity in a way that directly threatens shell-forming creatures such as pteropods (free-swimming sea snails and slugs) and many more animals affected by low water-oxygen levels.

[Q] With reference to the Constitution of India, consider the following statements:

1. It was handwritten and calligraphic in English only.
 2. The 9th Schedule to the Constitution of India was added by the first constitutional amendment act.
 3. The Fundamental Duties for Citizens were added by the 44th constitutional amendment act.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Constitution Of India

- **About:**
 - **The longest written constitution** of the World (25 Parts & 12 Schedules)
 - The Indian Constitution **wasn't typed or printed** and is handwritten & stored in a Helium filled case.
 - Handcrafted by the artists of **Shantiniketan** under the **guidance of Acharya Nandalal Bose**.
 - The original constitution was handwritten in **Hindi and English** with calligraphy by Prem Behari Narain Raizada.
 - **GOI Act, 1935:** Major portion borrowed from this Act.
- **Salient Features**
 - **Preamble:** Define India to be a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic assuring its citizen's justice, equality, and liberty.
 - Parliamentary form, Federalism, Single Citizenship, Separation of Powers.
- **Key Amendments Made:**
 - **1st CAA:** Added Ninth Schedule laws that cannot be challenged in courts.
 - **42nd CAA:** Inserted Article 51-A (10 FDs), Socialist, Secular and Integrity added to the Preamble, & new DPSPs added (Article 39, 39A, 43 A, 48A)

[Q] Exercise Garuda Shakti is a bilateral military exercise between India and which of the following nations?

- (a) Sri Lanka
- (b) Mongolia
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) Thailand

[ANS] c

[SOL] Option c is correct: The Garuda Shakti Exercise is a bilateral joint special force exercise between India and Indonesia. This joint military exercise is being organized as part of the bilateral defence cooperation between Indonesia and India. It has been held since 2012, involving Para Special Force of the Indian Army. It will facilitate both armies to know each other better, and share their wide experiences and combat experience on countering terrorist operations, Regional Security Operations & Peace Keeping Operations in an international environment.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. In India, Judicial Review is governed by the principle of “Procedure established by law”.
2. The Parliament of India has power to place a law in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] 26th November is being celebrated as **Constitution Day** to mark the adoption of the Indian Constitution by the Constituent Assembly.

Statement 1 is correct: The Judiciary is vested with power to pronounce upon the constitutionality of laws and executive orders. Judicial Review is governed by the principle of “Procedure established by law” as given in Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. The law has to pass the test of constitutionality if it qualifies it can be made a law. On the contrary, the court can declare it null and void.

Statement 2 is correct: The Parliament of India can place a particular law in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution of India. The validity of a law placed in the Ninth Schedule cannot be examined by any court and no judgment can be made on it.

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act ensures that at least half of beneficiaries have to be women.
2. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

- **About:**
 - It is a poverty alleviation programme of the Government of India, which provides the legal **Right to Work** in exchange for money to the citizens of the country.
 - On average, every day approximately 1.5 crore people work under it at almost 14 lakh sites.
- **Aim:**

- It aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
- **Funding:**
 - It is shared between the Centre and the States.
 - The Central Government bears 100 per cent of the cost of unskilled labour, 75 percent of the cost of semi-skilled and skilled labour, 75 percent of the cost of materials and 6 percent of the administrative costs.

[Q] With reference to the Rare Earth Elements, consider the following statements:

1. Russia has the world's largest repository of rare earth elements.
2. Thulium and Europium are rare earth elements.
3. In India, monazite and thorium is the principal source of rare earth.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

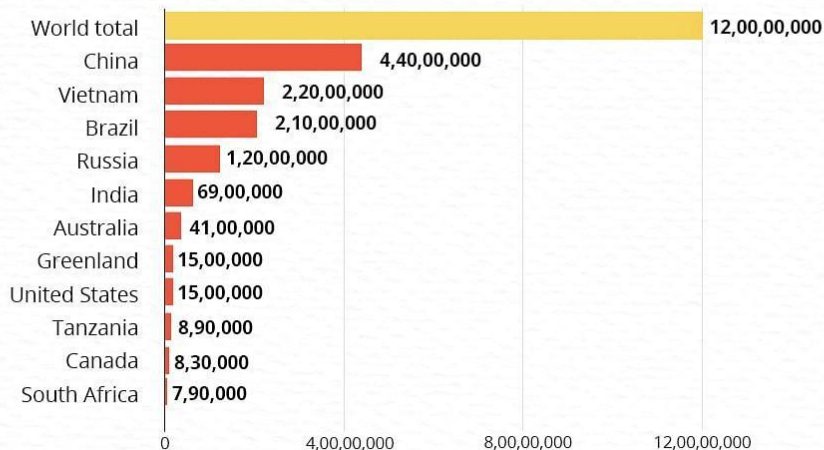
[SOL] What are Rare Earth Elements?

- There are **17 rare earth elements (REE)**.
- It **includes** the 15 Lanthanides (Atomic number 57 which is Lanthanum to 71 in the periodic table) plus Scandium (atomic number 21) and Yttrium (39).
- REEs are classified as **light RE elements (LREE) and heavy RE elements (HREE)**.

World Reserves

WHERE ARE THE WORLD'S LARGEST RARE EARTH RESERVES

Reserves in metric tonnes of REO (rare earth oxides) as of 2020



Source: U.S. Geological Survey



India's Scenario

- **India has 6% of the world's rare earth reserves.** It only produces 1% of global output and meets most of its requirements of such minerals from China.
- Rare earth elements contribute a **total value of nearly \$200 billion** to the Indian economy.
- In 2018-19, **92% of rare earth metal imports by value and 97% by quantity were sourced from China.**
- **Some REEs are available in India** which include Lanthanum, Cerium, Neodymium, Praseodymium and Samarium, etc.
 - Others such as Dysprosium, Terbium, and Europium, which are classified as HREEs, are **not available in Indian deposits in extractable quantities.**
- In India, **monazite and thorium** is the principal source of rare earth.
- **Indian Rare Earths Ltd (IREL)** which is a Government of India Undertaking, and KMML, a **Kerala State Government Undertaking** are actively engaged in the mining and processing of **beach sand minerals from placer deposits.**

[Q] India's Red Line initiative is associated with which of the following?

- (a) To aware youngsters of the use of steroids in sports
- (b) To create awareness regarding AIDS
- (c) To discourage the over-the-counter sale of antibiotics
- (d) To engage citizens on issues of food safety and adulteration

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option c is correct:** India's Red Line campaign began marking prescription-only antibiotics with a red line to curb their irrational use and create awareness on the dangers of taking antibiotics without being prescribed.

[Q] With reference to the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana, consider the following statements:

1. It is launched in 2015 for providing loans up to 10 lakh to non-farm small/micro enterprises.

2. Under this, the 'Tarun category' covers loans up to Rs. 50,000.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **About Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY)**

- It is a scheme launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on April 8, 2015, for providing loans up to 10 lakh to non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises.
 - These loans are classified as MUDRA loans under PMMY.
- **Major aspects:** Under PMMY loans are provided up to Rs. 10 Lakh through Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) viz; Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), Micro Financial Institutions (MFIs), other financial intermediaries, in three categories namely, 'Shishu', 'Kishore' and 'Tarun' which signifies the stage of growth or development and funding needs of the borrowers.
 - **Shishu:** covering loans up to Rs. 50,000/-
 - **Kishore:** covering loans above Rs. 50,000/- and up to Rs. 5 lakh
 - **Tarun:** covering loans above Rs. 5 lakh and up to Rs. 10 lakh
- **Objectives:** To signify the stage of growth/development and funding needs of the beneficiary micro unit/entrepreneur and also provide a reference point for the next phase of graduation/growth.

[Q] With reference to the Tea Board of India, consider the following statements:

1. The Board promotes domestic trade as well as the export of tea from India.
 2. The Tea Board consists of the Members of Parliament and is reconstituted every five years.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Recently, the Tea Board of India said it had sought a **special financial package of ₹ 1,000 crores** from the Centre for the tea Industry over five years.

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

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

[Q] With reference to the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP), consider the following statements:

1. It is an organisation developing new treatments for drug-resistant infections that pose the greatest threat to health.

2. It was established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Drugs for Neglected Disease initiative (DNDi).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] The World Antimicrobial Awareness Week 2022 concluded recently with the **Muscat Ministerial Manifesto on AMR** being agreed upon at the Third Global High-level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).

Statement 1 is correct: The Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP) is a not-for-profit organisation developing new treatments for drug-resistant infections that pose the greatest threat to health.

Statement 2 is not correct: Established by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** and the Drugs for Neglected Disease initiative (DNDi) in 2016, GARDP is a core element of WHO's Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding an animal:

1. It has been accepted as a food animal by the scientific panel of the Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI).
2. Churkum, churpi, ghee and paneer are the traditional byproducts made of this animal's milk.
3. They are traditionally reared under a transhumance system which is primitive, unorganised and full of hardship.

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

- (a) Himalayan Marmot
- (b) Musk Deers
- (c) Himalayan Yak
- (d) Markhor

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Himalayan Yak**

- Himalayan Yak is a species of **long-haired domesticated cattle** found throughout the **Himalayan region of the Indian subcontinent**.

- They are largely found on the heights of Arunachal, Sikkim, Himachal and Ladakh.

- Yaks are traditionally reared under a **transhumance** system which is **primitive, unorganised and full of hardship**.

- **Food Animal:**

- The Himalayan yak has been accepted as a food animal by the scientific panel of Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI), after a recommendation from Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD).

- **Nutritional value:**

- Research at the NRC-Y has revealed yak milk is highly nutritious, **rich in fat, contains essential minerals and has medicinal values**.

- According to the nutritional analysis, yak milk contains **78-82% water, 7.5-8.5% fat, 4.9-5.3% protein, 4.5-5.0% lactose and 12.3-13.4% solids-not-fat**. The products which are

traditionally produced from yak milk are **churkum, churpi, ghee and paneer**.

[Q] Strait of Dover, often heard in the news, is located between the:

- (a) Baltic Sea and Norwegian Sea
- (b) Irish Sea and English Channel
- (c) Baltic Sea and North Sea
- (d) English Channel and North Sea

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Option d is correct:** The Strait of Dover is a narrow water passage separating England (northwest) from France (southeast).

- It connects the English Channel (southwest) with the North Sea (northeast).
- Although the strait is one of the world's busiest seaways, a strict system of traffic lanes and navigation information became mandatory only in 1977.



[Q] Which of the following is/are the parts of the State List under the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution?

1. Police
2. Banking
3. Betting and gambling
4. Public health and sanitation; hospitals and dispensaries

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 4 only

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Recently, the Uttar Pradesh government has decided to introduce the **police Commissionerate System** in Agra, Ghaziabad and Prayagraj after it was implemented in Noida, Varanasi, Lucknow and Kanpur.

- The Union List is a list of 98 subjects (Originally 97) numbered items as provided in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India.
- The State List is a list of 59 subject (Originally 66) items in Schedule Seven of the Constitution of India.
- There are 52 (Originally 47) items currently on the Concurrent list.
- Police; Public health and sanitation and Betting and gambling come under the ambit of the State list while **Banking is a matter under the Union List.**

[Q] Consider the following statements:

1. All foreign undocumented nationals are governed as per the Citizenship Act of 1955 only.
2. India is a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] India's stand on refugees

- 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.

[Q] Consider the following pairs of defence exercises of India with respective countries:

Defence Exercise	Country
Nomadic Elephant	Mongolia
CORPAT	Singapore
Mitra Shakti	USA

Which of the given above pairs is/are correctly matched?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] The bilateral training exercise "**Austra Hind 22**" was recently held between contingents of the **Indian Army and the Australian Army.**

Other Military Exercises:

- **Sampriti** - Bangladesh
- **Mitra Shakti** - Sri Lanka
- **Maitree Exercise** - Thailand
- **Vajra Prahar** - USA
- **Yudh Abhyas** - USA
- **Nomadic Elephant** - Mongolia
- **Garuda Shakti** - Indonesia
- **Shakti Exercise** - France
- **Dharma Guardian** - Japan
- **Surya Kiran** - Nepal
- **Hand in Hand Exercise** - China
- **SIMBEX** - Singapore
- **Shakti Exercise** - France
- **CORPAT** - Thailand

[Q] Which of the following best describes the Fujiwhara Effect, which was recently in the news?

- (a) Fluctuations of sea level during the building up and melting down of glaciers leads to formation of Corals.
- (b) Any interaction between tropical storms formed around the same time in the same ocean region with their centres or eyes at a distance of less than 1,400 km.
- (c) It is a theoretical framework in which the point-like particles of particle physics are replaced by one-dimensional objects called strings.
- (d) Physical geographic features such as climate and terrain exert a strong and unmediated influence upon human affairs

[ANS] b

[SOL] About the Fujiwhara Effect

- **Definition:**
 - The Fujiwhara Effect is **any interaction between tropical storms** formed around the **same time in the same ocean region** with their centres or eyes at a distance of less than **1,400 km**, with intensity that could vary between a depression (**wind speed under 63 km per hour**) and a **super typhoon (wind speed over 209 km per hour)**.
- **Propounder:**
 - Fujiwhara effect was identified by Sakuhei Fujiwhara, a Japanese meteorologist whose first paper recognising the Fujiwhara cases was published in 1921.
- **Known examples:**
 - The first known instance of the effect was in 1964 in the western Pacific Ocean when typhoons Marie and Kathy merged.
 - Recently, two cyclones, namely **super typhoon Hinnamnor & tropical storm Gardo** started **hovering around the central line between them**, showcasing a textbook example of what is known as the Fujiwhara Effect.

[Q] Consider the following statements regarding the recently released State of the Climate in Asia 2021 report:

1. According to the report, floods and storms accounted for 80 percent of the natural disasters that struck Asia in 2021.

2. It was published by the World Meteorological Organization and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **State of the Climate in Asia 2021 report**

● Recently the **State of the Climate in Asia 2021 report** was published by the **World Meteorological Organization** and the **UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)**. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.

● **Report highlights:**

○ **On Asia:**

■ **Natural Disasters:**

● Floods and storms accounted for 80 percent of the natural disasters that struck Asia in 2021. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.

● **Flooding:**

○ Flooding was the event with “by far the greatest impact in Asia in terms of fatalities and economic damage.”

○ **On India:**

■ **Heavy rains & Floods:**

● The country faced heavy rains and flash floods during the monsoon season between June and September 2021.

■ **Storms:**

● During 2021, India experienced five cyclonic storms with maximum sustained wind speeds of ≥ 34 knots.

● Taukte, Yaas, Gulab, Saheen, Jawad, etc are the Cyclonic storms reported by the report.

[Q] With reference to Nine Dash Line, consider the following statements:

1. It is an imaginary, vague line which represents Chinese claims over the South China sea.
2. Main dispute is around the resource-rich region surrounding Paracel and Spratly islands.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Recently, the Defence Minister of India stated that India has emerged as a **regional power and net security provider** in the Indo-Pacific.

Statement 1 is correct: Nine-dash line is an imaginary, vague line which represents Chinese claims over the South China sea. This line has led China into border disputes with neighbouring countries including Vietnam, Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan.

Statement 2 is correct: At the heart of the dispute is the resource-rich region surrounding Paracel and Spratly islands. China has led claims over the islands, but they are rejected by the majority of the members of the international community.

[Q] With reference to the Grey-bellied tragopan, consider the following statements:

1. It is a state bird of Assam.
2. It is categorized as Critically Endangered under the IUCN Red List.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Blyth's tragopan (Tragopan blythii, grey-bellied tragopan)**

- **About:**
 - A pheasant also called grey-bellied tragopan
 - **State bird** of Nagaland.
 - **Scientific Name:** Tragopan blythii
- **Habitat:**
 - Bhutan through north-east India,
 - North Myanmar to south-east Tibet, and
 - China.
- **Population:**
 - Estimated to be about 2,500 to 9,999 birds.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Status:** Vulnerable (VU)
 - **CITES:** Appendix I
- **Threats:**
 - Deforestation as forest is primary habitat;
 - threatened to extinction and overexploitation
 - High levels of grazing and slash and burn agriculture

[Q] Consider the following pairs of defence exercises of India with respective countries:

Defence Exercise	Country
Agni Warrior	Singapore
Harimau Shakti	Malaysia
Yudh Abhyas	USA

Which of the given above pairs is/are correctly matched?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] The Indian Army is currently engaged in bilateral exercises with five countries underway both inside and outside the country meant to improve interoperability.

About the exercises

- The 18th edition of **India-U.S. Army exercise 'Yudh Abhyas'** which is underway at Auli

in Uttarakhand, about 100 km from the Line of Actual Control (LAC), has entered the validation phase and is set to conclude later this week.

- The previous edition of the exercise was held at Alaska, U.S., in October 2021.
- Yudh Abhyas reinforces our commitment to the Indo-Pacific region and improves interoperability with our Indian Army partner.
- **Other ongoing exercises are**
- **'Ex Austra Hind'** with **Australia** at Mahajan field firing ranges in Rajasthan from November 28 to December 11
- The exercise will be a yearly event that will be conducted alternatively in India and Australia.
- **'Ex Agni Warrior'** with Singapore at Deolali from November 13 to December 3.
- The **outgoing exercises** are
- **'Ex Harimau Shakti'** with Malaysia from November 28 to December 12
- the annual training event has been ongoing since 2012
- The scope of this exercise involves a command planning exercise at the Battalion level and company level field training exercise on sub-conventional operations in jungle terrain.
- **'Ex Garuda Shakti'** with Indonesia, between Special Forces began on November 21.
- It is aimed at enhancing understanding, cooperation and interoperability between the Special Forces of both armies.
- **'Ex KazInd'** with Kazakhstan is scheduled for mid-December.