

DAILY MCQs COMPILATION *with* **EXPLANATIONS**

APRIL, 2025

NEXT IAS

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HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. Which of the following statements about the Sarhul Festival are correct?
1. Sarhul is celebrated by the indigenous tribes of Jharkhand to mark the beginning of the new farming season.
 2. The festival is dedicated to Lord Ram and his victories in battle.
 3. During Sarhul, people worship the Sal tree, celebrating the union of the Sun and the Earth, symbolizing life's cycles.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
2. He crowned himself at Raigad Fort, marking the beginning of the 'Rajyabhisheka Era'. He established the Ashta Pradhan Mandal, a council of eight ministers, to assist in governance. Which of the following personalities has been described above?

- (a) Maharana Pratap
- (b) Rana Sanga
- (c) Tipu Sultan
- (d) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

3. Bharani Festival also called Kodungalloor Bharani, is celebrated in which of the following states?
- (a) Kerala
 - (b) Meghalaya
 - (c) Assam
 - (d) Madhya Pradesh

4. With reference to traditional dance forms, Consider the following pairs :

Dance form		State
1. Gomira Dance	:	West Bengal
2. Gotipua dance	:	Gujarat
3. Jatra Utsav	:	Tripura

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

5. With reference to the Chittorgarh Fort, consider the following statements:
1. Chittorgarh Fort was constructed in the 7th century AD by Chitrangada Mori, a ruler of the Maurya dynasty of Rajasthan.
 2. The fort was only ruled by the Rajput rulers.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Match the following components of the Tipitaka with their correct descriptions:
- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| A. Vinaya Piṭaka | 1. Systematic and philosophical analysis of Buddhist teachings |
| B. Sutta Piṭaka | 2. Buddha's teachings in the form of discourses or sermons |
| C. Abhidhamma Piṭaka | 3. Rules and procedures for monastic life |
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) A-2, B-1, C-3
 - (b) A-3, B-2, C-1
 - (c) A-1, B-3, C-2
 - (d) A-2, B-3, C-1
7. Dhokra art is best described as which of the following?
- (a) A style of tribal painting using natural dyes
 - (b) A metal casting technique using the lost-wax process
 - (c) A terracotta sculpture tradition from South India
 - (d) A form of textile weaving practiced by the Bhils
8. Which of the following dynasties are associated with the tombs found in Lodhi Garden?
1. Khilji Dynasty
 2. Tughlaq Dynasty
 3. Sayyid Dynasty
 4. Lodi Dynasty
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
 - (b) 2 and 4 only
 - (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
 - (d) 3 and 4 only
9. The term 'Jauhar', as historically associated with Chittorgarh Fort, refers to:
- (a) A strategic military formation employed by the Rajput warriors.
 - (b) A form of land revenue assessment prevalent during the Rajput period.
 - (c) The act of self-immolation by women to protect their honor during a siege.
 - (d) A specific style of Rajput painting that flourished in Mewar.
10. Which of the following statements correctly describes Velakali?
- (a) It is a tribal folk dance from Tamil Nadu.
 - (b) It is a classical dance form from North Karnataka.

- (c) It is a contemporary dance style influenced by Western martial arts.
- (d) It is a traditional martial art dance from South Kerala, performed by Nair warriors.

- 11.** Navkar Mahamantra Divas is primarily observed to promote:
- (a) The study of Jain scriptures and philosophy among scholars.
 - (b) The collective worship of Jain deities and the seeking of material prosperity.
 - (c) Spiritual harmony and ethical consciousness through the collective chanting of a revered Jain mantra.
 - (d) Awareness about the historical contributions of Jain rulers and their empires.
- 12.** The Arattupuzha Pooram, known as the “Mother of all Poorams,” is celebrated in which Indian state?
- (a) Tamil Nadu
 - (b) Kerala
 - (c) Karnataka
 - (d) Andhra Pradesh
- 13.** With reference to the Jainism, consider the following statements:
1. The word Jaina is derived from a Sanskrit word jina, meaning the ‘conqueror’, i.e., conqueror of passion and desire.
 2. Jainism later split into two sects, Digambaras (sky-clad) and Svetambaras (white-clad).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 14.** With reference to the Nationalist Response to Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. Rabindranath Tagore, renounced his knighthood in protest against the brutality of the British actions.
 2. Mahatma Gandhi gave up the title of Kaiser-i-Hind, bestowed by the British for his work during the Boer War.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 15.** The Hunter Commission, also called the Disorders Inquiry Committee, set up by the British government was tasked with investigating which of the following events?
- (a) Kakori Conspiracy
 - (b) Lahore Conspiracy Case
 - (c) The Bombay Armoury Raid
 - (d) The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre
- 16.** Dr. BR Ambedkar promoted the idea of ‘social endosmosis’ for an ideal society. What does it mean?
- (a) Freedom from social norms
 - (b) Free exchange of information

- (c) Adoption of perfect equality
- (d) Maximizing society's potential

17. Which of the following statements about the Mk-II(a) Laser-Directed Energy Weapon (DEW), recently tested by DRDO, is/are correct?

1. It is capable of neutralizing drones, enemy sensors, and antennae using a high-intensity laser beam.
2. With this achievement, India becomes the first country possessing such advanced capabilities.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

18. Consider the following pairs:

Festival	State
1. Puthandu	West Bengal
2. Vishu	Kerala
3. Pana Sankranti	Odisha

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

19. With reference to the Kalighat Temple, consider the following statements:

1. It is regarded as one of the holiest Shaktipeeths among the 52 Shakti Peethams of India.
2. The present structure of the temple was built by the British East India Company in the 19th century.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

20. He was a nationalist, jurist, and social reformer known for his fierce independence and commitment to justice. In 1897, he became the youngest president of the Indian National Congress at the Amaravathi Session and By 1908, he was a permanent judge of the Madras High Court.

Which among the following personalities has been described above?

- (a) Rajendra Prasad
- (b) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- (c) Chittaranjan Das
- (d) Chettur Sankaran Nair

21. Which among the following Sikh Gurus is known as "Hind di Chadar" (Shield of India)?

- (a) Guru Tegh Bahadur
- (b) Guru Arjan Dev

- (c) Guru Gobind Singh
- (d) Guru Nanak Dev

22. Consider the following statements regarding the Kokborok language:

1. It belongs to the Dravidian language family, primarily spoken in South India.
2. The word “Kokborok” literally translates to “people’s speech” or “human language.”
3. UNESCO has classified Kokborok as “Critically Endangered” in its Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

23. With reference to the Civil Services in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Lord Cornwallis is considered as Father of Civil Services in India.
2. Satyendranath Tagore was the first Indian to clear Indian Civil Services (ICS).

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

24. Which among the following personalities has authored the book ‘The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore’?

- (a) Jawaharlal Nehru
- (b) Mahatma Gandhi
- (c) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
- (d) Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

25. With reference to the Taj Mahal, consider the following statements:

1. It was commissioned in 1632 by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan.
2. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

26. The term “Togau” is associated with which of the following discoveries at the Mehrgarh archaeological site?

- (a) Well-preserved mud brick structures.
- (b) Burial practices indicating complex social stratification.
- (c) A distinctive style of pottery.
- (d) Evidence of early copper metallurgy.

27. The movement was initiated against the practice of untouchability in Kerala. It was led by T.K. Madhavan, and K. Kelappan.
Which of the following movements is described above?
- Satyashodhak Movement
 - Self-Respect Movement
 - Depressed Classes Movement (Mahar Movement)
 - Vaikom Satyagrah
28. He was awarded the Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal by the British government in 1904 for his contributions to art. In 2013, a crater on the planet Mercury was named in his honour.
Which of the following personalities has been described above?
- Rabindranath Tagore
 - Raja Ravi Varma
 - Abanindranath Tagore
 - Nandalal Bose
29. With reference to the Padma Awards, consider the following statements:
- It is one of the highest civilian awards of the country instituted in 1954.
 - Padma Bhushan is the second-highest civilian award in India.
 - It cannot be awarded posthumously.
- Which of the statements given above are **not** correct?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
30. Which of the following statements about the Jagannath Temple in Puri is correct?
- It was built in the 8th Century AD by Sivakaradeva I.
 - It is located in the state of Andhra Pradesh.
 - It is also known as the Black Pagoda.
 - It is part of the Char Dham pilgrimage sites.
31. Consider the following pairs of Bhakti saints and their primary regions of influence:
- Chaitanya Mahaprabhu : Bengal
 - Mirabai : Rajasthan
 - Vallabhacharya : Maharashtra
- Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2, and 3
32. Which of the following best explains the term “Muziris” in the context of Indian history?
- A lost Buddhist monastic complex in northern India
 - An ancient inland trading city near the Ganga river
 - A medieval Hindu pilgrimage town in Tamil Nadu
 - A legendary ancient port that was part of the global spice trade

33. He was the founder of the Nagpur-based Bhosale dynasty and a prominent Maratha general during the reign of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj. He was honoured with the title 'Senasaheb Subha' by Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj.

Which among the following personalities has been described above?

- (a) Peshwa Bajirao I
- (b) Santaji Ghorpade
- (c) Raghuji Bhosale I
- (d) Tana Ji Malusare

34. Consider the following statements regarding the National Archives of India (NAI):

1. It was established in 1905 and operates under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
2. It is the largest archival repository in South Asia and the custodian of records of enduring value of the Government 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

35. He made significant contributions as Project Director to develop India's first indigenous Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV-III) which successfully injected the Rohini satellite in near earth orbit in July 1980. He was responsible for the development and operationalisation of AGNI and PRITHVI Missiles and for building indigenous capability in critical technologies through networking of multiple institutions.

Which of the following personalities is described above?

- (a) Nambi Narayanan
- (b) K Kasturirangan
- (c) A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
- (d) Vikram Sarabhai

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: Adivasis in Jharkhand and the larger Chhotanagpur region will welcome the new year and the spring season with the **Sarhul festival**.

- It marks the **beginning of agricultural activities after rituals**.

Statement 2 is not correct: Sal trees (*Shorea robusta*) are venerated in Adivasi tradition as the abode of **Sarna Maa, the deity who protects villages from natural forces**.

Statement 3 is correct: Sarhul, meaning "**worship of the Sal tree**," celebrates the union of the Sun (male priest) and the Earth (priest's wife), symbolizing life's cycles.

2. (d)

Context

- April 3 marks the death anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the founder of the Maratha Empire.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj (1630-1680)

- **Birth:** Born as **Shivaji Bhosale**, he is widely revered for his progressive leadership, military strategies, and fight for **Swarajya (self-rule)**.
- He was influenced by Maharashtra saints like **Tukaram, Dnyaneshwar, and Ramdas**, who advocated social equality and spiritual awakening.
- **Coronation (1674):** He crowned himself at **Raigad Fort**, marking the beginning of the '**Rajyabhisheka Era**'.
- **Administrative Reforms:**
 - Established the **Ashta Pradhan Mandal** (a council of eight ministers) to assist in governance.
 - Reformed the **revenue system**, replacing the **Jagirdari system** with the **Ryotwari system** to ensure direct taxation.
 - **Military & Naval Strength:**
 - Engaged in **alliances and conflicts** with the **Mughals, Bijapur Sultanate, Golkonda Sultanate, and European powers**.
 - Built a **strong naval force** to secure trade routes, protect coastal territories, and challenge European dominance.

3. (a)

Known as the **Kodungalloor Bharani**, one of Kerala's most famous and intense celebrations.

- It occurs during the **Malayalam month of Meenam** (March-April).
- Kodungalloor Bharani is the **annual festival of Sree Kurumba Bhagavathy Temple** at Kodungalloor in Thrissur.
- The festival offers a mystical experience with the presence of a **multitude of Oracles (Komaram or Velichappadu) clad in red attire**.
- The Bharani festival celebrates the **birth of Bhadrakali (Hindu Goddess)** who as per legend was born from the third eye of Lord Shiva and was the one who went to destroy the demon Darika.

4. (b)

Context

- **Tripura** is set to organise a **Jatra Utsav** with the aim of preserving its traditional art forms, culture, and heritage.

About

- **Jatrapala** is a popular **traditional folk theatre form**, usually performed in open-air arenas, allowing interaction with the audience.
 - The word '**Jatra**' means "**journey**," indicating its origins as a travelling theatrical performance.
- **Region:** Jatrapala is popular in **Tripura, West Bengal, Odisha, and Assam** reflecting the region's cultural and linguistic heritage.

Gomira Dance

- The Gomira **masked dance** is a traditional folk performance primarily practiced by the **Rajbongshi and Polia** communities of **North Bengal**.
- It is influenced by **Mahayana Buddhism, Tantric Buddhism, and Shaivite and Shakta** traditions. The dance emerged from a fusion of these spiritual influences.

Gotipua dance

- It is a traditional dance form in the state of **Odisha**, and the precursor of Odissi classical dance.
- The dance is **executed by a group of boys** who perform acrobatic figures inspired by the life of Radha and Krishna.

They **dress as women** to praise Lord Jagannath and Lord Krishna.

5. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Chittorgarh Fort was constructed in the 7th century AD by Chitrangada Mori, a ruler of the **Maurya dynasty of Rajasthan**.

- In 728 AD, it was captured by the **rulers of Mewar**, who made it their capital and turned it into a center of Rajput power and resistance.
- The fort gained prominence as a **stronghold of Mewar's pride and sovereignty**.
- It was declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2013** under the Hill Forts of Rajasthan.

Statement 2 is not correct: As per **Malik Muhammad Jayasi's epic poem Padmavat**, **Alauddin Khilji besieged the fort** in his quest to obtain Queen Padmini, the wife of Rana Ratan Singh.

6. (b)

In News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was presented with '**The World Tipitaka: Sajjhaya Phonetic Edition**' by his Thai counterpart, Paetongtarn Shinawatra, in a diplomatic exchange.

About Tipitaka

- The term Tipitaka means "**Three Baskets**" in Pāli, representing the **three primary divisions of the Buddhist scriptures**.
- Three "Baskets" of the Tipitaka includes:
 - **Vinaya Piṭaka (Basket of Discipline):** Contains rules and procedures for monastic life and the discipline of monks and nuns.
 - **Sutta Piṭaka (Basket of Discourses):** Comprises the Buddha's teachings, presented in the form of discourses or sermons.
 - **Abhidhamma Piṭaka (Basket of Higher Doctrine):** Offers a systematic and philosophical analysis of Buddhist teachings.
- Compiled after the **Buddha's death** (5th century BCE) at the **First Buddhist Council in Rajagaha (Rajgir), India**.

7. (b)

During his recent visit to Thailand, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India presented a Dokra Brass Peacock Boat to the Thai Prime Minister.

About Dhokra art

- Dokra (or Dhokra) is a 4,000-year-old **metal casting technique**, dating back to the Indus Valley Civilization. Practiced using the **lost-wax** casting method, it results in one-of-a-kind pieces, as each mold is destroyed after use.
- Named after the Dhokra Damar tribe, this craft is kept alive by the Gadwas, Gonds, and Dhurwas tribes across Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Odisha, and Jharkhand.

8. (d)

Context

- Lodhi Garden, located in the heart of New Delhi, marks 89 years of its establishment as a public garden.

About

- Lodhi Garden traces its origins back to the **14th and 15th centuries** and was initially known as **Bagh-e-Jud**.
- The garden's roots are entwined with the **Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya Dargah** and later became

a burial site during the **Sayyid and Lodi dynasties**, showcasing Indo-Islamic architecture.

9. (c)

Rajasthan government told the Supreme Court it is considering a total mining ban within 10 km of **Chittorgarh Fort**.

About

- Chittorgarh Fort, located in Rajasthan, is one of the largest and most historically significant forts in India. Built in the 7th century by the Mauryans and later ruled by the Guhila and Sisodia Rajputs, it served as the capital of the Mewar Kingdom. The fort is a symbol of Rajput valor, pride, and sacrifice. It witnessed several heroic sieges, most notably by Alauddin Khilji in 1303, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat in 1535, and Mughal emperor Akbar in 1567.
- During these attacks, acts of **Jauhar (self-immolation) by the women of Chittor to protect their honor became legendary**. The fort is spread over 700 acres and features grand palaces, temples, towers like the Vijay Stambh (Tower of Victory), and water reservoirs. It is recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

10. (d)

Velakali is a traditional martial art dance from South Kerala, performed by Nair warriors and inspired by Kalaripayattu.

- Originating in Ambalapuzha, it depicts battle scenes, especially from the Mahabharata, and is showcased during temple festivals like Painkuni with swordplay, rhythmic music, and vibrant costumes.

11. (c)

Navkar Mahamantra Divas is observed to promote spiritual harmony and ethical consciousness through the collective chanting of the **Navkar Mahamantra**, which is the most revered and universal **prayer in Jainism**.

Navkar Mahamantra Divas is a spiritual observance in Jainism that focuses on:

- Promoting inner peace, ethical consciousness, and universal respect through collective chanting.
- Honouring the five supreme beings in Jainism: Arihant, Siddha, Acharya, Upadhyaya, and Sadhu.
- Encouraging people to adopt Jain values like Ahimsa (non-violence), Aparigraha (non-possessiveness), and Anekantavada (respect for multiple viewpoints).

12. (b)

The Arattupuzha Pooram is Kerala's oldest temple festival, held annually at the Sree Sastha Temple in Arattupuzha.

- Known as the "Mother of all Poorams," it features over 80 elephants, traditional music, and the grand procession of 23 deities.
- The festival's highlight is the Sasthavinte Melam, a large percussion ensemble.

13. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Jainism is a spiritual path focused on **non-violence, truth, self-discipline, and the pursuit of liberation (moksha)** through personal effort.

- The word Jaina** is derived from a **Sanskrit word jina**, meaning the '**conqueror**', i.e., conqueror of passion and desire.
- The last tirthankara, Mahavir** is called Jina as he conquered his passion after the attainment of the supreme realisation
- Jainism later split into two sects:** Digambaras (sky-clad) and Svetambaras (white-clad).

- **Kings like Bimbisara and Ajatsatru** adopted Jainism, and Jain art, architecture, and literature flourished under their patronage.

14. (c)

Context

- Prime Minister Modi paid homage to the **martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh**.

What was the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre?

- The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, occurred on 13th April 1919 and marked one of the darkest chapters in India's colonial history.
- To celebrate the Baisakhi festival and protest the arrest of prominent nationalist leaders **Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal** under the **Rowlatt Act**, a large crowd of men, women, and children had gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh.
- **Colonel Reginald Dyer** ordered British Indian Army troops to open fire on a peaceful gathering of thousands, without issuing any warning or order to disperse.
- According to official British records, at least **379 people** were killed and many wounded.

Nationalist Response

- **Rabindranath Tagore**, the Nobel laureate poet, renounced his knighthood in protest against the brutality of the British actions.
- **Mahatma Gandhi**, launched the **Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920**, urging Indians to boycott British goods and institutions.
 - He also gave up the title of **Kaiser-i-Hind**, bestowed by the British for his work during the **Boer War**.
- This movement marked a significant phase in India's struggle for independence.

15. (d)

Context

- Prime Minister Modi paid homage to the **martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh**.

What was the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre?

- The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, occurred on 13th April 1919 and marked one of the darkest chapters in India's colonial history.
- To celebrate the Baisakhi festival and protest the arrest of prominent nationalist leaders **Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal** under the **Rowlatt Act**, a large crowd of men, women, and children had gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh.
- **Colonel Reginald Dyer** ordered British Indian Army troops to open fire on a peaceful gathering of thousands, without issuing any warning or order to disperse.
- According to official British records, at least **379 people** were killed and many wounded.

British response to Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

- **Martial Law**: The shooting was followed by the proclamation of martial law in Punjab.
- **The Hunter Commission**, also called the **Disorders Inquiry Committee**, was set up by the British government in **October 1919** to investigate the massacre.
 - The Commission criticized Colonel Reginald Dyer for his actions at Jallianwala Bagh.
 - It censured Dyer but did not impose any significant penalties. It did, however, recommend his **resignation from the military**.

16. (b)

In News: Recently, India celebrated the legacy of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar on Ambedkar

Jayanti, a towering figure in India's fight against caste-based discrimination.

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar's Vision of an Ideal Society:

- **Liberty:** It encompasses both **freedom from social norms** that limit one's options and **freedom from physical tyranny**.
- **Equality:** Ambedkar pushed for the **adoption of perfect equality** as he thought that in order to maximize society potential, equal chances must be given from birth.
- **Fraternity:** Ambedkar **promoted 'social endosmosis'** or the **free exchange of information across all groups**, and saw brotherhood as the foundation of democracy.

17. (a)

In News

- DRDO successfully tested the Mk-II(A) **Laser-Directed Energy Weapon (DEW)** system in Andhra Pradesh.

The Mk-II(A) Laser-Directed Energy Weapon (DEW) system

- The system was developed by DRDO's Centre for High Energy Systems and Sciences (CHES), Hyderabad along with other labs, academic institutions and Indian industries.
- It has the **ability to engage and destroy** drones, enemy sensors, and antennae with speed and precision.

With this achievement, India joins a select group of countries, including the **US, China, and Russia**, possessing such advanced capabilities.

- It offers a cost-effective solution to counter **low-cost drone threats**, with the cost of operation being equivalent to just a few litres of petrol.
- It uses a high-intensity laser beam to neutralize targets at the speed of light, minimizing collateral damage and reducing reliance on expensive ammunition.

18. (b)

Pair 1 is not correct, Pair 2 and 3 is correct: Baisakhi marks the start of the solar calendar and the harvest season, celebrated predominantly in Punjab.

- Baisakhi usually falls on April 13 or April 14.
- According to the hindu calendar, this day is observed on the **first day of the month of Vaishakh**.
- This day also coincides with **several other regional spring festivals across India that celebrate the onset of the harvest season**.
- These include **Pana Sankranti** in Odisha, **Poila/Pohela Baisakh** in West Bengal, **Rongali Bihu** in Assam, **Puthandu** in Tamil Nadu, **Vaishakhi** in Bihar, and **Vishu or Poooram Vishu** in Kerala.

19. (a)

Context

- West Bengal Chief Minister (CM) Mamata Banerjee has inaugurated the longest skywalk in the city which will connect SP Mukherjee Road to Kolkata's famous Kalighat temple.

About: Kalighat Temple

- It is regarded as the **holiest Shaktipeeth** or pith of the **52 Shakti Peethams of India**, where various parts of Sati's body are said to have fallen, during Shiva's Rudra Tandava.

Kalighat represents the site where the toes of the right foot of Shakti or Sati fell.

- The present structure of the temple was built by the **Sabarna Roy Chowdhury family of Barisha**. The construction of the temple was accomplished in **1809**.

Situated on the banks of the **Adi Ganga**, the Kalighat Temple features a **sanctum sanctorum**

(Garbhagriha) along with a spacious hall known as the **Nat Mandir**, used for devotional gatherings and rituals.

In the north-east of this sanctum, there is a **Shiva Temple**.

There is one more shrine dedicated to **Radha Krishna**.

- The main attraction of this temple lies in the **idol of Goddess Kali** that bears a long-protruded tongue made from **gold**.
- Festivals like **Kali Puja, Durga Puja, Poila Boishakh, the Bengali New Year day and Sankranti** witness huge numbers of devotees at the temple.

20. (d)

Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair was a **nationalist, jurist, and social reformer** known for his fierce independence and commitment to justice.

- **In 1897**, he became the **youngest president of the Indian National Congress** at the Amaravathi Session.
- **By 1908**, he was a **permanent judge of the Madras High Court**.
- At the time of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, CS Nair served as **Education Minister** and the **sole Indian representative in the Viceroy's Executive Council**.

Deeply affected by the massacre, he resigned from the **Viceroy's Council in protest against British atrocities**.

- He later accused **Michael O'Dwyer**, the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab during the massacre, of enabling the killings.

O'Dwyer sued Nair for defamation in an English court in 1924.

The trial lasted five and a half weeks, making it the **longest-running civil case at that time**.

- **Nair was ordered to pay £500 and court costs, but refused to apologize**, despite an offer from O'Dwyer to waive the fine if he did.
- The trial exposed the **prejudice of the British legal system**, fueling nationalist sentiment in India.

21. (a)

In News

The Prime Minister paid tribute to Sri Guru Teg Bahadur on the auspicious Parkash Purab.

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur

He was born on 1 April 1621 in Amritsar and he was the ninth Sikh Guru and the youngest son of Guru Hargobind Sahib.

He was originally named Tyag Mal, he earned the title Tegh Bahadur after displaying bravery in battle.

- He married Mata Gujri and had a son, Guru Gobind Singh.
- He lived a life of meditation, selfless service, and sacrifice.
- He traveled widely, preaching Sikhism, promoting social reform, and establishing new preaching centers.

Sacrifice

In 1675, he was martyred in Delhi by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb for refusing to convert to Islam and defending religious freedom, especially for persecuted Kashmiri Pandits.

His sacrifice earned him the title **"Hind di Chadar" (Shield of India)**.

22. (a)

In News: The demand for the Kokborok language's inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution was raised by the Kokborok Sahitya Parishad.

Statement 1 is not correct: Kokborok is part of the Sino-Tibetan language family, not the Dravidian family. Kokborok is recognized as one of the State languages of Tripura.

Statement 2 is correct: The etymology provided indicates that "Kok" means "verbal" and "Borok" means "people" or "human," thus "Kokborok" can be understood as "people's speech" or "human language."

Statement 3 is not correct: UNESCO has classified Kokborok as "Vulnerable", not "Critically Endangered". The UNESCO Atlas has different levels of endangerment (Vulnerable, Definitely Endangered, Severely Endangered, Critically Endangered).

23. (c)

Context

- The Prime Minister of India addressed Civil Servants on the occasion of 17th Civil Services Day in New Delhi.

History of Civil Services in India

- **Lord Cornwallis** is considered as 'Father of Civil Services in India'.
- **Lord Wellesley** founded the College of **Fort William in Calcutta in 1800** to educate young recruits for the Civil Services.

But the directors of the Company, in 1806, replaced it with their own **East Indian College at Haileybury in England**.

- Before 1853 East India Company directors used to appoint Civil Servants. Board of Control members were allowed to make some nominations.
- **The Charter Act of 1853** abolished the patronage system and introduced open competitive examinations.
- The first competitive exams for the Indian Civil Services (ICS) were held in London in **1855**.
- **Satyendranath Tagore** was the first Indian to clear ICS in 1864.

24. (d)

Context: The death anniversary of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan—one of India's foremost scholars, a renowned philosopher, eloquent orator, and the second President of India—was observed.

About Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (5 September 1888 – 17 April 1975).

• **Birth:**

Born on September 5, 1888, he served as 2nd President of India from 1962 to 1967 and 1st Vice President of India from 1952 to 1962.

He was born in a Telugu Brahmin family.

He was also a renowned scholar, philosopher, and Bharat Ratna awardee.

• **Literary Works**

Radhakrishnan's philosophy was grounded in Advaita Vedanta.

He also authored the book '**The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore**'.

His other works include Indian Philosophy, (1923-27), The Philosophy of the Upanishads (1924), An Idealist View of Life (1932), Eastern Religions and Western Thought (1939), and East and West: Some Reflections (1955).

25. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The Taj Mahal is an ivory-white marble mausoleum located in

Agra, India.

- It sits on the south bank of the Yamuna River.
- Commissioned in 1632 by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan (reigned 1628–1658).
- It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983.

26. (c)

In News: As per the recent study, Mehrgarh's earliest farming settlement is now dated between 5223 and 4914 BCE, not 8000 BCE as previously believed.

Mehrgarh is considered one of the earliest known farming settlements in South Asia and a precursor to the Indus Valley Civilization. **Togau pottery** is a distinctive type of ceramic that was identified at several Chalcolithic sites, including **Mehrgarh in Balochistan, Pakistan**. It is known for its fine, painted decoration, often featuring black geometric or stylized animal motifs on a red or buff background.

27. (d)

The year 2024 marked the **centenary year of Vaikom Satyagraha (1924)**.

- **Cause:** The movement was initiated against the **practice of untouchability**.

In Vaikom in the **erstwhile Travancore princely State**, members of the lower castes, particularly Dalits, were denied the right to walk on roads leading to the Vaikom Shiva Temple.

- **Leadership:** It was led by **T.K. Madhavan, K. Kelappan**, and other prominent leaders.

Mahatma Gandhi also supported the cause, sending his advice, although he did not physically participate in the protests initially.

- **Significance:** The Vaikom Satyagraha played a vital role in the social reform movement in Kerala and was an important part of the broader struggle against untouchability and caste oppression in India.

It also marked the **first major organized movement against untouchability** in the Indian independence movement.

28. (b)

Context

- April 29 marks the birth anniversary of Raja Ravi Varma, one of India's pioneering modern artists.

About: Raja Ravi Varma (1848-1906)

- Born on **April 29, 1848, in Kerala** into an aristocratic family, Raja Ravi Varma revolutionized Indian art by **blending Indian themes with European techniques**, particularly **oil painting**, introduced to India by the British.

Awards and Legacy

- He was a member of the **Royal Academy of Arts** in London, making him the **first Indian artist** to receive this honor.
- His painting "Hansa Damayanti," which depicts the story of King Nala and Damayanti from the Mahabharata, won the **first prize at the Vienna Exhibition** in 1873.
- He was awarded the **Kaiser-i-Hind** gold medal by the British government in **1904** for his contributions to art.
- In 2013, a **crater on the planet Mercury** was named in his honour.

29. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: The President of India presented **Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan**

and Padma Shri Awards for the year **2025** at the Civil Investiture Ceremony-I held at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

- One of the highest civilian awards of the country instituted in **1954**.

Statement 2 and 3 are not correct: Padma Awards are conferred in **three categories**:

- **Padma Vibhushan**: Second-highest civilian award in India.
- **Padma Bhushan**: Third-highest civilian award.
- **Padma Shri**: Fourth-highest civilian award.
- Open to **all persons, regardless of race, occupation, position, or gender**.
- Can be **awarded posthumously**.

30. (d)

Context

- West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is set to inaugurate a newly built Jagannath Temple in the state's beach town of Digha.

About the Jagannath Temple (Digha)

- The temple is a **replica of the famous Jagannath Temple in Puri** and is expected to emerge as a major **pilgrimage and tourism destination** in West Bengal.

Key features mirroring its Puri counterpart, include: **Bhog Mandap, Natmandir, Jagmohan, and the sacred Garbhagriha** (sanctum sanctorum).

- Built in the traditional **Kalinga architectural style**, the grand structure is crafted from exquisite **pink sandstone** sourced from Rajasthan.
- The ambitious project, spanning across **20 acres**, was undertaken by the state government with an investment of **Rs 250 crore**.

About Jagannath Temple (Puri)

- **Location**: State of Odisha.
- **Built-In**: 12th Century AD by **King Ananta Varman Chodaganga Deva** of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty.
- It is referred to as the **White Pagoda** and is one of the **Char Dham pilgrimage sites**, along with **Rameswaram, Badrinath, and Dwarka**.
- Also called 'Yamanika Tirtha', according to the Hindu beliefs, the power of 'Yama', the God of death has been nullified in Puri due to the presence of Lord Jagannath, a form of **Lord Vishnu**.

31. (a)

First Pair is correctly matched: Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was a prominent Bhakti saint and proponent of the Gaudiya Vaishnavism tradition, primarily active in **Bengal** and Odisha.

Second Pair is correctly Matched: Mirabai was a Rajput princess and devotee of Krishna. Her devotional poetry and life are closely associated with **Rajasthan**.

Third Pair is not correct: Vallabhacharya was born in present-day Chhattisgarh and his main area of influence was northwestern India, particularly Gujarat and parts of Uttar Pradesh, not Maharashtra. He founded the **Pushti Marg** sect of Vaishnavism.

32. (d)

Context

The Leader of Opposition in the Kerala Assembly recently acknowledged historian **M.G.S. Narayanan** as a key force behind the **Muziris Heritage Project**, despite his theoretical differences.

About the Project

- The **Muziris Heritage Project (MHP)**, launched in 2009, is one of India's largest heritage conservation initiatives.
- It is jointly implemented by the **Government of Kerala** and the **Union Government**, with support from **UNESCO**, aiming to preserve a cultural legacy over **3,000 years old**.
- The aim of the project is to restore and **promote Muziris**, an ancient maritime trade hub and cultural crossroads.

Do you know?

- Muziris was a flourishing port on India's southwest coast during the **1st century BCE**, served as a major trade link with the **Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Egyptians**, dealing in spices, pearls, gems, ivory, and silk.
- The port mysteriously disappeared from historical records, possibly due to natural calamities.

33. (c)

Raghuji Bhosale I (1695– 1755) was the **founder of the Nagpur-based Bhosale dynasty** and a **prominent Maratha general** during the **reign of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj**.

- Impressed by his bravery and military acumen, he was honoured with the title '**Senasaheb Subha**' by Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj.
- Raghuji led pivotal military campaigns **in Bengal in 1745 and 1755**, greatly **expanding the Maratha Empire's territory** into Bengal and Odisha.
- He also **defeated Nawabs of Kurnool and Cuddapah**, extending Maratha influence in South India.

34. (b)

In News

- The **National Archives of India (NAI)** has acquired the private papers of former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

The collection includes lectures, original photographs, and personal documents like his Aadhaar card and passport.

National Archives of India (NAI)

- It was established in 1891 in Calcutta as the Imperial Records Department
- It is the **largest archival repository in South Asia** and the **custodian of records of enduring value** of the Government of India.
- It is located in New Delhi, with a regional office in Bhopal and records centres in Bhubaneswar, Jaipur, and Puducherry.
- It holds a vast collection of public records, private papers, oriental records, maps, and microfilms.
- The Director General of Archives oversees the implementation of the Public Records Act, 1993, and related rules for managing and preserving government records.

It operates under the **Ministry of Culture**.

35. (c)

In News: The National Archives of India (NAI) has acquired the private papers of former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (1931–2015), born in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu

He was a renowned **aeronautical engineer and scientist**.

As Project Director at ISRO, he led the development of **India's first Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV-III)**, successfully **launching the Rohini satellite** in 1980.

Later, at **DRDO**, he spearheaded the **Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP)**, overseeing the development of the **AGNI and PRITHVI** missiles and India's nuclear capabilities, including the **Pokhran-II nuclear tests**.

He served as Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India (1999-2001) and as Professor at Anna University, inspiring young minds.

He is known as the "**Missile Man of India**," and was a renowned scientist and the 11th President of India (2002–2007).

Revered as the "People's President", he spent his post-presidency years mentoring students.

His literary works, including **Wings of Fire, India 2020, My Journey, and Ignited Minds**, have motivated generations.



ECONOMY

1. What is the primary objective of an Advance Pricing Agreement (APA)?
 - (a) To eliminate double taxation on domestic transactions
 - (b) To ensure arm's length pricing in international related-party transactions
 - (c) To regulate capital inflows from foreign investors
 - (d) To fix domestic market prices for monopolistic firms
2. A Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) reading above 50 generally indicates:
 - (a) A decline in overall production activity compared to the previous month.
 - (b) Stagnation in the overall production activity compared to the previous month.
 - (c) An expansion in the overall production activity compared to the previous month.
 - (d) A significant contraction in the overall production activity compared to the previous month.
3. Kannadippaya has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, ensuring market protection and global recognition, it is
 - (a) A type of pottery
 - (b) A traditional tribal handicraft
 - (c) A metal craft
 - (d) A wooden sculpture
4. With reference to Warangal Chapata Chilli, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a short, bullet-shaped chilli known for its low pungency and high color value.
 2. It has got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag recently.
 3. The chilli is predominantly cultivated in the black cotton soils of Telangana.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 1 and 3 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
5. With reference to India's Coal Sector, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. India has the third-largest coal reserves in the world.
 2. Coal contributes around 55% to the energy mix and powers over 74% of electricity generation in India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

6. With reference to the 'One State One RRB', consider the following statements:
1. It is a strategic initiative led by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
 2. It aims to restructure and consolidate Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) within the same state 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
7. Which of the following committee recommendations led to the initiation of the consolidation of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in India?
- (a) Narasimham Committee I
 - (b) Narasimham Committee II
 - (c) Vyas Committee
 - (d) Rangarajan Committee
8. Recently, the India Volatility Index (India VIX) surged significantly. In this context, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. The VIX measures market expectations of volatility over the short term.
 2. It is expressed as annualized volatility based on the options order book of a specific index.
 3. The term "VIX" is a trademark owned by the Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE).
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 1 and 3 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
9. An increase in the Repo Rate by the Reserve Bank of India is likely to have the following impacts on the economy?
1. Increase in the cost of borrowing for commercial banks.
 2. Decrease in the lending rates offered by commercial banks
 3. Potential decrease in aggregate demand.
 4. Increased incentive for commercial banks to borrow from the RBI.
- Select the correct answer using the codes below:
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 4 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 3 and 4 only
10. With reference to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), consider the following statements:
1. Its current base year is 2011–2012 and it is released on a quarterly basis.
 2. It is released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. With reference to the Silk Production in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. India is the world's largest producer and consumer of silk.
- 2. Karnataka is the leading silk-producing state in India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

12. Navara Rice, highly valued in Ayurveda and a renowned GI-tagged variety of red rice, is predominantly grown in:

- (a) Vidarbha, Maharashtra
- (b) Mysuru, Karnataka
- (c) Palakkad, Kerala
- (d) Darjeeling, West Bengal

13. Consider the following departments:

- 1. Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)
- 2. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)
- 3. Department of Public Enterprises (DPE)

Which of the above departments come under the purview of the Union Ministry of Finance, Government of India?

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

14. With reference to the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), consider the following statements:

- 1. The CCPA has been established under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 and has come into force in 2020.
- 2. It is under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 15.** With reference to the Intellectual Property (IP) Rights, consider the following statements:
1. It is the legally enforceable exclusive right granted to the owner of the intellectual property for a limited period.
 2. An Indian Patent, which is granted by the Indian Government, will be valid only 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
- 16.** A higher Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) for a commercial bank generally implies:
- (a) A greater capacity for the bank to extend credit and stimulate economic growth.
(b) A lower risk of the bank facing short-term liquidity crises during market disruptions.
(c) A higher return on assets for the bank due to increased holdings of liquid instruments.
(d) A reduced need for the bank to comply with other prudential norms.
- 17.** With reference to the Tobacco Farming in India, consider the following statements:
1. Tobacco cultivation in India was introduced by the Danes in 1605.
 2. India is the 2nd largest producer of tobacco in the world after 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
- 18.** Consider the following statements:
1. A safeguard duty is a temporary measure and is permitted under World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.
 2. Anti-dumping duty applies uniformly to all countries, while safeguard duty targets specific countries.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 19.** With reference to the Mango Production in India, consider the following statements:
1. India is the largest producer of Mango in the world followed by China.
 2. Among states Bihar is the largest producer in India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs) are primarily designed to establish the pricing methodology for international transactions between related parties (e.g., subsidiaries of a multinational corporation) before these transactions occur. The core principle behind APAs is to ensure that these transactions are conducted at an arm's length price. This means the price should be the same as if the transactions were between independent entities.

2. (c)

Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)

- The PMI primarily measures the condition of a country's sectors, including manufacturing, services and overall business activity, through monthly surveys of respondents in different countries.
- It is a type of economic indicator which is compiled by agencies such as S&P Global, HSBC and others, using data from major companies representing key global economies.
- The index varies between 0 and 100; **a reading above 50 is a sign of progress**, whereas below **50 shows a decline in the overall production activity**.

3. (b)

Kannadippaya, meaning "mirror mat," is made from the soft inner layers of reed bamboo.

- It is a **traditional tribal handicraft from Kerala**.
- The best-quality mats are woven from reed bamboo (*Teinostachyum wightii*) and other bamboo species like *Ochlandra* sp.
- It has unique properties of providing warmth in winter and a cooling effect in summer.

4. (d)

In News: The **Warangal Chapata chilli**, or as it is called **Tomato chilli**, from Telangana has been granted the Geographical Indication tag by the GI Registry.

About Chapata Chilli (Tomato Chilli)

- Chapata Chilli is known for its flaming red colour but **low pungency**.
- It is in demand due to its natural colouring agent "**paprika oleoresin**".
- There are three fruit types existing in the **Warangal Chapata chilli**, namely the single **patti**, **double patti** and **odalu**.



5. (b)

Context

- India achieved a historic milestone as it crossed **one billion tonnes (BT)** of coal production in March in 2024-25, surpassing last fiscal year's 997.83 million tonnes (MT).

Statement 1 is not correct but Statement 2 is correct:

India, with the **fifth-largest coal reserves** and being the **second-largest consumer**, heavily depends on coal.

Coal contributes **55%** to the energy mix and powers over **74%** of electricity generation in India.

6. (b)

In News: Recently, the **Department of Financial Services (DFS)** has notified amalgamation of **26 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)** on the principles of '**One State One RRB**'.

- It is the **fourth phase** of amalgamation of RRBs.

Statement 1 is not correct

- '**One State, One RRB**' Policy is a strategic initiative led by the **Department of Financial Services (DFS)** under the **Ministry of Finance**.

Statement 2 is correct

- '**One State, One RRB**' Policy aims to **restructure and consolidate Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in India**, and to boost rural banking efficiency, enhance financial inclusion, and optimize operational costs **through the amalgamation of RRBs within the same state**.

7. (c)

About Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)

- **Background:** These were established in 1975, following the **recommendations of the Narasimham Working Group** and the enactment of the **Regional Rural Banks Act in 1976**.
 - It was aimed to provide financial services to rural areas, particularly to small and marginal farmers.
- However, over the decades, fragmentation, overlapping operations, and high operational costs limited their effectiveness.
- To address these challenges, the government introduced the **amalgamation strategy, with the vision of 'One State, One RRB'**:
 - Avoids duplication of services.
 - Enhances governance and accountability.
 - Increases access to technology and modern banking.
- The **Vyas Committee** was constituted in the early 2000s to examine the viability and amalgamation of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs).
- **Ownership Structure:** Jointly owned by:
 - Central Government: 50%
 - State Government: 15%
 - Sponsoring Bank: 35%
- **Supervision and Regulation:** Regulated by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** under the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949**.
 - Supervised by the **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**.
- **Treated as cooperative societies** for tax purposes under the **Income Tax Act, 1961**.

8. (d)

Context

- Recently, The India Volatility Index surged over 65% to 22.8, marking its highest single-day spike ever, indicating heightened risk and uncertainty in the market.

Volatility Index (VIX)

- The term "VIX" is a trademark owned by the **Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE)**.

- It measures the **market's expectation of volatility** over the near term, reflecting the rate and magnitude of price changes, often associated with risk.
- It is calculated as **annualized volatility**, expressed as a percentage, based on the order book of options for a specific underlying index.

India VIX

- It is specifically based on **NIFTY Index Option prices**.
- It calculates the expected market volatility for the next 30 days by analyzing the best bid-ask prices of NIFTY Options contracts.
 - India VIX uses the CBOE's computation methodology, with adjustments made for the NIFTY options order book, incorporating techniques like cubic splines.

9. (c)

Repo Rate: The Repo Rate is the interest rate at which the RBI lends short-term funds to commercial banks, against government securities as collateral. It helps in controlling short-term liquidity in the financial system.

Statement 1 is correct: A higher repo rate makes borrowing costlier for commercial banks.

Statement 2 is not correct: Lending rates are likely to increase, not decrease.

Statement 3 is correct: Higher interest rates tend to reduce borrowing and spending, which can reduce aggregate demand.

Statement 4 is not correct: A higher repo rate discourages banks from borrowing due to increased cost.

10. (b)

Context

- **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** grew at its slowest rate in six months, clocking a pace of **2.9%** in February 2025.

Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

- The IIP is an index which shows the **growth rates in different industry groups of the economy** in a stipulated period of time.
- It is a composite indicator that **measures the growth rate of industry groups** classified under:
 - **Broad sectors:** Mining, Manufacturing, and Electricity.
 - **Use-based sectors:** Basic Goods, Capital Goods, and Intermediate Goods.
- **Released by:** The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- **Base year:** 2011-2012
- **Periodicity:** Monthly basis

11. (b)

Context

- India's raw silk production increased from 31,906 MT in 2017-18 to **38,913 MT in 2023-24**.

Silk Production in India

- India is the **second-largest producer and consumer** of silk globally.
- Silk accounts for only **0.2 %** of the world's total textile production.
- India produces four types of natural silks; **Mulberry, Eri, Tasar and Muga**.
- **Silk producing states:** **Karnataka** is the largest silk-producing state in India, followed by **Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh**.

- **Exports of silk** and silk goods rose from ₹1,649.48 crores in 2017-18 to ₹2,027.56 crores in 2023-24.

12. (c)

Navara Rice, also known as Njavara, is a renowned **GI-tagged** variety of red rice grown predominantly in **Kerala's Palakkad region**.

- Celebrated for its wholegrain quality and distinctive red husk, Navara Rice is extensively sought after by health-conscious individuals and those looking to control their sugar intake effectively.
- This unique rice variety is highly valued in **Ayurveda** and traditionally known as 'Shastikashaali' due to its quick maturity cycle of approximately 60 days.

13. (b)

In News: The Union government is in the process of **merging two departments** — the **Department of Public Enterprises (DPE)** and **Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)** in the **Ministry of Finance**. The idea is to improve the efficiency and performance of CPSEs.

- **Departments under the Ministry of Finance:**
 - **Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)**
 - **Department of Public Enterprises (DPE)**
 - Department of Economic Affairs (DEA)
 - Department of Expenditure (DoE)
 - Department of Financial Services (DoFS)
 - Department of Revenue (DoR)
- However, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (**DPIIT**) falls under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.

14. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)** has been established under the **Consumer Protection Act, 2019** and has come into force in **2020**.

Statement 2 is not correct: It is under the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**.

- **Aim:** To regulate matters relating to violation of rights of consumers, unfair trade practices and false or misleading advertisements which are prejudicial to the interests of consumers.

15. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Intellectual Property (IP) is generally defined as the '**Product of Mind**'.

- It is a property that results from the **creations of intellect in industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields**.
- **Intellectual Property Right (IPR)** is the **legally enforceable exclusive right** granted to the owner of the intellectual property for a limited period.
 - **IPR rewards creativity & human endeavor** which fuel the progress of humankind.

Statement 2 is correct: **Patent rights are territorial rights**, which will be **valid within the territory of the Country which has issued Patent**.

Hence, an Indian Patent, which is granted by the Indian Government, will be **valid only in India**.

16. (b)

The Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) is a regulatory standard that requires banks to hold an adequate level of high-quality liquid assets (HQLA) that can be easily converted into cash to meet their short-

term (30-day) liquidity needs under a stress scenario.

A higher LCR means the bank holds more liquid assets relative to its potential outflows, which reduces the risk of facing a liquidity crunch in times of financial stress.

17. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Tobacco cultivation in India was introduced by the **Portuguese in 1605**.

Statement 2 is correct: India is the **2nd largest producer** of tobacco in the world after China.

India is the 2nd largest exporter of unmanufactured tobacco (quantity terms) after Brazil.

18. (a)

Context

- India has imposed a 12% provisional safeguard duty for 200 days on five categories of steel products to protect domestic producers from a surge in low-cost imports.

Safeguard Duty

- A safeguard duty is a **temporary measure** used to **limit the import of a specific good** to prevent serious harm to a domestic industry.
- It is permitted under **World Trade Organization (WTO) rules**.
- These duties typically have a deadline and are **applicable against all the countries** with uniform rate of duty **unlike the anti-dumping duties**.
- These are considered an emergency action and are deemed necessary only when certain imports present serious injury or damage to domestic industries.

19. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: India is the **largest producer** of Mango in the world followed by China.

Statement 2 is not correct: **Uttar Pradesh** is the largest producer in India followed by Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.



INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. In which of the following cases did the Supreme Court of India first articulate the concept of the creamy layer?
- (a) Keshavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973)
 - (b) Minerva Mills Ltd. v. Union of India (1980)
 - (c) Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (1992)
 - (d) M. Nagaraj v. Union of India (2006)

2. Consider the following statements regarding the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA):
- 1. CARA was established as an executive body in 1990.
 - 2. It functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
 - 3. CARA acts as the Central Authority for inter-country adoptions under the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 2 only
 - (d) 2 and 3 only
3. With reference to the '*Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India*', consider the following statements:
- 1. It was introduced through the 91st Amendment Act of 2003.
 - 2. An independent legislator can be disqualified if he joins any political party after being elected.
 - 3. The decisions made by the Speaker are subject to judicial review.

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) All of the above
4. Which of the following changes does the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 propose?
- 1. The Bill removes the requirement for Members of Parliament (MPs), retired judges, and eminent persons to be Muslim in the Central Waqf Council.
 - 2. The expert in Muslim law will remain as a member of the Tribunal.
 - 3. No appeals will be allowed against Tribunal decisions.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
5. The Lily Thomas judgment (2013), recently seen in the news, is related to:
- (a) Disqualification of convicted legislators
 - (b) Protection of tribal land rights
 - (c) Reservation in educational institutions
 - (d) Reforms in the judiciary
6. Which of the following best describes the timing of “Zero Hour” in the parliamentary proceedings of India?
- (a) It is the first hour of the sitting, dedicated to raising questions to the government.
 - (b) It occurs after the scheduled legislative business is concluded for the day.
 - (c) It is the period immediately following Question Hour and the laying of papers, typically around 12 noon.
 - (d) It is a designated hour specifically for discussing financial matters and the budget.
7. Consider the following statements regarding President’s Rule in India:
1. The term ‘President’s Rule’ is explicitly mentioned in Article 356 of the Indian Constitution.
 2. It can be revoked by the President at any time without Parliamentary approval.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. With reference to the ‘*Custodial Torture in India*’, consider the following statements:
1. It is governed by legal provisions under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.
 2. India has signed and ratified the UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) of 1997.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
9. MC Mehta v. Union of India and Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar, recently seen in the news, are related to:
- (a) Electoral reforms and voting rights
 - (b) Interstate water disputes
 - (c) Reservation policies for backward classes
 - (d) Right to a clean environment
10. What does Section 271 of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), 2023, primarily deal with?
- (a) Adulteration of food and drugs
 - (b) Breach of trust by public servants
 - (c) Unlawful assembly and rioting
 - (d) Negligent acts that risk spreading life-threatening infections

11. With reference to the **Article 341** of the Indian Constitution, consider the following statements:
1. The President can notify the list of Scheduled Castes for any state or union territory after consulting the Governor of the state.
 2. The list of Scheduled Castes once notified by the President cannot be modified under any circumstances.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
12. With reference to the District Mineral Foundation (DMF), consider the following statements:
1. It is a statutory body created under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957.
 2. It is applicable only in coal mining districts.
 3. The composition and functions of the DMF are prescribed by the Union Government.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 1 and 3 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
13. With reference to recent developments in Centre-State relations, consider the following statements:
1. The Rajamannar Committee was formed by the Union Government to suggest improvements in Centre-State relations.
 2. The three-language policy under NEP 2020 is binding upon all States.
- Which of the above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
14. **Article 343** of the Indian Constitution is related to which of the following?
- (a) Establishment of an Inter-State Council (ISC)
 - (b) Extent of legislative power for the Parliament and State Legislatures
 - (c) Official Language of the Union
 - (d) Power of the Deputy Speaker
15. With reference to the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), consider the following statements:
1. IMEC was launched during the BRICS Summit 2023.
 2. It aims to establish a multimodal transport and digital connectivity corridor linking India with Europe through the Middle East.
 3. IMEC is considered a counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

16. Consider the following statements regarding the appointment of the Chief Justice of India (CJI):

- 1. The Constitution of India explicitly outlines the procedure for the appointment of the CJI.
- 2. The convention followed for appointing the CJI is based on the principle of seniority in the Supreme Court (SC).
- 3. Seniority among SC judges is determined by the date of their appointment to the SC, not by age.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

17. Which of the following statements about the Permanent Lok Adalat (PLA) is/are correct?

- 1. It is a pre-litigation mechanism.
- 2. Its decisions are binding and final.
- 3. Its decisions are appealable in civil courts.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

18. Article 142 has been invoked in which of the following landmark cases?

- (a) Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala
- (b) Minerva Mills v. Union of India
- (c) Union Carbide Corporation v. Union of India
- (d) Golaknath v. State of Punjab

19. Articles 72 and 161 of the Indian Constitution relate to

- (a) Appointment of President and Governor
- (b) Appointment of Prime Minister and Chief Minister
- (c) Judicial review by the Supreme Court and High Court
- (d) Pardoning powers of the President and Governor

20. 'Article 355' of the Indian Constitution is related to which of the following?

- (a) Centre assumes greater control over states.
- (b) Duty of the union to protect every state against external aggression and internal disturbance.
- (c) Suspend the legislature of a state in case of financial emergency.
- (d) The President assumes control of the state government.

- 21.** Consider the following statements regarding the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD):
1. It functions under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
 2. It is one of the six Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres of the World Meteorological Organisation.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 22.** With reference to the Panchayati Raj System, consider the following statements:
1. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee, appointed in 1957, recommended the establishment of the Panchayati Raj system in India.
 2. The Panchayati Raj system has three levels – Village Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 23.** The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), the apex decision-making body in India responsible for matters related to national security and defence, is chaired by:
- (a) Defence Minister
(b) National Security Advisor
(c) Prime Minister
(d) Home Minister
- 24.** With reference to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in India, consider the following statements:
1. India is the first country in the world to make CSR spending mandatory through legislation.
 2. Companies with a net profit of ₹2 crore or more are required to comply with CSR obligations.
 3. As per the 2019 amendment, unspent CSR funds must be transferred to a specified fund listed under Schedule VII of the Companies Act, such as the PM CARES Fund.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, and 3
- 25.** Consider the following statements regarding the National Investigation Agency (NIA):
1. The NIA can suo motu register and investigate cases in any state with central approval.
 2. The NIA's jurisdiction extends to offences committed by persons on ships and aircraft registered in India, wherever they may be located.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

26. With reference to the Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, consider the following statements:

1. The first elected Deputy Speaker of independent India was M.A. Ayyangar.
2. It holds office until the dissolution of the Lok Sabha or until they resign or are removed.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

27. With reference to Sharia Courts in India, consider the following statements:

1. Sharia Courts have legal recognition under the Indian Constitution and their decisions are binding.
2. These courts primarily deal with personal matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance under Islamic law.

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

28. The case of Balram Singh v. Union of India, recently seen in the news, primarily pertains to:

- (a) Challenging the inclusion of 'socialist' and 'secular' in the Preamble of the Constitution
- (b) Eradication of manual scavenging and ensuring rehabilitation and compensation for affected workers
- (c) Disputes over the delimitation of parliamentary constituencies
- (d) Implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) across states

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Context: A parliamentary committee on the **welfare of Other Backward Classes recommended raising the ₹8 lakh income limit** for "creamy layer" within OBCs.

Creamy Layer Principle

- It is a concept used to ensure that reservations in educational institutions and government jobs are extended to those **who are economically and socially disadvantaged within a certain group.**
 - It aims to **prevent the more affluent or advantaged members** of a reserved category from availing themselves of these benefits.
- **Origin:** The concept was first articulated by the **Supreme Court of India** in the **Indra Sawhney case (1992)**, also known as the **Mandal Commission case.**

- The Court's ruling emphasized that within the OBC (Other Backward Classes) category, those who are **relatively more privileged should not benefit from reservations**.

2. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: CARA is a "Statutory body as per the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. This means it was established by an Act of Parliament, not as a purely executive body.

Statement 2 is not correct: CARA falls under the "Ministry of Women & Child Development.

Statement 3 is correct: The CARA is "Designated as the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions under Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993."

3. (b)

In News: Recently, the Supreme Court of India has reiterated its stance on the importance of timely decisions by Speakers in cases of defection under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Statement 1 is not correct:

- The **Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India**, commonly known as the **Anti-Defection Law**, was introduced to curb political instability caused by elected representatives switching parties.
- It was **added by the 52nd Amendment Act of 1985 and later amended by the 91st Amendment Act of 2003**.
 - The landmark amendment was inspired by reports such as the **Y.B. Chavan Committee Report (1967)** and the **Dinesh Goswami Committee Report (1990)**, which highlighted the need for a strong law to curb unethical defections.

Statement 2 is correct:

- **Grounds for Disqualification:** A legislator (MP or MLA) can be disqualified on the following grounds:
 - If they voluntarily give up their membership of a political party.
 - If they vote or abstain from voting in the House contrary to the directions of their party (without prior permission), leading to potential disqualification.
 - **For independent members, if they join any political party after being elected.**
 - For nominated members, if they join a political party after six months from the date of their nomination.

Statement 3 is correct:

- Initially, decisions made by the presiding officer were considered final and beyond judicial review.
- However, in the **Kihoto Hollohan v. Zachillhu (1992) case**, the Supreme Court ruled that the decision of the Speaker is **subject to judicial review** under Articles 136, 226, and 227 of the Constitution.

4. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Composition of the Central Waqf Council: The Union Minister in-charge of waqf is the ex-officio chairperson.

- **Council members include:**
 - Members of Parliament (MPs).
 - Persons of national eminence.
 - Retired Supreme Court/High Court judges.

- Eminent scholars in Muslim law.
- **The Bill removes the Muslim requirement for MPs, former judges, and eminent persons.**
- The Bill **mandates two non-Muslim members** in the Council.
- **Composition of Waqf Boards:**
 - Empowers state governments to nominate one person from each group.
 - Non-Muslim members required: two.
 - Must include at least one member each from Shias, Sunnis, and Backward Muslim classes.
 - Requires two Muslim women members.
- **Composition of Tribunals:**
 - **Removes the expert in Muslim law. Hence, Statement 2 is not correct.**
 - District Court judge (Chairman).
 - Joint Secretary rank officer.
- **Appeals Against Tribunal Orders:**
 - **Act:** Decisions of Tribunals are final, with no appeals allowed in courts.
 - **Bill: Allows appeals against Tribunal decisions to the High Court within 90 days. Hence, Statement 3 is not correct.**

5. (a)

In News

- Recently, the Supreme Court of India addressed petitions regarding the delayed disqualification proceedings of 10 Telangana MLAs who defected to the ruling Congress party.

About law on disqualification

- The disqualification of sitting members of a legislature is governed by **Article 102 of the Indian Constitution** and **Section 8 of the Representation of the People (RP) Act, 1951.**
- The RP Act does not specify the authority responsible for this declaration, but **Article 103 of the Constitution** states that the President must decide if a sitting member becomes disqualified due to a conviction.
- A sitting member can be disqualified if convicted of certain offenses and sentenced to at least two years of imprisonment.
- Section 8 of the RP Act lists various offenses for which conviction can lead to disqualification, including **promoting enmity, bribery, rape, and corruption, among others.**

Supreme courts ruling

- The **Supreme Court's 2013 Lily Thomas judgment** struck down Section 8(4) of the RP Act, which allowed a sitting member three months to appeal their conviction before disqualification could take effect.
 - The Court ruled that Parliament could not make special provisions for sitting members, as both candidates and sitting members are equally liable to disqualification under Article 102.

Latest Developments

- Recently, the Supreme Court emphasized that a Speaker **cannot use indecision to undermine the objective of the anti-defection law (Tenth Schedule)** and that courts are not powerless in such situations.
 - While the Court cannot direct a Speaker on how to decide, it can mandate that disqualification petitions be resolved within a reasonable timeframe.
- The Supreme Court has previously intervened in similar cases to push Speakers to decide on

long-pending disqualification petitions.

6. (c)

Zero Hour is an informal term in Indian parliamentary proceedings. It starts immediately after Question Hour, around 12:00 noon, hence the name "Zero Hour." It is not mentioned in the rules of procedure but is an accepted parliamentary convention. During this time, Members of Parliament (MPs) can raise matters of urgent public importance without prior notice.

7. (b)

In News

- Parliament has adopted a **Statutory Resolution** confirming the imposition of the **President's Rule in Manipur**.

About President's Rule

- Article 356:** Union govt can take direct control of the state machinery if a state government is unable to function according to the Constitution.
 - Valid for **six months** & can be extended up to **three years in phases**.
 - Can be revoked by the President at any time without Parliamentary approval.
 - 44th Amendment Act, 1978:** President's rule can only be extended over a year every 6 months only after certification of Election Commission or in case of National Emergency.
- Article 365:** President's Rule can be proclaimed if a state fails to comply with directions given by the Union.
- It was imposed for the **first time in PEPSU state (1954) and then in Kerala (1959)**.
- The term '**President's Rule**' is **not mentioned** in the Constitution.
- Major Cases:** S R Bommai vs Union of India (1994); Buta Singh case (2005).

8. (a)

In News: A recent report by **Common Cause** and the **Lokniti Programme** highlights the prevalence of police violence, revealing systemic issues that perpetuate custodial torture.

- It surveyed 8,276 police personnel across 17 states and Union Territories, revealing systemic issues in law enforcement.

Statement 1 is correct

- Torture**, as defined by the **UN Convention (1984)**, is the intentional infliction of severe physical or mental pain on a person.
 - It is used to force confessions, punish, intimidate, or discriminate, and is carried out or approved by officials in positions of authority.
- Custodial Torture in India** is governed by legal provisions under the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023**.
 - It defines the framework for detaining individuals during investigations while balancing individual liberty and effective law enforcement.

Statement 2 is not correct

- India has **signed but not ratified** the **UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT), 1997** meaning it is not legally bound to implement its provisions.
- The **Prevention of Torture Bill (2010)** lapsed in Parliament, and subsequent efforts to introduce legislation have been shelved or diluted.

9. (d)

Context

- Recently, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has adopted a resolution recognizing the critical connection between plastic pollution, ocean protection, and the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

Human Right to a Healthy Environment in India

- **Constitutional Provisions:**
 - **Article 21 (Right to Life):** The right to a healthy environment is derived from Article 21, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty.
 - **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP):**
- ⓘ **Article 48A:** It directs the state to protect and improve the environment and safeguard forests and wildlife.
- ⓘ **Article 51A(g):** It imposes a duty on every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife.
- **Judicial Activism:**
 - **MC Mehta v. Union of India** and **Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar:** Supreme Court of India reinforced the **right to a clean environment** as a Fundamental Right.
 - Principles such as *polluter pays*, *precautionary principle*, and *sustainable development* have been upheld by Courts in India.

10. (d)

Context: An FIR was registered against a restaurant owner in Noida **under Section 271 of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS)**.

About

- **Sections 269 and 270 of the Indian Penal Code, 1870**, have been identically reproduced as **Sections 271 and 272 of the BNS**.
 - These punish acts that are **“likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life”**.
- **Section 271 of the BNS**, carries a **maximum punishment of six months imprisonment**, punishes those who **“negligently”** commit such acts.
- **Section 272** punishes those who do so **“malignantly”**, implying that the accused intended to spread the infection. It carries a **punishment of six months imprisonment**.
 - Both are **bailable offences**.
- Under both provisions, the **prosecution must establish that the infection is of a “disease dangerous to life”** — ruling out non-lethal infections.
- It must also prove that the **accused knew or** that their action, whether negligent or malignant, **may cause an infection to spread**.

11. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: **Article 341** of the Constitution empowers the **President to designate certain ‘castes, races, or tribes’ as SCs** based on **historical injustice**.

- The President can notify the list of Scheduled Castes for any state or union territory after consulting the Governor of the state.

Statement 2 is not correct: The list can be amended, but only by Parliament, not by the President.

- Thus, any change in the SC list necessitates an amendment to the Constitution.

12. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: DMF is a statutory body created under the MMDR Act, 1957, through the 2015 amendment. Its objective is to work for the interest and benefit of persons and areas

affected by mining-related activities.

Statement 2 is not correct: DMF applies to all mining-affected districts, not just coal mining areas.

Statement 3 is not correct: The State Governments prescribe the composition and functions of DMFs, not the Central Government. **Funding to DMF is done with** contribution by mining lease holders:

- 30% of royalty for leases granted after 2015.
- Funds are deposited at the **district level and not transferred to the Consolidated Fund of India.**
- The amount collected is meant for **area-based development, not for general infrastructure.**
- **Fund Allocation:** 70% of funds must be used for high-priority sectors like drinking water, healthcare, education, women & children welfare. 30% of funds may be used for supporting infrastructure like roads, bridges, and electricity.

13. (d)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Rajamannar Committee was not formed by the Union Government. It was constituted in 1969 by the Government of Tamil Nadu under the leadership of Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi. The purpose of the committee was to review the Centre-State relations and suggest measures for greater autonomy to the states.

Statement 2 is not correct: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recommends the implementation of a three-language formula in schools, where students learn Hindi, English, and a regional language. However, the NEP 2020 is a set of guidelines and recommendations, and it is not legally binding on the states. States have the autonomy to implement the policy as per their specific needs and contexts. Some states have expressed reservations or opted for modifications to the three-language formula.

14. (c)

The Constitution of India does not list any one language as India's "national language".

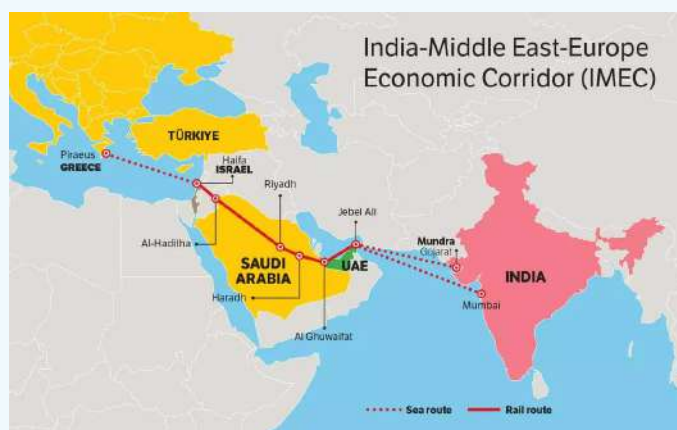
Clause 1 of Article 343 (Official language of the Union) says "The official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script".

15. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: According to the initial information, IMEC was established through an MoU signed at the G20 Summit (2023) in New Delhi, not the BRICS Summit.

Statement 2 is correct: The IMEC is a "Multi-modal connectivity project aimed at developing infrastructure of ports, railways, roads, sea lines and pipelines to enhance trade between India, the Arabian Peninsula, the Mediterranean region and Europe." It also promotes "digital connectivity."

Statement 3 is correct: IMEC is considered a counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).



16. (b)

Context

- Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna has recommended Justice B.R. Gavai — next in line by seniority — to the government for appointment as the 52nd Chief Justice of India.

About: Appointment of the CJI

- The **Constitution of India does not mention** any procedure for appointment of the CJI.
- **Article 124 (1)** of the Constitution merely says, “there shall be a Supreme Court of India consisting of a Chief Justice of India.”
- **Clause (2) of Article 124** of the Constitution says that every Judge of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the **President**.
- Thus, in the **absence of a constitutional provision**, the procedure to appoint CJI relies on convention.

What is the Convention?

- The outgoing **CJI recommends his successor** a practice, which is based on seniority.
- **Seniority at the apex court**, however, is **not defined by age**, but by the date a judge was appointed to the SC.
- If two judges are elevated to the Supreme Court on the same day,
 - the one who was **sworn in first** as a judge would trump another;
 - if both were sworn in as judges on the same day, the one with **more years of high court service** would ‘win’ in the seniority stakes;
 - an appointment **from the bench** would ‘trump’ in seniority an appointee from the bar.

17. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: One of the primary aims of the Permanent Lok Adalat is to provide a forum for conciliation and settlement of disputes before they reach the regular courts. This helps in reducing the burden on the judiciary.

Statement 2 is correct: Once a settlement is reached before the Permanent Lok Adalat and an award is passed by it, the award is considered to be a decree of a civil court and is final and binding on all the parties involved.

Statement 3 is not correct: PLA is a pre-litigation forum and its decision is binding and final. It cannot be appealed in regular civil courts but can be challenged through judicial review in High Courts or Supreme Court.

18. (c)

Article 142 of the Indian Constitution empowers the Supreme Court to pass any decree or make any order necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it. Originally envisioned as an extraordinary remedy, this provision allows the Court to bridge gaps where existing laws are silent or inadequate, ensuring that justice is not denied due to procedural or legislative shortcomings.

In the **Union Carbide case (related to Bhopal Gas Tragedy)**, **Article 142** was invoked by the Supreme Court to arrive at a settlement for victims.

Also in the case of **Bhanwari Devi and Ors. vs State of Rajasthan (2002)**, where the Supreme Court, in the absence of a specific law to address sexual harassment at the workplace, invoked Article 142 to issue the **Vishaka Guidelines**.

19. (d)

Context

- The Kerala High Court has observed that a convict cannot claim remission of sentence for the period during which he/she remained an undertrial prisoner prior to conviction.

About

- **Remission** refers to the reduction of the duration of a sentence without changing the nature of the sentence itself.
- It is granted by the appropriate government under provisions such as:
 - **Section 432 of the CrPC** (now Section 475 of BNSS).
 - Under **Articles 72 and 161** of the Constitution by the **President and Governors**, respectively.

Court ruling

- The court observed that entitlement of remission arises only when an accused is convicted and admitted to prison as part of undergoing the sentence of imprisonment.
- It drew a distinction between, **Remission of sentence and Set-off of pre-conviction detention** under Section 428 CrPC (now Section 468 of BNSS).

20. (b)

The Supreme Court answered a plea to **invoke Article 355 of the Constitution**.

About

- It is a part of **Part XVIII: Emergency Provisions**.
- Article 355 mandates it the “**duty of the Union to protect every State against external aggression and internal disturbance** and to ensure that the government of every State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution”.
- Used during events like:
 - Law and order breakdown in a state.
 - Threats to the sovereignty or unity of the country within a state.
 - Communal riots or insurgencies.

21. (b)

Context

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast that India is likely to receive ‘above normal’ monsoon rainfall, around 5% more than the historical average of 87 cm.

About: Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)

- IMD is an agency of the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**.
- It is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology.
- It is also one of the six Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres of the **World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)**.

22. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee, appointed in 1957, recommended the establishment of the Panchayati Raj system in India.

- The Panchayati Raj system has three levels – Village Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad.
 - **The Village Panchayat:** It has around five members that includes a Sarpanch.
 - **The Panchayat Samiti:** It usually covers 20 to 60 villages. Its head is called the Pradhan and the deputy is the Up-Pradhan.

- **The Zilla Parishad:** It includes members from Panchayat Samitis and government officials. Its main job is to guide and check the work done in the district.

23. (c)

Context: Recently, the **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)**, chaired by Prime Minister of India, held the **Indus Waters Treaty (1960)** with Pakistan '*in abeyance with immediate effect*' in the aftermath of the terror strike in Pahalgam.

About Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)

- It is the apex decision-making body in India responsible for matters related to national security and defence.
- It is **chaired by the Prime Minister**, it typically includes **key ministers** such as the Home Minister, Defence Minister, Finance Minister, and External Affairs Minister.
- The **National Security Advisor (NSA)** acts as a secretary-level coordinator for issues within its purview.

Key Functions of the CCS

- **Defence and Security:** Addresses internal and external security challenges, including military strategies and intelligence operations.
- **Foreign Affairs:** Deals with diplomatic policies and international security collaborations.
- **Nuclear and Space Policy:** Oversees critical decisions related to nuclear energy and space exploration.
- **Major Appointments:** Approves high-level appointments in defence and intelligence agencies.

23. (c)

Context: Recently, the **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)**, chaired by Prime Minister of India, held the **Indus Waters Treaty (1960)** with Pakistan '*in abeyance with immediate effect*' in the aftermath of the terror strike in Pahalgam.

About Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)

- It is the apex decision-making body in India responsible for matters related to national security and defence.
- It is **chaired by the Prime Minister**, it typically includes **key ministers** such as the Home Minister, Defence Minister, Finance Minister, and External Affairs Minister.
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24. b

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- **Definition:** CSR refers to corporate initiatives aimed at societal, environmental, and economic development, allowing companies to create a positive impact on communities.
- **Legal Basis:** CSR in India has traditionally been seen as a philanthropic activity. However, with

the introduction of **Section 135 in the Companies Act 2013**, India became the **first country** to have statutorily mandated CSR for specified companies.

- **Eligibility Criteria:** India's CSR policy established through the 2014 and 2021 amendments to the Companies Act of 2013, mandates companies with a net worth of **₹500 crore**, turnover of **₹1,000 crore**, or a **net profit of ₹5 crore** to spend **at least 2% of their average net profit over the last three years on CSR activities**.
- **2019 Amendment:** Unspent funds must be transferred to a Schedule VII Fund (e.g., PM CARES, Clean Ganga Fund) by the fiscal year-end.
 - Unspent CSR funds could be carried forward.

25. (c)

Context

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) began investigating the Pahalgam terror attack.

National Investigation Agency (NIA)

- National Investigation Agency (NIA) is working as the **Central Counter Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency in India**.
- It was established in 2008, following recommendations from expert committees to create a specialized agency for investigating terrorism-related cases, which often involve complex inter-State and international links, including activities like arms and drug smuggling, fake currency circulation, and border infiltration.
 - This was prompted by the **26/11 Mumbai terror attacks**.
- NIA cases are tried in Special Courts, which are designated by the Central Government, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the High Court, through an Official Gazette notification.

Jurisdiction

- The NIA Act empowers the agency to investigate offenses that threaten India's sovereignty, security, and foreign relations.
 - The law under which the agency operates extends to the whole of India and also applies to Indian citizens outside the country; persons in the service of the government wherever they are posted; **persons on ships and aircraft registered in India wherever they may be**; persons who commit a scheduled offence beyond India against the Indian citizen or affecting the interest of India.
- The NIA Act, amended in 2019, outlines the offences the NIA can investigate, including crimes under various laws like the Criminal Code, Information Technology Act, and Arms Act.

Powers of NIA

- **Investigation:** The Central Government can direct the NIA to investigate any case when it is of the opinion that a **Scheduled Offence** (listed under the NIA Act) has been committed.
 - The NIA can suo motu (on its own) register and investigate cases in any state with central approval.
- **Prosecution:** The NIA is empowered to prosecute cases in Special NIA Courts that are established under the NIA Act.
 - These courts ensure fast-track trials for cases investigated by the NIA.
- **Coordination with State Police:** The NIA collaborates with State Police forces during investigations. It can take over investigations from the State Police, ensuring centralized handling of serious offences like terrorism, organized crime, etc.

26. (c)

In News: The persistent vacancy of post of **Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha** in recent years highlights a troubling neglect of consensus politics and constitutional obligations.

- **Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha** is a constitutional office in India, mandated under **Article 93 of the Constitution**.
- It ensures the smooth functioning of the Lok Sabha, especially in the absence of the Speaker.

Statement 1 is correct

- The Office of Deputy Speaker originated during British rule as the Deputy President of the Central Legislative Assembly, first held by **Sachidanand Sinha in 1921**.
 - The Constituent Assembly retained the role before the Constitution's adoption in 1950.
- The **first elected Deputy Speaker of independent India** was **M.A. Ayyangar**, who later served as acting Speaker after the sudden death of Speaker G.V. Mavalankar in 1956.

Statement 2 is correct

- **Article 94 of Indian Constitution** specifies that the Deputy Speaker **remains in office until resignation, removal, or cessation** as a Member of Parliament.
 - It ensures that the Lok Sabha always has a **second-in-command**.
- It holds office **until the dissolution** of the Lok Sabha or until they **resign or are removed**.

27. (b)

In News

- The Supreme Court ruled that **Sharia Courts or Courts of Kazi** have **no legal recognition** in India and their decisions are not binding.

Sharia courts

- They are informal Islamic forums led by a Qazi that interpret Shariat (Islamic law based on the Quran and the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed) to provide guidance on personal matters like **marriage, divorce, inheritance, and maintenance**.
- They serve mainly as arbitration centers, especially for the economically disadvantaged.
- However, their **decisions are not legally binding** or enforceable, and any party dissatisfied with their ruling can seek recourse in regular courts.

Supreme Court's Recent ruling

- The Court cited the **2014 Vishwa Lochan Madan case** and clarified that any decisions from such bodies are **valid only if voluntarily accepted** by the concerned parties and not in conflict with existing laws.
- It granted maintenance to a Muslim woman whose husband had sought divorce through a Sharia court.

28. (b)

Context

- In a landmark ruling, the Andhra Pradesh high court has directed the state government to pay compensation of ₹30 lakh and ensure full rehabilitation for the families of sanitation workers who died while cleaning sewage drains and engaging in manual scavenging since 1993.

About the Ruling

- The order was issued in response to a **Public Interest Litigation (PIL)** filed by Tutika Daalaiah, founder of the **Com George Fernandes Memorial Socialist International** and aligns with Supreme Court judgments in **Balram Singh vs. Union of India** and **Safai Karamchari vs. Union of India**.

- The court also ruled that officials responsible for such deaths must have adverse entries recorded in their service records, **affecting their chances for promotion**. In cases involving contract workers, the court directed that compensation be recovered from the contractors concerned.

What is Manual Scavenging?

- It is an umbrella term for manually cleaning of waste and excreta, ranging from dry latrines to septic tanks, drains and sewers, by humans.
- It is **banned in India** under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.
 - It was first banned in India in 1993 with the Employment of Manual Scavenging and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act.
- As on 31.07.2024, out of 766 districts in the country, **732 districts** have reported themselves as **manual scavenging-free**. However, there are still around **60,000** identified manual scavengers and **443 workers** lost their lives between 2018 and 2023.



GEOGRAPHY

1. Arrange the following Indian states in descending order of coal reserves (*in percentage*):

1. Odisha
2. Jharkhand
3. Chhattisgarh
4. West Bengal
5. Madhya Pradesh

Which one of the following options is correct?

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

2. With reference to the 'Naini Lake', consider the following statements:

1. It is located in Nainital and the town is named after the lake.
2. It is a natural freshwater lake, tectonic in origin and crescent-shaped due to repeated landslides.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

3. Consider the following statements regarding the Taiwan Strait:

1. The Strait was named "Formosa" by Spanish explorers in the 17th century.
2. It serves as a vital shipping lane connecting the South China Sea and the East China Sea.
3. The Median Line, also known as the Davis Line, running through the Strait is mutually recognized by both China and Taiwan as the maritime boundary.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. Consider the following statements

1. Katchatheevu is an uninhabited island situated between India and Maldives.
2. Bilateral agreements signed in 1974 and 1976 established that Katchatheevu belongs to India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. **'Atacama Desert'** is located in which of the following countries?

- (a) Morocco
- (b) Chile
- (c) Libya
- (d) South Africa

6. Which of the following statements is most accurate regarding the geographical location of North Sentinel Island?

- (a) It is located in the Arabian Sea and is part of the Lakshadweep archipelago.
- (b) It is situated in the Bay of Bengal and is the northernmost island of the Andaman Islands.
- (c) It is located in the Indian Ocean, south of the Nicobar Islands.
- (d) It is situated in the Bay of Bengal and is part of the Andaman Islands archipelago, west of South Andaman Island.

7. With reference to the Heard and McDonald Islands, consider the following statements:

- 1. They are part of France territory and are located approximately 1,700 km from Antarctica.
- 2. The islands are named as the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

8. Consider the following statements with reference to New Pamban Bridge:

- 1. It is located in Wayanad district of Kerala.
- 2. It is India's first Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. India shares a land border with which of the following countries?

- 1. Afghanistan
- 2. Bhutan
- 3. Indonesia
- 4. Myanmar

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

10. With reference to the Gaza Strip, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. It is located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea.
- 2. It is bordered by Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.

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

11. With reference to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is situated in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula, bordering Iran and Saudi Arabia.
- 2. Prior to independence, the seven Emirates were part of a British protectorate called the Trucial States.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. Which among the following is the impact of El Nino on weather patterns?

- 1. Rise in global temperatures.
- 2. Increase in rainfall in India.
- 3. Trigger extreme weather events in the Pacific Ocean.

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

13. With reference to the Ozone, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. Stratospheric ozone forms the ozone layer that shields the Earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation.
- 2. Tropospheric ozone is a harmful air pollutant and greenhouse gas.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

14. Which of the following archipelagos are part of Portugal?

1. Azores
2. Madeira
3. Canary Islands

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

15. Which of the following countries shares a border with Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)?

1. Angola
2. Tanzania
3. Uganda
4. Zambia

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

16. Consider the following statements:

1. El Nino is associated with the warming of the ocean in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
2. La Nina is characterised by cooler than average ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
3. El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is a naturally occurring phenomenon in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

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

- (a) Establishment of a new trade route between Israel and Egypt.
- (b) Creation of a wider Israeli-controlled security zone across Gaza.
- (c) A humanitarian corridor for aid distribution to Gaza.
- (d) Demilitarization of Gaza's southern border.

18. Consider the following:

1. Mountain Building
2. Mid-Atlantic Ridge
3. Creation of New Crust

How many of the above is / are feature(s) of Convergent Boundaries in Plate Tectonics?

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

19. Consider the following statements regarding Wet-bulb Temperature:

1. It is the lowest temperature that can be achieved by evaporative cooling of water into the air.
2. Wet-bulb temperature is a direct indicator of the dew point of air.
3. It is a critical measure for assessing human heat stress in humid environments.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

20. The Sterkfontein Caves, part of the Cradle of Humankind, are located in which of the following countries?

- (a) Kenya
- (b) Ethiopia
- (c) South Africa
- (d) Tanzania

21. K2-18b, recently seen in the news, is:

- (a) An asteroid
- (b) An exoplanet
- (c) A comet
- (d) A moon of Jupiter

22. Ras Isa Port, recently in the news, is located in which of the following countries?

- (a) Oman
- (b) Saudi Arabia
- (c) Yemen
- (d) Somalia

23. With reference to the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH), consider the following statements:

1. The HKH mountains extend over eight countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.
2. These mountains are also called the “water towers of Asia” because they are the origins of 10 crucial river systems on the continent.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

24. Natuna Island, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following regions?

- (a) South China Sea
- (b) Mediterranean Sea
- (c) Red Sea
- (d) Arabian Sea

25. Consider the following statements:

1. Rare earth elements are a group of 17 substances found in the Earth's crust and are crucial for various technological advancements.
2. China is the world's largest producer of rare earths followed by India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

26. The Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect refers to the phenomenon where:

- (a) Coastal cities experience significantly lower temperatures compared to inland areas due to oceanic influence.
- (b) Metropolitan areas exhibit markedly higher temperatures compared to their surrounding rural areas.
- (c) High-altitude urban centers trap cold air, leading to lower average temperatures.
- (d) Urban areas experience uniform temperature levels across both day and night.

27. Consider the following statements:

1. The United States is the world's largest gold producer followed by Russia and Australia.
2. China holds the largest gold reserves 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

28. With reference to the South China Sea, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a marginal sea of the Western Pacific Ocean.
2. It is located between southern China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and Malaysia.

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

- 29.** The Strait that connects the Labrador Sea with Baffin Bay is:
- Strait of Gibraltar
 - Davis Strait
 - Bering Strait
 - Hudson Strait
- 30.** Palmyra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which was destroyed in the 2011 civil war, is located in which country?
- Iraq
 - Syria
 - Egypt
 - Lebanon
- 31.** Consider the following statements:
- Continental shelf stretches from the coastline to the deep ocean floor.
 - India currently possesses 12 nautical miles of territorial sea and 200 nautical miles of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 32.** In the context of climate studies, the term “Temperature Flips” refers to:
- Long-term gradual changes in average global temperatures
 - Abrupt and rapid transitions between extreme warmth and cold within a short time span
 - Seasonal variation of temperatures between summer and winter
 - Gradual shift of Earth’s temperature zones due to tectonic movements
- 33.** Sandy Cay Reef, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following regions?
- South China Sea
 - Mediterranean Sea
 - Red Sea
 - Arabian Sea
- 34.** Consider the following statements regarding Zojila Pass:
- It is the highest mountain pass connecting the Kashmir Valley and the Drass Valley.
 - It is situated on National Highway 1, which links Srinagar and Leh.
 - Upon completion, the Zojila tunnel will be the longest unidirectional tunnel in Asia.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

In News: Recently, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has unveiled its annual publication, '**Energy Statistics India 2025**', through the National Statistics Office (NSO).

- **Coal Reserves and Production:** The distribution of coal reserves in India is concentrated in a few states like **Odisha (25.47%), Jharkhand (23.58%), Chhattisgarh (21.23%), West Bengal (8.72%) and Madhya Pradesh (8.43%)**.
 - These states account for **approximately 85% of the total coal reserves** in India.
- Total estimated reserves of **lignite** as on 01-04-2024 stood at **47.30 billion tonnes**. The **highest reserves of lignite** are located in the **state of Tamil Nadu (79%)**.

2. (c)

The Naini Lake has recorded a **water level of 4.7 feet** — marking a **five-year low**.

- The lake has reached its **zero level more than 10 times since 2000**, compared to **just twice in the 1900s**.
- It is a natural freshwater lake, **tectonic in origin** and crescent-shaped due to repeated landslides.
- Located in the **heart of Nainital town, Uttarakhand**.
- **Third largest lake** in the state by surface area.

3. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The name "Formosa" was given by Portuguese navigators in the late 16th century, not Spanish explorers in the 17th century. The Taiwan Strait is a major flashpoint in East Asia due to the China–Taiwan dispute. China considers Taiwan a breakaway province, while Taiwan sees itself as a sovereign democratic nation.

Statement 2 is correct: The Strait "extends from southwest to northeast between South and East China seas," indicating its role as a connector.

Statement 3 is not correct: The Median Line (Davis Line) is not recognized by China.

4. (d)

In News : The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly passed a resolution urging the Union government to take steps to retrieve the **Katchatheevu island from Sri Lanka**.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct: Katchatheevu is a small, uninhabited island covering approximately 285 acres in the **Palk Strait, situated between Tamil Nadu, India, and northern Sri Lanka**.

- It lies 14.5 km south of Delft Island and about 16 km northeast of Rameswaram.
- The island is barren, lacking drinking water or infrastructure, except for a Catholic church dedicated to St. Anthony.
- **Dispute** began in 1921 between the British colonial governments of Madras and Ceylon and it was resolved through two bilateral agreements signed in 1974 and 1976 by India and Sri Lanka.
- These agreements established that **Katchatheevu belongs to Sri Lanka** and defined the maritime boundaries between the two countries, including their exclusive economic zones (EEZs).

5. (b)

Chile is a **long, narrow country on the west coast of South America**.

- Its coastline stretches over 6,437 km but is only about 91 km wide.
- **Cape Horn:** Located at the southern tip of South America, Cape Horn is known for high winds

and treacherous waves.

- **The world's driest desert is the Atacama Desert**, located in northern Chile.

6. (d)

North Sentinel Island lies in the Bay of Bengal (in a broader sense, all are part of the Indian Ocean, but regionally it's in the Bay of Bengal). It is part of the Andaman Islands archipelago, and located west of South Andaman Island. It is not the northernmost island—that would be Landfall Island. It lies about 50 km west of Port Blair.



7. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Heard and McDonald Islands are Australian territory, they are located in the Southern Indian Ocean, about 1,700 km from Antarctica and 4,100 km southwest of Australia.

Statement 2 is correct: Protection: Protected under the **Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and World Heritage Convention**, with penalties for unauthorized actions.

- They are listed as the **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**.

8. (b)

In News: The new Pamban Bridge will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, replacing the century-old structure.

Statement 1 is not correct but Statement 2 is correct: The New Pamban Bridge was constructed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL), a Navratna PSU under the Ministry of Railways. It is located in Rameswaram, **Tamil Nadu**.

- It features a 72.5-meter lift span that can rise 17 meters to allow ships to pass.
- It is 3 meters higher than the old bridge and is designed to accommodate both heavy freight trains and advanced semi-high-speed trains, like Vande Bharat.
- It is **India's first Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge** and is built with advanced materials to withstand harsh marine conditions.

9. (c)

India currently has **more than 15000 km of land borders**.

- It shares borders with **seven countries, Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar**.



10. (a)

Context

- Israel has established control over more than 50% of the territory within the Gaza Strip, Since resuming its military campaign against Hamas.

About

- Location:** The Gaza Strip is a small territory located on the **eastern coast** of the **Mediterranean Sea**.
- It borders **Israel** to the north and east and **Egypt** to the southwest, covering about **365 square kilometers**.
- Conflict zone:** It has been the site of repeated conflicts between Israel and Hamas, including wars in 2008, 2012, 2014, and most recently in 2023–2024.
- Humanitarian crisis:** Due to the blockade and ongoing conflicts, Gaza faces high unemployment, limited access to clean water, electricity, and healthcare, and widespread poverty.



11. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: UAE is situated in the southeast of the **Arabian Peninsula**, bordering **Oman and Saudi Arabia**.

Statement 2 is correct: Prior to independence, **the seven Emirates** were part of a **British protectorate** called the **Trucial States**.

- In 1971, the **UAE became a federation of six emirates** - Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm

Al-Quwain, and Fujairah, while the seventh emirate, Ras Al Khaimah, joined the federation in 1972.

12. (c)

El Nino means **Little Boy** in Spanish, it is a climate phenomenon characterized by the periodic warming of sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.

- During El Nino, **trade winds weaken**.
- Warm water is pushed back east, toward the west coast of the Americas and as a result **cold water is pushed towards Asia**.

Impact of El Nino on weather patterns:

- **Global Temperature Rise:** El Nino causes a **rise in global temperatures**, often leading to warmer-than-average conditions worldwide.
- **Disruption of Monsoon:** In India, El Nino **typically weakens the monsoon**, leading to **reduced rainfall** and drought conditions.
- **Increased Risk of Wildfires:** El Nino increases the likelihood of wildfires, especially in regions like Australia, southern Africa, and parts of the Americas.
- **Extreme Weather Events:** El Nino can **trigger extreme weather events**, including more intense storms, hurricanes, and cyclones, particularly in the Pacific Ocean and Atlantic.

13. (c)

Context

- According to a study by the IIT Kharagpur, surface ozone pollution is impacting India's major food crops, particularly in the Indo-Gangetic Plain and central India.

What is Ozone Pollution?

- **Ozone (O₃)** is a gas composed of three oxygen atoms.
 - It occurs both in the Earth's upper atmosphere (**stratosphere**) and at ground level (**troposphere**).
- **Stratospheric ozone** is beneficial as it forms the ozone layer that **shields the Earth** from the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation.
- **Tropospheric ozone**, however, is a harmful air pollutant and greenhouse gas.
 - It is not emitted directly but is formed by chemical reactions between **oxides of nitrogen (NO_x)** and **volatile organic compounds (VOCs)** in the presence of sunlight.
- **The World Health Organization (WHO)** recommends a maximum ozone level of **100 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³)**, measured as an 8-hour maximum moving average within a day

14. (a)

Context

- President Murmu held **delegation-level talks with the Portuguese President**, commemorating **50 years of diplomatic relations between India and Portugal**.

Portugal

- Portugal is the **westernmost point of Europe** and lies on the west coast of the Iberian Peninsula.
- It is **bordered by Spain to the east and north and the Atlantic Ocean to the west and south**.



- The country includes the **Azores and Madeira archipelagos** in the Atlantic.
- The **capital city is Lisbon**, which is also the largest city in the country.
- **Age of Exploration:** Portugal was a global maritime power in the 15th and 16th centuries, leading the Age of Exploration.
 - Famous explorers like Vasco da Gama and Ferdinand Magellan played pivotal roles.
- **Colonial Era:** Portugal established colonies across the globe, including Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, and Goa (India).
- **EU Membership:** Portugal is a member of the European Union (EU).

15. (d)

In News : The UN condemned the widespread rape of children in eastern DR Congo, where thousands faced sexual violence in early 2025.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a country located in Central Africa. It is the second-largest country in Africa by land area



- Kinshasa is the capital city, located on the Congo River, and is one of the largest urban areas in Africa. **Bordering countries :** Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

16. d

In News: Recently, the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** has forecasted that neutral conditions will dominate the Pacific Ocean until October 2025.

- It highlights the absence of **El Niño or La Niña phenomena**, collectively known as the **El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)**.

Statement 1 is correct

- **El Niño:** It is a naturally occurring climate pattern associated with the **warming of the ocean surface** temperatures in the **central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean**.

Statement 2 is correct

- **La Nina:** It is characterised by cooler than average ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.
 - During La Niña events, trade winds are even stronger than usual, pushing more warm water toward Asia.

Statement 3 is correct

- **El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO)** is a naturally occurring climate phenomenon resulting from interactions between the ocean and atmosphere in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

17. (b)

Context

- Israel announced that its military had completed the takeover of a new security corridor known as the **Morag axis**.

About

- It cuts across Gaza between the southern cities of **Rafah and Khan Yunis**.
- This move effectively links the **Philadelphi Route** along the Egyptian border to **Morag**, creating a wider Israeli-controlled “security zone.”
 - The Morag corridor joins other key zones under Israeli control, including the Philadelphi and Netzarim corridors.
 - The Philadelphi Corridor refers to a narrow strip of land along Gaza’s border with Egypt that has been under Israeli control since 2024.
- Together with expanded buffer zones, these give Israel control of over 50% of Gaza’s territory.



Source: UN Ocha, 2023

B B C

18. (a)

In News: Recent geological studies have revealed that the Indian Plate is undergoing a process of delamination, where a portion of it is splitting apart and sinking into the Earth's mantle.

- **Convergent Boundaries:** Plates collide, leading to **subduction or mountain building**.
 - **Three ways of convergence:** (i) between an oceanic and continental plate; (ii) between two oceanic plates; and (iii) between two continental plates.
- **Mid-Atlantic Ridge** (American Plate(s) is/are separated from the Eurasian and African Plates) is an example of **Divergent Boundaries**, where plates move apart, **creating new crust**.

19. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Wet-bulb temperature is the lowest temperature that can be achieved by evaporative cooling of water into the air at a constant pressure. It represents the combined effect of temperature and humidity.

Statement 2 is not correct: Wet-bulb temperature is related to humidity, but it is not the same as dew point.

Statement 3 is correct: It is used in heat stress indices like Wet-Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) and is crucial in evaluating human survivability in extreme heat and humidity.

20. (c)

Context

- South Africa's **Sterkfontein Caves**, part of the **Cradle of Humankind**, have reopened to the public after three years.

About

- **Location:** Approximately 50 km northwest of Johannesburg, South Africa.
- **Geological Formation:** Composed mainly of dolomitic limestone, with striking rock formations such as stalactites and stalagmites formed over millions of years.
- **Palaeoanthropological Significance:**
 - Known as one of the richest sources of hominid fossils in the world.
 - Key discoveries include **"Mrs Ples"**, **Australopithecus africanus** skull and **"Little Foot"**, a nearly complete **Australopithecus** skeleton.
 - These findings suggest that early human ancestors lived in the region as far back as **3.5 million** years ago.

21. (b)

Context

- Researchers that have been studying data from the planet **K2-18b**, **some 120 light years away from Earth**, have reported strong signals of dimethyl sulphide (DMS) and dimethyl disulphide (DMDS).

About K2-18b

- Discovered in **2015**, K2-18 b is a **super Earth exoplanet**.
- It is **8.6 times as massive as Earth**.
- It orbits in the **"habitable zone"** - a distance where liquid water, a key ingredient for life, can exist on a planetary surface.
- It orbits around a **red dwarf star smaller than the Sun**.

22. (c)

In News: US air strikes on Yemen's Ras Isa oil port kill at least 80 people.

About Ras Isa Port

It is a port located in the Ras al-Mashawn Peninsula, Yemen.

It is situated on the Gulf of Aden, approximately 35 kilometers west of the city of Al Mahrah.

The Marib–Ras Isa oil pipeline is a critical component of Yemen’s energy infrastructure, linking the inland oil fields of Marib to the Ras Isa Marine Terminal on the Red Sea.

23. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The HKH mountains extend around **3,500 km over eight countries** — Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Myanmar, and Pakistan.

- These mountains are also called the “**water towers of Asia**” because they are the origins of **10 crucial river systems on the continent** — Amu Darya, Indus, Ganga, Brahmaputra, Irrawaddy, Salween, Mekong, Yangtze, Yellow river, and Tarim.
- These river basins provide water to almost **one-fourth of the world’s population** and are a significant freshwater source for people in the HKH region.

24. (a)

Context

- Indonesia and China have reaffirmed their commitment to maritime cooperation, amid ongoing tensions over Chinese activity near the Natuna Islands.

Natuna Island

- Natuna Island, also known as Bunguran Island is the largest island in the Natuna Islands archipelago, located in the **northernmost part of Indonesia’s Riau Islands Province**.
- **Location:** It is located in the **South China Sea** and lies approximately halfway between Peninsular Malaysia and the island of Borneo.

25. (a)

Context

Amid the ongoing U.S.–China trade war, Chinese authorities have reportedly imposed export controls on **rare earth elements (REEs) and magnets**.

About

Rare earth elements are a series of **seventeen substances** that are **present in the earth’s crust**.

- Unlike what the name may indicate, **rare earths occur plentifully in nature**, but the **rarity comes from the ability to isolate them chemically** and make them usable in industrial applications.
- **Demand for rare earth metals** such as neodymium, dysprosium, praseodymium and yttrium is increasing alongside technological advancements.
- **Heavy and light rare earths occur naturally in several countries**, such as India, China, Myanmar, Japan, Australia and North Korea.
 - **China** is the world’s largest producer of rare earths followed by the USA.

26. (b)

The Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect refers to the temperature difference observed between **urban areas and their rural surroundings**. Cities tend to be warmer due to:

- High concentrations of concrete, asphalt, and buildings that absorb and retain heat
- Reduced vegetation and green cover
- Heat emissions from vehicles, industries, and air conditioners
- Limited air flow due to tall structures

This phenomenon can lead to higher energy demands, air pollution, and health risks, especially

during heatwaves.

27. (d)

Both the statements are not correct: China is the world's largest gold producer followed by Russia and Australia.

- **China** is also the world's **largest gold consumer** followed by India.
- **The United States** holds the largest gold reserves in the world, with approximately 8,133.5 metric tons followed by Germany, and Italy.

28. (c)

Context

- Indonesia and China have reaffirmed their commitment to maritime cooperation, amid ongoing tensions over Chinese activity near the Natuna Islands.

South China Sea

- It is a marginal sea of the **Western Pacific Ocean**.
- It is located between **southern China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and Malaysia**.
- It is a crucial maritime gateway and junction for shipping between the **Pacific and Indian Oceans**.

Dispute in South China Sea

- Southeast Asian countries like **China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan** have had disputes over the contentious South China Sea region for centuries.
- The two primary points of contention are: The **Spratly Islands** and the **Paracel Islands** in the sea.
- **Nine-dash line:** China stakes claim to most of the region and at the heart of this claim is the U-shaped '**nine-dash line**' that includes as much as **90 percent** of these waters.
 - This dotted line was adopted from Chinese maps in the 1940s, and represents Beijing's claim over the sea and all the land features that are contained within the line.

29. (b)

Context

- A hidden landmass has been found beneath the **icy waters of the Davis Strait**.

Davis Strait

- Davis Strait, the body of water that **separates Canada's Baffin Island from Greenland**.
- The Strait connects the **Labrador Sea (Atlantic Ocean) in the south with Baffin Bay to the north**.
- Straits are usually defined as a **narrow passage or a waterway** that lies between two land masses and connects two oceans or large bodies of water.
 - They are formed by natural geological phenomena such as tectonic shifts.



30. (b)

Context

- The Syrian civil war in 2011, turned Palmyra's strategic location into a conflict zone, leading to widespread destruction of its ancient monuments.

About

- **Location: Palmyra** is an ancient city in central Syria, nestled in an oasis surrounded by palms and flanked by the **northern and southern Palmyrene** mountain ranges.
- **Architectural Significance:** The site is a fusion of Graeco-Roman, local, and Persian architectural styles. Key features include;
 - Grand colonnaded street (1100 metres)
 - Temple of Ba'al
 - Theatre, Agora, Diocletian's Camp
 - Funerary monuments and necropolis (Valley of the Tombs)
 - Roman aqueduct.
- Palmyra was inscribed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1980**.

31. (c)

In News: India has strategically expanded its claim in the **Central Arabian Sea**, adding nearly 10,000 square kilometers to its **Extended Continental Shelf (ECS)**.

Statement 1 is correct

- **Continental Shelf** is a critical concept in maritime law, defined under the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**. It refers to the **submerged extension of a country's landmass**, stretching from the **coastline to the deep ocean floor**.
- **Coastal nations** have sovereign rights over their continental shelf for exploring and exploiting natural resources, such as minerals, oil, and gas.

Statement 2 is correct

- Nations are entitled to an **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** extending **200 nautical miles** from their coastline, granting exclusive rights to fishing, mining of minerals, polymetallic nodules, and resource extraction like oil reserves.
- Beyond the EEZ, countries can claim an **ECS** if they provide scientific evidence to the **Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS)** that the shelf is a **natural extension of their landmass**.
 - India currently possesses **12 nautical miles of territorial sea and 200 nautical miles of EEZ**.

31. (c)

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 - India currently possesses **12 nautical miles of territorial sea and 200 nautical miles of EEZ**.

32. (b)

Context

- According to a new study, Over 60 per cent of the world has likely experienced sudden swings between extreme heat and cold over the past six decades.

About

- **Temperature flips** refer to abrupt and rapid transitions from extreme warmth to cold, or vice versa, within a very short time span.
- **Impact:** Such swift changes can lead to severe and potentially irreversible impacts on;
 - Human health (heatstroke, respiratory illnesses),
 - Agriculture (crop failures),
 - Infrastructure (road and bridge damages due to thermal stress),
 - Air quality (increased pollution during heat events),
 - Plant and animal ecosystems.
- **Geographical Spread:** Temperature flips occurred less frequently in the tropics and polar regions and are widespread in mid-latitudes, including East Asia, eastern North America and parts of South America, Africa and Australia.
- **In April 2021, Europe** experienced a temperature flip where temperatures dropped sharply from unusually warm conditions, causing widespread frost damage to crops.

33. (a)

Context

- The South China Sea dispute has intensified as China and the Philippines assert claims over **Tiexian Reef (Sandy Cay Reef)**.

About

- **Location:** It is a part of the Spratly Islands chain in the **South China Sea**.
 - It lies close to **Thitu Island (Pag-asa)**, which is under Philippine control.
- The reef is partially **submerged at high tide** and **consists of sandbars** that occasionally rise above sea level.
- **Strategic Importance:** Control of the reef allows for increased military and surveillance

capability in the region.

34. (b)

In News: Zojila Pass connecting Ladakh with the rest of India is now open for tourists.

Statement 1 is not correct: Zojila Pass is a crucial link between the Kashmir Valley and the Drass Valley, it is considered the second-highest pass after Fotu La on the Srinagar-Leh highway. Therefore, it is not the highest.

Statement 2 is correct: Zojila Pass is located on National Highway 1 (NH 1), formerly known as NH 1D. This highway connects Srinagar in the Kashmir Valley to Leh in Ladakh, making Zojila Pass a crucial segment of this route .

Statement 3 is not correct: The Zojila Tunnel is designed to be a bi-directional tunnel, not unidirectional. Spanning approximately 13 kilometers, it is set to become Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel upon completion .

■ ■ ■ ■

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. 'Zero Poverty - P4' initiative is launched by which of the following states in India?
 - (a) Bihar
 - (b) Madhya Pradesh
 - (c) Andhra Pradesh
 - (d) Rajasthan
2. What is the primary objective of the NITI-NCAER Portal?
 - (a) Promote e-commerce in rural areas
 - (b) Serve as a centralized data hub for state-level trends
 - (c) Conduct national elections
 - (d) Monitor international trade
3. With reference to the 'Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Norms in India', consider the following statements:
 1. It was initiated on the recommendations of the Banking Commission of 1972.
 2. Trans-genders and Joint Liability Groups are eligible for loans under PSL.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Consider the following statements regarding the Hamari Parampara Hamari Virasat:
 1. The program aims to document the vibrant history and cultural practices of villages across Jharkhand.
 2. This initiative aligns closely with the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA Act).Which of the above statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. With reference to Stand-Up India Scheme, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. It facilitates bank loans for setting up greenfield enterprises for the manufacturing sector only.
 2. The borrower must be SC/ST and/or a woman entrepreneur, aged above 18 years.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II):

- 1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with 60:40 funding between Centre and States.
- 2. It aims to make the population act as the 'eyes and ears' of the border guarding forces.
- 3. The scheme will be implemented only in the Northeastern states.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

7. The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) primarily targets which segment of the Indian economy?

- (a) Large-scale industrial units
- (b) Corporate agricultural businesses
- (c) Non-corporate, non-farm micro and small enterprises
- (d) Public sector undertakings

8. With reference to the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), consider the following statements:

- 1. It was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in 2019.
- 2. NCAP aims to achieve up to a 40% reduction in PM₁₀ levels or to meet national standards (60 µg/m³) by 2025-26.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. With reference to the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a composite Index that has been compiled based on themes of Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs).
- 2. It is aligned with the National Indicator Framework (NIF) of the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 10.** With reference to the Civil Registration System (CRS) App, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It was developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
 2. It aims to facilitate digital registration of births and deaths in India.
- 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
- 11.** With reference to the STELLAR model developed for India's power sector, consider the following statements:
1. STELLAR enables integrated planning of generation, transmission, energy storage, and demand-side response.
 2. It has been developed by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
 3. The model provides real-time electricity pricing mechanisms to guide consumer tariff rates.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 12.** The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) aims to achieve which of the following outcomes in the Indian e-commerce landscape?
- (a) Consolidation of the market share by existing major e-commerce players.
 - (b) Creation of barriers to entry for new and smaller online retailers.
 - (c) Democratization of e-commerce by enabling broader participation and reducing platform dependency.
 - (d) Strict regulation of online pricing and discounting by e-commerce platforms
- 13.** Which of the following statements about the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) are true?
1. ONDC is run by the Ministry of Electronics and IT.
 2. It's designed to make online shopping more inclusive and open by using common digital rules.
 3. It allows small local sellers to compete on equal footing.
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 14.** What is the primary objective of "Operation Chakra" initiated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)?
- (a) To combat organized cyber-enabled financial crime networks
 - (b) To enhance India's cybersecurity infrastructure
 - (c) To dismantle international drug trafficking operations
 - (d) To improve digital literacy across rural areas

- 15.** With reference to the Surat Emission Trading Scheme (ETS), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is the world's first market-based trading system for particulate matter emissions.
 2. The scheme is based on the cap-and-trade principle.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 16.** The primary objective of constructing the Silkyara Tunnel is to;
- (a) Promote mining activities in the Upper Himalayas
 - (b) Facilitate high-speed train connectivity to Uttarakhand
 - (c) Improve road connectivity to the Yamunotri shrine under the Char Dham project
 - (d) Construct a hydroelectric power tunnel for river interlinking
- 17.** Which of the following best describes the primary nature of the Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND)?
- (a) A statutory body overseeing financial institutions to prevent illicit activities.
 - (b) An independent body reporting to the Ministry of Home Affairs for national security matters.
 - (c) A central national agency for receiving, analyzing, and disseminating information on suspect financial transactions.
 - (d) An enforcement agency directly involved in the investigation and prosecution of financial crimes.
- 18.** Which Indian state has launched the first-of-its-kind village-level survey for documentation and geo-tagging of antiquities?
- (a) Tamil Nadu
 - (b) Rajasthan
 - (c) Maharashtra
 - (d) Karnataka
- 19.** Consider the following statements regarding the Jal Jeevan Mission:
1. Launched in 2019, it is a centrally sponsored scheme.
 2. It aims to provide tap connections to about 16 crore urban households to achieve saturation coverage by 2030.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 20.** What does "Safe Harbour Protection" under the Information Technology Act, 2000 imply?
- (a) It allows online platforms to censor any content without accountability.
 - (b) It provides legal immunity to social media platforms for third-party user-generated content.
 - (c) It allows the government to permanently ban any online intermediary.
 - (d) It permits intermediaries to charge users extra for protecting their data online.

21. The SVAMITVA Scheme, recently in news, primarily aims to:
- Digitally connect all Panchayats with high-speed internet
 - Provide rural households with direct cash transfer for housing improvement
 - Offer legal ownership of residential property in villages using drone technology
 - Promote organic farming and sustainable agriculture in rural areas
22. With reference to the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), consider the following statements:
- The NMNF is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
 - It aims to convert one crore farmers to natural farming practices by organizing them into 15,000 clusters.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
23. SMILE Scheme, recently seen in the news, primarily aims to:
- Promote digital literacy among rural youth.
 - Empower women through microfinance and entrepreneurship training.
 - Provide free education to SC/ST students in higher education.
 - Rehabilitate persons engaged in begging and support transgender persons.
24. With reference to the 'Aquaculture Insurance Scheme', consider the following statements:
- It was introduced under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY).
 - It aims to mitigate risks and provide financial security to marginalized farmers engaged in aquaculture.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister launched the '**Zero Poverty - P4**' initiative under **Swarnadra 2047 vision**.

- Aim:** To ensure poverty-free Andhra Pradesh by **2029**.
- 'P4' stands for 'Public, Private, People Partnership', and achieving 'zero poverty'** is one of the (10 principles) of Swarna Andhra-2047.
- Key Benefits:**
 - House sites and house construction.

- Sanitation facilities and 100% tap water connections.
- LPG connections, reliable power supply, and rooftop solar incentives.
- High-speed internet for all households.
- Promotion of entrepreneurship in every family.
- **Target Beneficiaries:** Economically weaker families, termed 'Bangaru Kutumbam' (golden families).

2. (b)

Developed collaboratively by NITI Aayog and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), the portal offers comprehensive data on social, economic, and fiscal parameters of Indian states spanning over three decades. This initiative aims to facilitate an understanding of macro, fiscal, demographic, and socio-economic trends through easily accessible and user-friendly data, thereby addressing the ongoing need for consolidated sectoral information in one place.

3. (c)

In News: As India's economic structure evolves, the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) framework requires a comprehensive review to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Statement 1 is correct

- **Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Norms:** It was initiated in 1972 on the recommendations of the **Banking Commission**, as part of a larger effort to democratize access to credit.
- It is **mandated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**, all scheduled commercial banks are required to allocate a specified percentage (**currently 40% for domestic banks**) of their **Adjusted Net Bank Credit** to designated sectors, like:
 - Agriculture, Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs), education, housing, social infrastructure, and renewable energy.

Statement 2 is correct

- Recently, RBI has introduced **updated guidelines** for PSL, **effective from April 1, 2025**, with the aim to enhance credit flow to critical sectors of the economy while promoting financial inclusion and sustainable development. These include:
 - **Educational Loans:** ₹25 lakh (earlier ₹20 lakh)
 - **Artisans and Women Borrowers:** ₹2 lakh (earlier ₹1 lakh)
 - **Trans-genders and Joint Liability Groups** are eligible for loans under PSL, and others.

4. (c)

Context

- The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj, in collaboration with the Government of Jharkhand, organized a national-level event under the initiative 'Hamari Parampara Hamari Virasat' in New Delhi.
 - The event also marked the 150th Birth Anniversary Year of Bhagwan Birsa Munda (Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh).

About the Hamari Parampara Hamari Virasat

- **Launched:** On **26th January 2025** by the Department of Panchayati Raj, Government of Jharkhand, with support from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the campaign has seen participation from over **3,000 villages** pledging to preserve traditional self-governance and cultural practices.
- **Objective:** To preserve, enhance, and transmit to future generations the cultural heritage, folk songs, festivals, and worship practices integral to the traditional governance systems of various Scheduled Tribe communities in Scheduled Areas.

The program aims to document the vibrant history and cultural practices of villages across Jharkhand. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

- **Alignment with PESA Act (1996):** This initiative aligns closely with the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA Act), which empowers Gram Sabhas in Scheduled Areas to safeguard tribal customs, traditions, and self-governance. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

5. (b)

Context

- The Stand-Up India Scheme, launched on 5th April 2016, has completed nine years of its implementation.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Stand-Up India Scheme is an initiative of the **Ministry of Finance** aimed at promoting entrepreneurship among **Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and women**.

- The scheme facilitates bank loans ranging from **₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore** for setting up **greenfield enterprises** in manufacturing, services, trading, or activities allied to agriculture.

Statement 2 is correct: The borrower must be SC/ST and/or a woman entrepreneur, aged above **18 years**.

- In case of non-individual enterprises, **at least 51%** of the shareholding and controlling stake must be held by either an SC/ST or a woman entrepreneur.

6. (c)

Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved the second phase of the Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) to boost development in strategic border areas.

About Vibrant Villages Programme-II (VVP-II)

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** (100% Centre-funded) with a total outlay of **₹6,839 crore**. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- **Implementation and Timeline:** It will be implemented in select strategic villages across the following States/UTs till FY 2028–29:
 - Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir (UT), Ladakh (UT), Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- **Objective:** The programme aims to create better living conditions and adequate livelihood opportunities to ensure prosperous and safe borders, control trans-border crime, assimilate the border population with the nation, and inculcate them '**as eyes and ears of the border guarding forces**' — vital for internal security. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Key Features:**
 - Infrastructure development within the village or a cluster of villages,
 - Support for value chain development (via cooperatives, SHGs, etc.),
 - Border-specific outreach activities,
 - Education infrastructure like SMART classes,
 - Tourism circuit development and
 - Works/projects to create diverse & sustainable livelihood opportunities.

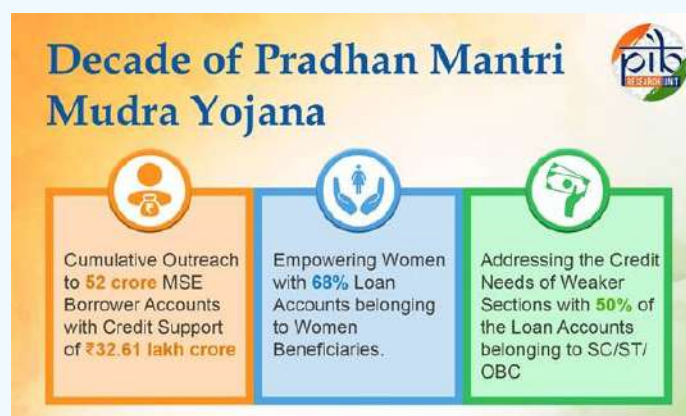
7. (c)

About the Scheme

- **Launched:** April 2015
- **Objective:** To provide collateral-free institutional credit to non-corporate, non-farm micro and small enterprises.
- **Tagline:** Funding the Unfunded
- **Implementation:** Through MUDRA (Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency).
- **Target:** Small businesses in manufacturing, trading, processing, and services—a major employment segment after agriculture.
 - Collateral-free credit up to **₹20 lakh** is provided by Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) i.e. Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) and Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs).
- **Loan Categories under PMMY:**



- **Achievements (As of FY25)**
 - Loans sanctioned: Over 52 crore
 - Loan value: ₹32.61 lakh crore



8. (c)

Both the statements are correct: National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** in **2019** with the objective of improving air quality in **131 Cities across 24 States/UTs**.

- NCAP aims to achieve up to a **40% reduction** in PM10 levels or to meet **national standards (60 µg/m³)** by **2025-26**.
- **City specific targets** ranging from **4-15% have been given** for reduction in annual PM10 concentrations by implementing city specific action plans.

9. (a)

[SOL] In News: Recently, the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** has unveiled the first-ever **Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) Baseline Report** for the **fiscal year 2022–23**.

Statement 1 is correct

- **Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI)** is a **composite Index** & has been compiled based on 435 unique local Indicators (331 mandatory & 104 optional) consisting of 566 unique data points across 9 themes of **Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)**.
- It reflects India's commitment to achieving the **SDG 2030 Agenda** through participatory, bottom-up development.

Statement 2 is not correct

- It is aligned with the **National Indicator Framework (NIF)** of the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.
- It is a collaborative effort of various **Union Ministries, State Governments and UN Agencies**.

10. (b)

Civil Registration System (CRS) App

- The mobile app, prepared by the **Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (Ministry of Home Affairs)**, is expected to significantly reduce the time required for the registration of births and deaths.
- According to the **Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023**, all reported births and deaths in the country occurring from **October 1, 2023** are to be digitally registered.
- **The digital birth certificates** will be a single document to prove the date of birth for various services such as admission to educational institutions, government jobs and marriage registration.
- The centralized database will also help update the **National Population Register (NPR)**, ration cards, property registration and electoral rolls.

11. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: STELLAR is designed for integrated planning across generation, transmission, storage, and demand response.

Statement 2 is correct: It was developed by CEA in collaboration with The Lantau Group (TLG) and supported by ADB.

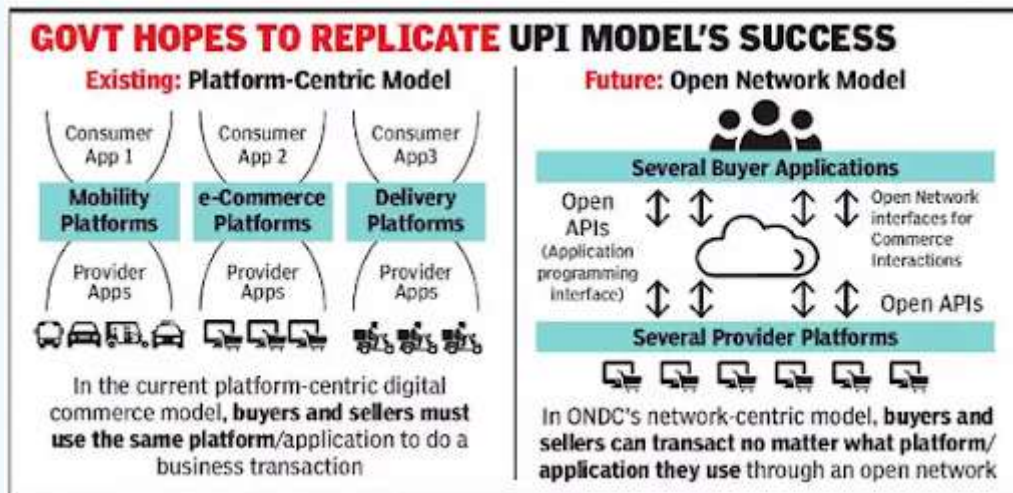
Statement 3 is not correct: STELLAR does not provide real-time pricing for consumers; rather, it focuses on resource adequacy and system planning, not tariff design.

12. (c)

Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC). It is an open-source initiative by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Aim: To promote an open, inclusive, and interoperable e-commerce network that connects buyers, sellers, and service providers across platforms.

To provide equal opportunities to all kinds of sellers – from local kirana stores to large retailers – by removing platform-centric limitations.



13. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: ONDC isn't run by the Ministry of Electronics and IT, it comes under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Statement 2 is correct: ONDC is trying to shake things up in e-commerce by making the system open and fair — kind of like how UPI made payments simple across apps.

Statement 3 is correct: ONDC levels the playing field, so small neighbourhood stores can sell online just like big brands, without being tied to any one app or website.

14. (a)

In News

- The CBI arrested four people in connection with a 'Digital Arrests' fraud, as part of 'Operation Chakra V,' after searches at 12 locations.

Operation CHAKRA

- It is an initiative of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which was launched in 2022.
- It is a global initiative supported by INTERPOL to combat and dismantle organized cyber-enabled financial crime networks.
- These crimes, including impersonation, phishing, romance, and lottery scams, involve sophisticated tactics such as data harvesting, customized messaging, money mules, and call center operations.

Objectives and Need

- The criminals operate globally, targeting victims across various jurisdictions and causing significant financial losses.
- The operation aims to coordinate law enforcement efforts internationally to address the growing threat of cyber-enabled financial crimes.

15. (c)

Context

A study found that the Surat Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) in Gujarat, delivered both environmental and economic benefits.

About

- The Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) in Surat, launched in **2019**, is the **world's first market-based trading system for particulate matter (PM)** emissions and India's first pollution trading scheme of any kind.
- It represents a **cap-and-trade system**, where total emissions are capped and emission permits can be traded among industrial units.
- It was developed by the **Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCB)**, in collaboration with the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago.

16. (c)

Context

- Silkyara Tunnel in Uttarakhand will now be named after **Baba Baukhnag**.

About

- The Silkyara Tunnel is a **bi-directional, double-lane tunnel** with a total length of **4.531 kilometres**.
- It is located on the **Yamunotri National Highway** in **Uttarkashi district** of Uttarakhand.
- The tunnel is being constructed at an estimated cost of **₹1,384 crore** and is a key component of the **Char Dham All-Weather Road Project**.
- Once operational, the tunnel will reduce the distance between **Gangotri and Yamunotri** by approximately **25 kilometres**.

17. (c)

Option (a) is not correct: FIU-IND is an independent body reporting directly to the Economic Intelligence Council (EIC) headed by the Finance Minister.

Option (b) is not correct: FIU-IND reports to the Economic Intelligence Council (EIC) headed by the Finance Minister, not the Ministry of Home Affairs, although its work contributes to national security.

Option (c) is correct: FIU-IND is the central national agency for receiving, processing, analyzing, and disseminating information related to suspect financial transactions.

Option (d) is not correct: FIU-IND's role is primarily intelligence-focused. Investigation and prosecution are carried out by other enforcement agencies, which FIU-IND supports with its analysis.

18. (d)

Context

- **Karnataka** has embarked upon a village-level survey for documentation of antiquities, an initiative to be the first-of-its-kind in the country.

About

- It was announced by the **Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage**, during **World Heritage Day celebrations**.
- The survey is seen as a foundational step in safeguarding Karnataka's archaeological heritage.
- The model is expected to be exemplary for other States.
- It includes documentation of inscriptions, sculptures, and monuments.
- Each antiquity will be **geo-tagged**, making **Karnataka the first state with such a detailed inventory**.

19. (a)

Context

- Jal Shakti Ministry seeks Rs 2.79 lakh crore more for **Jal Jeevan Mission**.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- Launched by the Prime Minister in **2019, it is a centrally sponsored scheme**.
- **Aim:** To provide tap connections to about **16 crore rural households** to achieve **saturation coverage by 2028 (earlier 2024)**.
- **Mandatory components include:**
 - Source sustainability
 - Greywater management
 - Water conservation
 - Rainwater harvesting
- **Mission Objectives:**
 - **Empowering Women:** Reduces the burden on mothers and sisters of fetching water.
 - Improves health, education, and socio-economic status of women.
 - **Ease of Living:** Enhances the dignity and quality of life of rural families.
- **Community Approach:**
 - Focus on Information, Education, and Communication (IEC).
 - Aims to create a Jan Andolan (people's movement) for water.

20. (b)**Context**

- Under the **Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)-led Sahyog portal**, the government has issued 130 content notices to online platforms like Google, YouTube, Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft in the last 6 months.

About

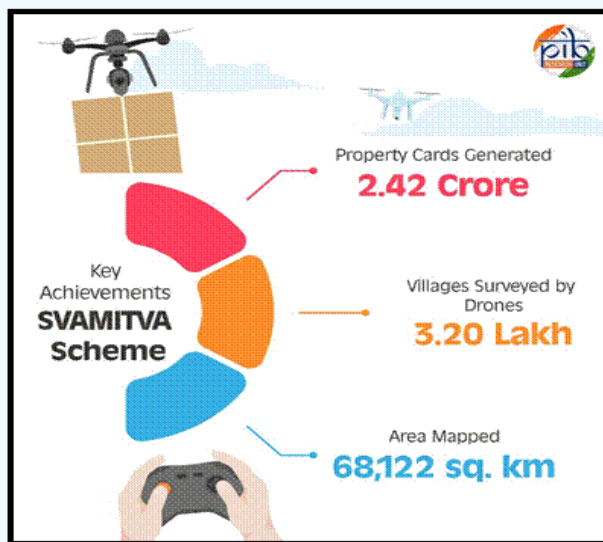
- These notices effectively act as **content blocking orders** and are sent under **Section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology Act, 2000**.
 - These **fall outside Section 69(A) of the Information Technology Act**, which has been commonly used to issue online censorship orders.
- As per Section 79(3)(b) of the IT Act, online intermediaries **can lose their safe harbour protections** if they fail to block access to content which has been flagged by an "appropriate" government agency.
 - **Safe harbor protections** provide legal immunity to social media platforms for third-party user-generated content.

21. (c)**In News**

- Recently, SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) Scheme completed 5 Years.

About SVAMITVA Scheme

- SVAMITVA Scheme was launched on April 24, 2020 on National Panchayati Raj Day. It is a **Central Sector scheme** of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.



- It aims to provide **legal ownership papers** for houses and land in villages using drones and mapping technology.
- This helps villagers **access loans, resolve disputes, and support better planning**.
- It is being implemented by the Survey of India with National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICS) as the tech partner.
- It has a budget of ₹566.23 crores from FY 2020-21 to 2024-25, with an extension to FY 2025-26.

22. (b)

In News: The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has come up with the guidelines for setting up of bio-input resource centres (BRC) under the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF).

Statement 1 is not correct: The National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare. It was launched in 2024 with the objective of promoting nature-based, sustainable systems of farming.

Statement 2 is correct: The NMNF aims to promote natural farming among one crore farmers by organizing them into 15,000 clusters across willing Gram Panchayats.

23. (d)

Context

- As per the Union Social Justice Ministry, the **SMILE scheme has identified fewer than 10,000 people engaged in begging**.

About

- **Scheme Name:** Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE).
- **Launch Year:** 2022.
- **Implementing Ministry:** Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 - One of its components was the sub-scheme to **identify, profile, and rehabilitate individuals** engaged in the act of begging with their consent.
 - The other component of the scheme is for the **empowerment of transgender persons**.
- **Objectives:** Make religious, tourist, and historical urban spaces **"beggary-free"**.
 - Rehabilitate at least 8,000 individuals **over FY 2023–24 to FY 2025–26**.
- **Implementation Phases:** **Phase 1:** Began in 30 cities (e.g., Ayodhya, Amritsar, New Delhi, Kolkata, Lucknow).
 - **Phase 2:** Expanded to 50 more cities in the second year.

24. (c)

In News: Recently, the Coastal States Fisheries Meet of 2025 unveiled the **first-ever aquaculture insurance scheme**, aiming to enhance the socio-economic status of fisher communities and promote sustainable practices in the fisheries sector.

Statement 1 is correct

- The **Aquaculture Insurance Scheme** was introduced under the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana (PM-MKSSY)**, a sub-scheme of the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)**.

Statement 2 is correct

- The **Aquaculture Insurance Scheme** aims to mitigate risks and provide financial security to marginalized farmers engaged in aquaculture.
- It is designed to address challenges such as natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and market fluctuations.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. Exercise Tiger Triumph is conducted between India and which of the following countries?
 - (a) Australia
 - (b) United Kingdom
 - (c) United States
 - (d) France
2. The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in Exercise INIOCHOS-25, a prestigious multinational air exercise hosted by which of the following countries?
 - (a) Greece
 - (b) Italy
 - (c) Türkiye
 - (d) France
3. With reference to the airspace regulations, consider the following statements:
 1. Every country has exclusive rights over the airspace above its territory.
 2. Chicago Convention (1944) establishes rules for airspace sovereignty and international flight 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
4. Exercise INDRA 2025, recently seen in the news, is:
 - (a) A joint military exercise between India and the USA
 - (b) A trilateral naval exercise between India, Russia, and Japan
 - (c) A bilateral India-Russia naval exercise
 - (d) A joint Air Exercise between India and Japan
5. Mitra Shakti, is a Joint Military Exercise between India and which one of the following countries?
 - (a) Nepal
 - (b) Bangladesh
 - (c) Myanmar
 - (d) Sri Lanka
6. The primary objective of Project Varsha is to develop:
 - (a) A network of offshore patrol vessels along India's coastline.
 - (b) A secure underground base to house a fleet of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs).

- (c) An advanced research facility for developing indigenous naval technology.
- (d) A training academy for naval personnel specializing in submarine operations.

7. Exercise Sampriti, is a Joint Military Exercise between India and which one of the following countries?
- (a) Nepal
 - (b) Bangladesh
 - (c) Myanmar
 - (d) Sri Lanka
8. The primary strategic advantage offered by the 'Gaurav' precision-guided glide bomb is its capability to:
- (a) Engage multiple targets simultaneously with a single launch.
 - (b) Operate effectively in high-altitude, mountainous terrains.
 - (c) Strike land targets from stand-off distances, beyond the range of enemy air defenses.
 - (d) Achieve hypersonic speeds to evade interception.
9. Which of the following countries are participating in the first Africa India Key Maritime Engagement (AIKEYME) exercise?
1. Libya
 2. Comoros
 3. Madagascar
 4. Egypt
 5. Seychelles
 6. Kenya
 7. Djibouti

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2, 4 and 5 only
 - (b) 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7 only
 - (c) 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
10. DUSTLIK-VI is a Joint Military Exercise between India and which one of the following countries?
- (a) Kazakhstan
 - (b) Uzbekistan
 - (c) Kyrgyzstan
 - (d) Turkmenistan
11. The Taurus KEPD-350, recently in news, is best described as which of the following?
- (a) Long-range cruise missile developed by Germany
 - (b) Short-range ballistic missile developed by Israel
 - (c) Surface-to-air missile developed by France
 - (d) Hypersonic glide vehicle developed by Russia
12. Exercise Desert Flag is an annual multinational air combat exercise hosted by:
- (a) United Arab Emirates
 - (b) India

(c) Qatar

(d) Egypt

13. India conducts the joint exercises — Sada Tanseeq and Al Mohed Al Hindi — with which of the following countries?

(a) Saudi Arabia

(b) Oman

(c) United Arab Emirates

(d) Egypt

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Context: The 4th edition of **Exercise Tiger Triumph**, the bilateral Tri-Service India-US Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise, has commenced at **Visakhapatnam (India)**.

About

- Launched in **2019**, the exercise is aimed at developing interoperability for conducting HADR operations and for the formulation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to establish a Combined Coordination Center (CCC).
- This would enable rapid and smooth coordination between Indian and US Joint Task Forces (JTF) during exercises and in times of crises or contingencies.

2. (a)

Context

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in the **Exercise INIOCHOS-25**, a prestigious multinational air exercise hosted by **Greece's Hellenic Air Force**.

Exercise INIOCHOS

- It is a **biennial** multinational air exercise that integrates multiple air and surface assets from **fifteen countries** under realistic combat scenarios. The exercise is designed to simulate modern-day air warfare challenges.
- IAF's participation in INIOCHOS-25 reflects its commitment to global defence cooperation and operational excellence.

3. (c)

In News: The Pahalgam terror attack has escalated tensions between India and Pakistan, leading to a series of retaliatory measures by both countries, including the airspace closure by Pakistan.

Statement 1 is correct

- **Airspace** refers to the portion of the atmosphere controlled by a country, where it regulates the movement of aircraft. Its closure is governed by both domestic regulations and international frameworks.
- **Each country** has **exclusive rights over the airspace** above its territory, as defined by its **civil aviation authority**.
- In India, the **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** oversees airspace management and closures during emergencies.

Statement 2 is correct

- **Chicago Convention (1944):** It establishes rules for airspace sovereignty and international flight operations, under the **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)**.

- **Article 1** recognizes the **complete and exclusive sovereignty of nations** over their airspace.

4. (c)

Context

- The 14th edition of the India-Russia bilateral naval exercise, **INDRA 2025**, was held from 28 March to 2 April 2025.

About

- The exercise included a **wide range of activities and structured drills** designed to enhance interoperability towards countering common **maritime threats**.
- The **INDRA series of exercises** have been a cornerstone of **India-Russia Defence** relations since its **inception in 2003** and both countries recognise the importance of maritime security and the need for a collaborative approach to counter common threats and concerns.

5. (d)

Context

- Prime Minister Modi, during his visit to Sri Lanka, held a significant meeting with Sri Lankan President Anura Dissanayake in Colombo.

India and Sri Lanka Relations

- **Trade Relations: India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA)** in 2000 contributed significantly towards the expansion of trade between the two countries.
 - India has traditionally been among **Sri Lanka's largest trade partners** and Sri Lanka remains among the largest trade partners of India in the SAARC.
 - India is also one of the largest contributors to **Foreign Direct Investment** in Sri Lanka.
- **Maritime Security and Defence Cooperation:** In 2011, a decision was taken to establish the **Colombo Security Conclave** which aims to further promote maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.
 - India and Sri Lanka conduct a joint Military exercise named **'Mitra Shakti'**, Trilateral Maritime Exercise **"Dosti"**, and a Naval exercise named **SLINEX**.

6. (b)

[SOL] Project Varsha is a strategic and classified initiative by the Indian Navy to establish INS Varsha, a state-of-the-art naval base near the village of Rambilli in Andhra Pradesh, about 50 km south of Visakhapatnam. This base is primarily intended to house India's growing fleet of nuclear-powered submarines, including ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs).

A key feature of the project is its underground docking facilities, designed to allow submarines to discreetly enter and exit the base without detection from satellites or aerial surveillance. Project Varsha forms a critical part of India's broader strategy to strengthen its sea-based nuclear deterrence, especially in response to growing Chinese naval presence in the Indian Ocean.

7. (b)

Context

- **India has formally revoked the transshipment facility** that allowed Bangladesh to export goods to third countries via Indian land customs stations, ports, and airports.

India Bangladesh Relations

- **Independence and Liberation War:** India played a crucial role in Bangladesh's independence in 1971, supporting the Bengali nationalist movement against Pakistan's rule.
 - This historic event laid the foundation for strong bilateral ties.

- **Land Boundary Agreement (LBA):** In 2015, both countries resolved long-standing border issues by exchanging enclaves and simplifying their international border, which had remained unresolved since partition in 1947.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Both countries are active members of regional organizations like SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), promoting regional integration and cooperation.
- **Various Joint exercises** take place between the two countries:
 - **Exercise Sampriti** (Army) and
 - **Exercise Milan** (Navy).

8. (c)

In News: DRDO successfully conducted the Release Trials of **Long-Range Glide Bomb (LRGB) 'Gaurav'** from the Su-30 MKI aircraft.

Long-Range Glide Bomb (LRGB) 'Gaurav'

- LRGB 'Gaurav' is a 1,000 kg class glide bomb. It is a precision-guided, long-range glide bomb developed to strike land targets from stand-off distances, i.e., beyond enemy air defence range.
- It is designed and developed indigenously by Research Centre Imarat, Armament Research and Development Establishment and Integrated Test Range, Chandipur.
- The trials successfully demonstrated a range close to 100 kms with pin-point accuracy. The stated range capability is between 30 km and 150 km.
- **Importance:** The development of LRGB will further enhance the capabilities of the Armed Forces to a great extent.

9. (b)

In News : The first edition of the large-scale multilateral exercise Africa India Key Maritime Engagement (AIKEYME) is being held from 13 to 18 April 2025.

- AIKEYME, which means 'Unity' in Sanskrit, is planned for six days from 13 to 18 Apr 25 and will include participation from **Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar**, Mauritius, Mozambique, **Seychelles** and South Africa, alongside the co-hosts India and Tanzania.
- It aligns with India's vision of Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions (**MAHASAGAR**).

10. (b)

Context

- The 6th edition of India-Uzbekistan Joint Military Exercise DUSTLIK commenced in Pune, Maharashtra.

About the Exercise

- Initiated in **2019**, the exercise 'DUSTLIK' — between the Indian Army and Uzbekistan Army — is an **annual training event** conducted alternatively in **India and Uzbekistan**.
 - The last edition was conducted in Termez District, Uzbekistan in 2024.
- DUSTLIK -VI will enable both sides to share best practices in **Tactics, Techniques** and Procedures of conducting **Joint Sub Conventional operations**.

11. (a)

Context

- Russia has said it will view any Ukrainian strike using German Taurus missiles as "direct participation" by Germany in the war.

What is Taurus Missile?

- The **Taurus KEPD-350** is a **long-range, cruise missile**, known to be one of the most modern weapon systems used by the German military, the Bundeswehr.
- **Speed & Range:** It is capable of travelling at a speed of up to **1,170 kilometres per hour**, and can reach targets as far as **500 kilometres** away.
 - It can travel at an altitude of just **35 metres**, making it nearly impossible to be detected by radar systems.
 - It has day and night, **all-weather capabilities**.
- The system is a **Mobile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) Category II weapon**, designed to penetrate thick, hardened air defences via a very low-level terrain following flight.
- **Navigation systems:** It uses four independent navigation systems to stay on track. It has a **satellite-supported GPS system**, which is protected against attempts to jam it.

12. (a)**Context**

- A contingent of the Indian Air Force reached Al Dhafra Air Base in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to participate in **Exercise Desert Flag-10**.

About the Exercise

- Exercise Desert Flag is an **annual multinational** air combat exercise hosted by the **UAE Air Force**.
- This year, it brings together the air forces of Australia, Bahrain, France, Germany, **India**, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Republic of Korea, Turkey, **UAE**, United Kingdom, and the United States.
- The **aim of the exercise** is to undertake complex and diverse fighter engagements, with exchange of operational knowledge and best practices with some of the most capable Air Forces in the world.

13. (a)**Context**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a state visit to Saudi Arabia.

Brief on India and Saudi Arabia Relations

- **Political Relations:** The two countries established diplomatic relations in **1947**.
- **Economic Relations:** India is Saudi Arabia's second-largest trade partner; Saudi Arabia is India's fourth-largest trade partner.
- **Defence Cooperation:** India and Saudi Arabia are focusing on strengthening defence ties to achieve self-reliance and mutual growth in defence manufacturing.
 - **Under Vision 2030**, Saudi Arabia is aiming to transition from a defence consumer to a defence producer, with a target to localise 50% of its spending.
 - **Saudi Arabia signed a \$250 mn contract** for ammunition from Munitions India Limited, a Defence Public Sector Undertaking.
 - Saudi Arabia has procured the **155mm Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS)** from Bharat Forge.

Joint exercises:

- **Sada Tanseeq:** The inaugural Army exercise held in 2024.
- **Al Mohed Al Hindi:** Bilateral naval exercise initiated in 2022.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. With reference to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. (a)DB was established in 1966 with 120 members.
 2. The headquarters of ADB is located in New York.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
2. With reference to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), consider the following statements:
 1. It was founded in 1889 as the first multilateral political organization in the world.
 2. It defends the human rights of parliamentarians through a dedicated committee made up of MPs from around the world.
 3. It is funded mainly by its Members and has headquarters in Switzerland.How many of the above statements are correct?
 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
3. With reference to the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), consider the following statements:
 1. Thailand and Myanmar are among the founding members of the grouping.
 2. (d)uring the 6th summit, the chairmanship of the regional grouping was handed over to Bangladesh for the next two 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
4. Which of the following countries were part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)?
 - (a) United States, Canada, and Brazil
 - (b) United States, Mexico, and Canada
 - (c) Canada, Mexico, and Argentina
 - (d) United States, Mexico, and Chile

5. With reference to The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), consider the following statements:
1. Nicaragua, Eswatini, India, Somalia, and Liberia are a part of the Alliance.
 2. It aims for conservation of seven big cats namely Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. With reference to the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN), consider the following statements:
1. It is a process within the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) aimed at reforming the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
 2. It seeks to expand and restructure the UNSC to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. With reference to the 'Arctic Council', consider the following statements:
1. It was established through the Ottawa Declaration in 1996.
 2. India has been an Observer in the Arctic Council since its inception.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. With reference to the 'Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)', consider the following statements:
1. India controls the rivers—Beas, Ravi, Sutlej, and Pakistan controls the Rivers—Indus, Chenab, Jhelum.
 2. It lacks an exit clause, meaning neither India nor Pakistan can legally abrogate it unilaterally.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
9. The SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme was conceived following a decision made at which SAARC Summit?
- (a) 2nd SAARC Summit, Bangalore (1986)
 - (b) 3rd SAARC Summit, Kathmandu (1987)
 - (c) 4th SAARC Summit, Islamabad (1988)
 - (d) 5th SAARC Summit, Male (1990)

10. Which of the following was NOT a direct outcome or provision of the Shimla Agreement of 1972?
- The withdrawal of Indian troops from Pakistani territory occupied during the 1971 war.
 - The release of Pakistani prisoners of war held by India.
 - The establishment of the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir.
 - International mediation for resolving Indo-Pak disputes
11. Which of the following statements accurately reflects the historical development of the World Economic Forum (WEF)?
- Founded in 1987 by Klaus Schwab, it was initially focused on addressing global environmental issues.
 - Established in 1971 as the European Management Forum, its focus broadened in 1987 to become the World Economic Forum.
 - Originally known as the Global Economic Initiative, it was renamed the World Economic Forum to emphasize European participation.
 - A United Nations initiative from its inception in 1971, it adopted the name World Economic Forum in 1987.
12. With reference to the Bandung Conference, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- The conference marked the emergence of the Global South, opposing colonialism, imperialism, and neocolonialism in all forms.
 - The conference served as a precursor to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
13. Which among the following countries are a part of the BRICS?
- Indonesia
 - Saudi Arabia
 - Iran
 - (a)rgentina
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1, 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 2 and 4 only
 - 1, 2, 3 and 4

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

Asian Development Bank

- ADB is a regional development bank established in **1966** for Social and Economic Development.
 - It has **68 members**.
- It is a **multilateral development bank**, which seeks to help its developing member countries to reduce poverty and improve their people's quality of life through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth and regional integration.
- Headquarters:** Manila, Philippines.

2. (c)

In News : Lok Sabha Speaker, Shri Om Birla is leading a Parliamentary Delegation to the 150th Assembly of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), being held in Tashkent from 5 to 9 April, 2025.

Statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct : The IPU is the global organization of national parliaments. It was founded in **1889 as the first multilateral political organization in the world**, encouraging cooperation and dialogue between all nations. Today, the IPU comprises 181 national Member Parliaments and 15 regional parliamentary bodies. It promotes peace, democracy and sustainable development. It helps parliaments become stronger, younger, greener, more innovative and gender-balanced. **It also defends the human rights of parliamentarians through a dedicated committee made up of MPs from around the world.**

IPU is primarily run by Members out of public funds. **Headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.**

3. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: It is a regional cooperation organization formed in **1997** with the signing of the **Bangkok Declaration**.

- It unites South and **Southeast Asian nations bordering the Bay of Bengal.**
- **Founding Members (1997):** Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand.
- **Current Members:** It comprises seven member states, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, **Myanmar**, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Statement 2 is correct: PM Modi attended the **6th BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Summit, hosted by Thailand, which is the current chair.

- **Theme: “BIMSTEC: Prosperous, Resilient, and Open”**
- **Focus on** shared growth amid global uncertainties.
- The **chairmanship** of the regional grouping was **handed over to Bangladesh for next 2 years.**

4. (b)

Context

- In an effort to advance a trade agreement with the United States and avoid 26% reciprocal tariffs, India’s Ministry of Commerce and Industry has expanded its NAFTA division.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

- The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was a trilateral trade pact among the **United States, Canada, and Mexico**, effective from **1994 to 2020**.
- It created one of the world’s largest free trade zones, eliminating tariffs and reducing trade barriers to promote economic integration.
- **In 2020**, NAFTA was replaced by the **United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)** with updated provisions on digital trade, labor standards, and environmental regulations.

5. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The Government of India and the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) signed the Headquarters Agreement.

- **The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** was launched by the PM in **2023**, during an event **“Commemorating 50 years of Project Tiger” at Mysuru.**
- The IBCA became a legal entity after **five countries**—Nicaragua, Eswatini, India, Somalia, and Liberia—had signed the Framework Agreement to formally become members of the IBCA.
 - 27 countries have agreed to join the IBCA.

- The IBCA primarily **aims for conservation of seven big cats** namely **Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma**.
- **Objectives:**
 - Facilitation of collaboration and synergy amongst the concerned stakeholders,
 - consolidation of successful conservation practices;
 - and expertise to achieve conservation of big cats around the globe.

6. (c)

In News: Recently, the **Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN)** Chairperson acknowledged India's strong position in global affairs, and pitched for a permanent seat in the **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**.

Statement 1 is correct

- **Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN)** is a **process within the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** aimed at **reforming the UNSC**.

Statement 2 is correct

- It seeks to **expand and restructure the UNSC** to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities.
- It aims to ensure fair representation for all UN member states.

7. (a)

In News:

Statement 1 is correct

- **Arctic Council:** It was established in 1996 through the **Ottawa Declaration**.
- It is composed of eight nations (U.S., Canada, Russia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland), and aims to promote environmental protection and scientific cooperation.

Statement 2 is not correct

- **India** has been an **Observer in the Arctic Council** since 2013, and can advocate for equitable resource sharing and sustainable development in the region.

8. (c)

In News: Recently, the **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)**, chaired by Prime Minister of India, held the **Indus Waters Treaty (1960)** with Pakistan '**in abeyance with immediate effect**' in the aftermath of the terror strike in Pahalagam.

- **According to the Indus Water Treaty (IWT), India** controls the Eastern Rivers (Beas, Ravi, Sutlej), and **Pakistan** controls the Western Rivers (Indus, Chenab, Jhelum).
- Under the IWT, **India** received rights **over 20%** of the system's water, while **Pakistan received 80%**.
 - India is allowed **limited use of western rivers** for non-consumptive purposes like hydropower, but cannot block or significantly alter flows.

Statement 2 is correct

- IWT **lacks an exit clause**, meaning **neither India nor Pakistan** can legally abrogate it unilaterally. The **Treaty has no end date**, and any modification requires the consent of both parties.

9. (c)

In News: The Indian government has announced that Pakistan nationals will not be permitted to travel to India under the **SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES)**.

SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme

Launched: 1992

Origin: Based on a decision taken at the 4th SAARC Summit in Islamabad (1988)

Objective: Provides visa-free travel to persons from 24 designated categories across SAARC nations

- To promote people-to-people contact
- To facilitate regional cooperation among SAARC member states

10. (d)

The Shimla Agreement (1972) was signed between India and Pakistan following the **1971 Bangladesh Liberation War** with the aim of laying the groundwork for peaceful bilateral relations.

Provisions and Outcomes of the Shimla Agreement:

- Withdrawal of Indian troops from Pakistani territory occupied during the war
- Release of Pakistani POWs and India eventually repatriated over 90,000 prisoners of war.
- The 1971 ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir was re-designated as the Line of Control (LoC).
- The Shimla Agreement explicitly stated that all disputes between India and Pakistan, including Kashmir, shall be resolved bilaterally **without the intervention of any third party or international mediation.**

11. (b)

About World Economic Forum (WEF)

- **Founded in:** 1971 as the European Management Forum.
- **Renamed:** Became the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 1987 to reflect a broader global focus.
- **Founder:** Klaus Schwab, a German economist, who also pioneered the concept of “stakeholder capitalism” — the idea that companies should serve all stakeholders, not just shareholders.
- **HQ:** Switzerland
- **Aims and Objectives:** To improve the state of the world through public-private cooperation.
 - Address global economic, social, and environmental challenges.
 - Foster collaboration among governments, businesses, and civil society.

Major Functions and Activities

- **Global Dialogues:** Hosts the prestigious Annual Meeting in Davos, where world leaders, CEOs, economists, activists, and academics gather to discuss urgent global issues.
- **Publications and Rankings:** Produces influential reports and indices, including:
 - Global Competitiveness Report
 - Global Gender Gap Report
 - Future of Jobs Report
 - Energy Transition Index

Option (a) is not correct: It was founded in 1971 (not 1987) and initially focused on European economic issues, not specifically on global environmental issues.

Option (c) is not correct: It was never called the Global Economic Initiative.

Option (d) is not correct: WEF is a private, independent organization, not a UN initiative.

12. (c)

Context

- This year marks the 70th anniversary of the historic Bandung Conference held in Indonesia in 1955.

Bandung Conference

- **The Bandung Conference** brought together **twenty-nine** newly independent Asian and African countries.
- **The objective** of the conference was to deliberate on the common challenges faced by decolonized nations and to assert their collective voice in a world order dominated by the Cold War superpowers.
- The conference marked the emergence of the **Global South** as an influential grouping in international politics.
 - It aimed to promote **Afro-Asian economic and cultural cooperation** and strongly opposed colonialism, imperialism, and neocolonialism in all forms.
- The conference served as a precursor to the **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**.

13. (b)

BRICS is an acronym that refers to a group of **five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.**

- **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates** have joined **BRICS** as **new full members.**
- The term was originally coined by economist **Jim O'Neill** in **2001.**
- BRICS brings together five of the largest developing countries of the world, representing around **41%** of the global population, around **24%** of the global GDP and around **16%** of global trade.
- **Economic growth:** All members are projected to grow in 2024, with rates ranging from 1.1% to 6.1% (IMF).



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1. Which among the following planets is known as the “moon champion”?
 - (a) Jupiter
 - (b) Saturn
 - (c) Neptune
 - (d) Uranus
2. With reference to the ‘Axiom Space Mission’, consider the following statements:
 1. It lays groundwork for a commercial space station.
 2. It aims to focus on biological processes in microgravity.Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. With reference to the Diabetes, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a chronic medical condition where the body has trouble regulating blood sugar (glucose) levels.
 2. In type 2 the body doesn’t produce insulin at all, and it typically develops in childhood or adolescence.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Consider the following statements regarding Rare Earth Elements (REEs):
 1. REEs include 15 lanthanides along with scandium and yttrium.
 2. They are typically hard, brittle metals with low reactivity.
 3. REEs are crucial for defense, electronics, and green technologies.Which of the above statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3

5. CAPTCHA is used primarily to;
- Encrypt user data on websites
 - Block access to restricted websites
 - Distinguish between humans and bots for online security
 - Enable faster loading of web pages
6. Consider the following statements:
- Cybercrime refers to criminal activities that involve the use of computers, networks, and digital technologies.
 - Phishing is the deceptive attempt to acquire sensitive information, such as usernames, passwords, and financial details, by posing as a trustworthy entity.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
7. With reference to the Internal Structure of Sun, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- The Sun's energy originates in its core through nuclear fission reactions.
 - Corona is the outermost part of the Sun's atmosphere, consisting of very hot, low-density plasma.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
8. What is the role of genome editing tools such as CRISPR in de-extinction?
- They help identify extinct species through fossils.
 - They aid in mapping the migration of ancient species.
 - They allow precise editing of DNA to recreate traits of extinct organisms.
 - They are used in reforestation programs to revive ancient plant varieties.
9. Recently, which country became the 54th signatory to the Artemis Accords, a NASA-led initiative for peaceful space exploration?
- Bangladesh
 - Sri Lanka
 - Nepal
 - Thailand
10. Which of the following statements about Vitamin D is/are correct?
- It is a fat-soluble vitamin vital for overall health.
 - Deficiency of Vitamin D could lead to Osteoporosis.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

11. Consider the following statements:

1. The WHO's first-ever global guidelines on meningitis align with the goals of the Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Global Roadmap.
2. Meningitis is exclusively caused by bacterial infections and cannot result from non-infectious origins.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. With reference to the Type 5 diabetes, consider the following statements:

1. It is a form of diabetes affecting lean and malnourished teenagers and young adults in low- and middle-income countries.
2. Unlike people with type 2 diabetes, their bodies can still respond well to insulin.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

13. What is the primary advantage of using nanofertilizers over conventional fertilizers in agriculture?

- (a) They contain higher concentrations of nitrogen and phosphorus
- (b) They release nutrients rapidly to boost immediate crop growth
- (c) They enhance nutrient uptake efficiency while reducing environmental losses
- (d) They eliminate the need for irrigation during the crop cycle

14. With reference to the Axiom Mission 4, consider the following statements:

1. It is a private spaceflight to the International Space Station to be launched in 2025.
2. Only India and the USA are a part of the 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

15. Which of the following statements is not correct regarding Anemia?
- (a) It primarily affects women and children.
 - (b) It is often caused by a lack of iron in the blood.
 - (c) Its symptoms include fatigue, dizziness, and shortness of breath.
 - (d) It is a non-preventable disease.
16. What is the primary purpose of NASA's Lucy mission?
- (a) To study primitive asteroids, especially Jupiter's Trojan asteroids, to understand the early Solar System.
 - (b) To explore the Kuiper Belt and study icy dwarf planets.
 - (c) To collect samples from Mars for return to Earth.
 - (d) To deploy satellites around Jupiter for atmospheric research.
17. With reference to the India's first satellite, Aryabhata, consider the following statements:
1. Launched in 1975, the satellite was named after the ancient Indian mathematician and astronomer, Aryabhata.
 2. With its successful launch, India was recognized as the 5th country in the world to send a satellite into orbit.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
18. Which of the following diseases is most commonly associated with long-term arsenic exposure?
- (a) Kwashiorkor
 - (b) Blackfoot disease
 - (c) Pellagra
 - (d) Marasmus
19. Nano Sulphur, developed by TERI, offers a novel approach to sulphur fertilization. Which of the following best describes the primary mechanism through which Nano Sulphur enhances nutrient uptake and crop yield?
- (a) It directly alters the soil pH, making other nutrients more available to the plant roots.
 - (b) It utilizes a nano-formulation for efficient foliar absorption and employs plant-growth.
 - (c) It releases sulphur slowly over an extended period, ensuring a continuous supply of this essential nutrient to the plant.
 - (d) It enhances the plant's photosynthetic efficiency by directly interacting with chloroplasts at the cellular level.
20. Which of the following is correct regarding NGC 1052-DF2?
- (a) It is a new vaccine that helps protect against tuberculosis.
 - (b) It is an ultra-diffuse galaxy which is unique for its extreme dark matter deficiency.
 - (c) It is a rocky remnant left over from the formation of the solar system.
 - (d) It is a super-Earth exoplanet, nearly nine times the mass of Earth.

- 21.** With reference to the lipids in the human body, which of the following statements is/are not correct?
1. Lipids constitute about 30% of the dry weight of living cells.
 2. Lipids aid in hormone production and energy storage.
- 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
- 22.** Hemophilia is a genetic disorder that primarily affects the body's ability to:
- (a) Control blood clotting
 - (b) Produce red blood cells
 - (c) Regulate blood pressure
 - (d) Fight infections
- 23.** Which of the following statements is correct regarding Malaria?
- (a) It is mostly found in tropical countries.
 - (b) It is caused by plasmodium protozoa.
 - (c) Its symptoms include fever, headache, muscle ache and fatigue.
 - (d) All of the above.
- 24.** With reference to Ebola disease, consider the following statements:
1. It is caused by viruses that belong to the Orthoebolavirus genus of the filoviridae family.
 2. It cannot be transmitted through blood or body fluids.
- 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
- 25.** With reference to the Starlink, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. Starlink is a satellite internet service providing high-speed, low-latency broadband access globally.
 2. It utilizes a constellation of small satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO) to provide service.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Saturn has “gained” 128 new moons in a groundbreaking discovery by astronomers in Taiwan.

- **Saturn’s New Title:**

- Saturn now holds the **title of “moon champion” with 274 moons**, the most of any planet in the solar system.
- This **surpasses the total number of moons of all other planets combined**.

- **Discovery Details:** Some moons were found during space missions like Voyager 1 and others during “ring-plane crossings.”

- **Irregular Moons:** All newly discovered moons are classified as “irregular” moons, which have **elliptical orbits at various angles**.

- **Irregular moons were likely once small planets** captured by Saturn’s gravity and later shattered by collisions.
- **Regular moons** are formed around a planet at the same time as the planet itself forms.

2. (d)

In News: Indian astronaut Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla will pilot the Axiom-4 mission (Ax-4) to the International Space Station (ISS).

Statement 1 is correct:

- The **Axiom Space Mission (Ax-4)**, *a private astronaut mission*, represents a significant milestone in the commercialization of space travel, and marks another step toward a thriving commercial space economy.
- Axiom Space is developing a commercial space station, which **eventually replaces the ISS** as a hub for private astronaut missions.

Statement 2 is correct:

- The Ax-4 mission aims to conduct over 60 scientific studies across 31 countries, including India, Poland, Hungary, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Nigeria, and the UAE.
- Research will focus on biological processes in microgravity, crop seed resilience, and muscle dysfunction therapies.

3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Diabetes is a **chronic medical condition** where the body has trouble regulating **blood sugar (glucose) levels**.

- It occurs when the body either **doesn’t produce enough insulin** (a hormone that helps regulate blood sugar) or doesn’t effectively use the insulin it produces.
- **There are two main types:**
 - **Type 1 Diabetes:** The body doesn’t produce insulin at all, and it typically develops in childhood or adolescence.
 - **Type 2 Diabetes:** The body doesn’t use insulin properly (insulin resistance), often due to lifestyle factors, and usually develops in **adults**. **Statement 2 is not correct.**
- **Managing Diabetes:**
 - If not managed, diabetes can lead to serious health issues such as heart disease, kidney problems, and nerve damage.
 - Managing diabetes typically involves a combination of diet, exercise, medication, and regular blood sugar monitoring.

4. (c)

Statement 1 is Correct: Rare Earth Elements (REEs) include 15 lanthanides (atomic numbers 57 to 71) plus scandium (21) and yttrium (39). These two are included because they exhibit similar chemical properties and tend to occur in the same ore deposits as the lanthanides.

Statement 2 is not correct: REEs are soft, malleable, and ductile rather than hard and brittle. Although they do tarnish easily and are chemically reactive, especially at high temperatures, describing them as “low reactivity” is inaccurate.

Statement 3 is correct: REEs are essential for many modern technologies, including:

Defense (e.g., missile guidance, lasers)

Electronics (e.g., smartphones, TVs, computers)

Green technologies (e.g., wind turbines, electric vehicle motors, batteries)

5. (c)

Context

- CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart) is a key security tool that has transformed how websites protect user accounts and data.

What is CAPTCHA?

- CAPTCHA is a type of challenge–response test designed to distinguish human users from automated bots.
- It typically involves tasks that are easy for humans but difficult for machines to complete.

6. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Cybercrime refers to criminal activities that involve the **use of computers, networks, and digital technologies**.

- Cybercriminals employ **various techniques and tools** to exploit vulnerabilities in networks, and they may target individuals, organizations, or even governments.

Common types of Cybercrime include:

- **Hacking:** Unauthorized access to computer systems or networks to steal, alter, or destroy data.
- **Phishing:** Deceptive attempts to acquire sensitive information, such as usernames, passwords, and financial details, by posing as a trustworthy entity.
- **Malware:** Malicious software designed to disrupt, damage, or gain unauthorized access to computer systems. This includes viruses, worms, trojans, ransomware, and spyware.
- **Identity Theft:** Stealing and using someone’s personal information, such as social security numbers or credit card details, for fraudulent purposes.
- **Cyber Espionage:** Covert activities aimed at gaining unauthorized access to sensitive information for political, economic, or military purposes.
- **Cyberbullying:** Using digital platforms to harass, threaten, or intimidate individuals.
- **Online Fraud:** Engaging in fraudulent activities, such as online scams and financial fraud, to deceive and exploit victims for monetary gain.

7. (b)

Internal Structure of Sun

- **Core:** The Sun’s energy originates in its core through nuclear **fusion reactions**. With extremely high temperatures and pressures, the core fuses hydrogen into helium, releasing energy.
- **Radiative Zone:** Surrounding the core, energy is transported outward via radiation.

- **Convection Zone:** Here, heated material rises, cools at the surface, and sinks again, forming convection currents. This movement carries energy toward the Sun's surface.
- **Photosphere:** It has no solid surface but appears as a bright disk due to high gas density blocking deeper visibility.
- **Chromosphere:** Located above the photosphere, this layer is less dense and usually visible only during solar eclipses or with special filters.
- **Corona:** The outermost and most extended part of the Sun's atmosphere. It consists of **very hot, low-density plasma** and is visible during total solar eclipses.

8. (c)

Context

- A United States-based bioscience company claimed that it had revived an extinct species of animal, the dire wolf.

What Is De-Extinction?

- De-extinction, or resurrection biology, refers to the **scientific process of bringing back extinct species** or creating organisms closely resembling them through genetic engineering.
- De-extinction is possible because of bioengineering techniques that can manipulate DNA and genomes or the genetic material in an organism.
- The goal is to re-establish dynamic processes that **produce healthy ecosystems** and **restore biodiversity**.

Methods of De-Extinction

- **Back-breeding:** It uses the principles of selective breeding. This method works well when the extinct species are closely related to a still-living species.
- **Cloning:** It produces a genetically identical copy of an organism through **Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer (SCNT)**.
- **Genome Editing & Synthetic Genomics:** Genome editing tools (like CRISPR) allow for precise deletion, addition, or modification of genes.
 - Synthetic genomics involves inserting large sections of synthesized DNA into a host genome.
 - **Result:** Hybrid organisms with traits from both extinct and living species.

9. (a)

Context

- Bangladesh has inked the 'Artemis Accords' as the 54th country with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), focused on non-military space exploration.



About

- The Artemis Accords, established in October 2020, are a set of non-binding agreements designed to promote peaceful and cooperative civil exploration of outer space.
- Apart from Bangladesh, countries that have signed the accords include the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, India, the United Arab Emirates, Australia, and several others from Europe and Latin America.

10. (c)

In News

- A recent study has revealed that one in five Indians suffers from Vitamin D deficiency.

Vitamin D

- Also known as calciferol, is a **fat-soluble vitamin** vital for overall health.
- Ultraviolet B (UVB) rays from the sun help the skin produce Vitamin D naturally and other dietary sources include eggs, meat or fish.
- Some dairy products, cereals, and plant-based milks are fortified with Vitamin D.
- It regulates calcium and phosphate metabolism in the body.
- Deficiency of Vitamin D could lead to Osteomalacia (softening of bones), **Osteoporosis** (loss of bone density) and Rickets in children.

11. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: WHO has launched its first-ever global guidelines for meningitis diagnosis, treatment, and care, contributing to the objectives of the Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Global Roadmap.

Statement 2 is not correct: Meningitis can be caused by both infectious agents (bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites) and non-infectious factors (such as autoimmune diseases, medications, and cancer). Hence, it is not exclusively bacterial in origin.

12. (c)

Both the statements are correct: **Type 5 diabetes** has been officially recognized as a **distinct form of the disease** by the **International Diabetes Federation (IDF)**.

- **Type 5 diabetes** is a **form of diabetes** affecting **lean and malnourished teenagers and young adults** in **low- and middle-income countries**.
 - It is also called **malnutrition-related diabetes** as it mostly affects lean people who have faced long-term undernutrition, especially during childhood.
- It was first **reported in Jamaica in 1955 as J-type diabetes**.
- **Unlike type 2 diabetes**, which is linked to obesity and insulin resistance, this type is caused by **poor development of the pancreas**, due to **lack of nutrition over the years**.
 - **People with type 5 diabetes** have a hard time making **enough insulin**, which is the hormone that **helps control blood sugar levels**.
 - But unlike people with type 2 diabetes, **their bodies can still respond well to insulin**.

13. (c)

Nanofertilizers are fertilizers made using nanotechnology, where nutrients are delivered in nano-sized particles or coated with nanomaterials. Their primary advantage lies in:

- Improved nutrient delivery to the plant roots and leaves due to the smaller size of the particles, allowing for better absorption.
- Slow and controlled release of nutrients, which reduces leaching, volatilization, and runoff, leading to less environmental pollution compared to conventional fertilizers.

- Higher efficiency in nutrient use, which means less quantity is required for similar or better yield outcomes.

14. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Axiom Mission 4 (or Ax-4) is a **private spaceflight to the International Space Station to be launched in 2025.**

Statement 2 is not correct: Countries: USA, India, Poland, and Hungary.

- It is the first government-sponsored spaceflight in over 40 years for Poland & Hungary.
- **Objectives:** The astronauts will execute a mission that includes outreach, scientific, and commercial operations during their **14-day stay in orbit.**

15. (d)

In News

- India is leading a major public health campaign against anemia.

Anemia

- Anemia is a condition where there are fewer red blood cells or lower hemoglobin levels than normal, **primarily affecting women and children.**
 - It occurs when there isn't enough hemoglobin to transport oxygen to the body's organs and tissues.
- Anemia affects around 500 million women aged 15 to 49 and 269 million children under 5 years (6-59 months) worldwide.
- **Anaemia is preventable and treatable.**

Causes

- Anaemia can be caused by poor nutrition, infections, chronic diseases, heavy menstruation, pregnancy issues and family history.
 - It is often caused by a **lack of iron in the blood.**

Symptoms

- Anemia commonly presents with **symptoms** like fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, cold hands and feet, and headaches, especially during physical activity.

16. (a)

Context

- Nasa's Lucy spacecraft completed a close flyby of the small main belt asteroid **Donaldjohanson.**

About

- **NASA's Lucy mission** was launched in **2021** to visit ten asteroids over 12 years — **two asteroids** in the main belt **between Mars and Jupiter**, and **eight Trojan asteroids** leading and trailing **Jupiter** in its orbit.
- **Origin:** Named after an ancient fossil **3.2 million-year-old** ancestor who belonged to a species of hominins.
- **Spacecraft and Instruments:**
 - **L'LORRI:** High-resolution visible imager.
 - **L'Ralph:** Optical and near-infrared imaging spectrometer.
 - **L'TES:** Thermal infrared spectrometer.

17. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: India's first satellite, Aryabhata has completed 50 years.

- **Launched in 1975**, the satellite was named after the **ancient Indian mathematician and astronomer, Aryabhata.**

- The satellite, built by the Indian Space Research Organisation, was launched from Kapustin Yar with the **assistance of the USSR**.

Statement 2 is not correct: Aryabhata marked **India's entry into space exploration** and laid the foundation for the country's future space missions.

- With its successful launch, **India was recognized as the 11th country in the world to send a satellite into orbit**.

18. (b)

Context

- A new study in The Lancet Planetary Health links climate change to rising arsenic levels in rice, warning of increased health risks in Asia by 2050.

What is Arsenic (As)?

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

Effects on health

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

19. (b)

A nano-formulation of sulphur applied via foliar spray to improve nutrient uptake and crop yield. It uses **plant-growth** promoting bacteria for eco-friendly, enzyme-driven nutrient delivery.

- Nano Sulphur, developed by TERI and its efficiency is primarily attributed to:
 - Nano-size particles that improve **foliar absorption**, allowing for better penetration and utilization.
- Integration with plant-growth promoting bacteria (PGPB), which play a role in enzyme-mediated nutrient solubilization and uptake, boosting nutrient delivery and overall crop yield.

20. (b)

Astronomers at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) have investigated the unusual lack of **dark matter** in the galaxy NGC 1052-DF2, which challenges standard galaxy formation theories.

NGC 1052-DF2 is an **ultra-diffuse galaxy** the size of the **Milky Way** but with far fewer stars and only 1/400th the expected **dark matter**.

- It is unique for its extreme dark matter deficiency, making it a rare anomaly even among ultra-diffuse galaxies.
- It has a total mass of around **340 million solar masses**—mostly from stars—indicating very little dark matter compared to typical galaxies like the Milky Way.

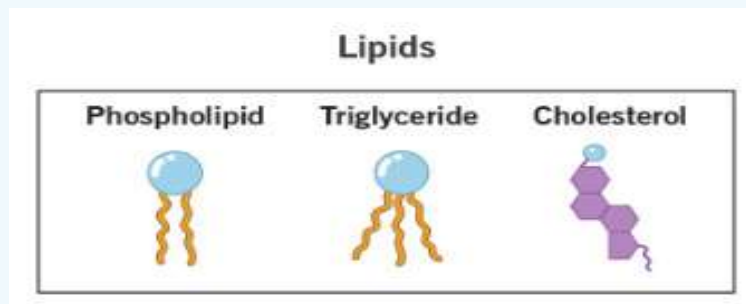
21. (d)

Context

- A new study challenges the traditional view that lipids are merely structural components, revealing their active role in cellular evolution and mitochondrial function.

What are Lipids?

- Lipids are fatty compounds that make up **30%** of the dry weight of living cells.
- It plays critical roles in the body which includes; **Energy storage, Hormone production, transport of fat-soluble vitamins like A, D, E, and K.**



- There are two types of cholesterol;
 - **LDL (low-density lipoprotein)**, often referred to as 'bad' cholesterol because it can accumulate in the walls of arteries and contribute to severe diseases, and
 - **HDL (high-density lipoprotein)**, known as 'good' cholesterol.

22. (a)**Context**

- India's first human gene therapy trial for haemophilia was conducted through a collaboration between Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council's Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (BRIC-inStem) and CMC Vellore.

What is Hemophilia?

- It is a rare genetic disorder that impairs the body's ability to control blood clotting or coagulation.
- This can lead to spontaneous bleeding as well as bleeding following injuries or surgery.
- Hemophilia is **caused by a mutation or change, in one of the genes**, that provides instructions for making the clotting factor proteins needed to form a blood clot.
 - These **genes are located on the X chromosome**. Males have one X and one Y chromosome (XY) and females have two X chromosomes (XX).
- **Hemophilia can result in:**
 - Bleeding within joints that can lead to chronic joint disease and pain.
 - Bleeding in the head and sometimes in the brain which can cause long term problems, such as seizures and paralysis.
 - Death can occur if the bleeding cannot be stopped or if it occurs in a vital organ such as the brain.
- The following two are the most common:
 - **Hemophilia A (Classic Hemophilia):** This type is caused by a lack or decrease of clotting factor VIII.
 - **Hemophilia B (Christmas Disease):** This type is caused by a lack or decrease of clotting factor IX.

23. (d)**Context**

- Every year, 25th April is observed as 'World Malaria Day'.

What is Malaria?

- **Malaria** is a life-threatening disease spread to humans by some types of mosquitoes. It is mostly found in **tropical countries**.

- **Transmission:** It is caused by **plasmodium protozoa**. The plasmodium parasites spread through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. Blood transfusion and contaminated needles may also transmit malaria.
- **Types of parasites:** There are 5 Plasmodium parasite species that cause malaria in humans and 2 of these species – **P. falciparum** and **P. vivax** – pose the greatest threat. The other malaria species which can infect humans are **P. malariae**, **P. ovale** and **P. knowlesi**.
 - **P. falciparum is the deadliest malaria parasite** and the most prevalent on the African continent. **P. vivax** is the dominant malaria parasite in most countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Symptoms:** Fever and flu-like illness, including chills, headache, muscle ache and fatigue.

24. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Ebola disease is a severe, often fatal illness in humans.

- **Ebola disease** is caused by viruses that belong to the **Orthoebolavirus genus of the filoviridae family**.
 - Three different viruses are known to cause **large Ebola disease outbreaks**: Ebola virus, Sudan virus and Bundibugyo virus.

Statement 2 is not correct: Transmission: Blood or body fluids of an infected person can transfer the disease.

- Infected animals (through handling or consumption).
- **It is not an airborne disease.**

25. (c)

Context

- Starlink has begun discussions with key Indian players in the satellite communication , telecom, and broadband sectors, to accelerate the rollout of its services across India.

What is Starlink?

- Starlink is a **satellite internet service** developed by **SpaceX**, designed to provide **high-speed, low-latency broadband access globally**, particularly in underserved and remote areas.
- Utilizing a constellation of over 7,000 small satellites in **low Earth orbit (LEO)**, Starlink aims to deliver internet services where traditional infrastructure is limited or unavailable.



ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. With reference to painted lady butterfly, consider the following statements:
1. It is the most widespread butterfly in the world and it is found on every continent including Antarctica.
 2. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 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

2. Consider the following statements about the Green Credit Programme:
1. It was launched by the Indian Prime Minister on the sidelines of COP29.
 2. It is open to individuals, companies, PSUs, and institutions on a voluntary basis.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

3. Which among the following are the common Air Pollutants?
1. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)
 2. Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂)
 3. Carbon Monoxide (CO)

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

4. Consider the following statements:
1. Fluoride is a naturally occurring pollutant found in minerals, soil, water, and air.
 2. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a maximum safe level of fluoride in drinking water as 1.5 mg/liter.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. With reference to the Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve, consider the following statements:
1. It was added to UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves in 2016.
 2. The Kani tribes residing in the reserve are primarily located in Tamil Nadu, with no presence in Kerala.
 3. The reserve includes wildlife sanctuaries like Shendurney, Peppara, and Nayar, and the Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

6. With reference to the Nilgiri tahr, consider the following statements:
1. It is the endemic species of the Western Ghats and is found in Kerala only.
 2. It is listed as Endangered in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

7. With reference to the Renewable Energy Targets of India, consider the following statements:
1. India has committed to reducing its emissions intensity by 45% by 2030 (compared to 2005 levels).
 2. Achieving 50% of cumulative electric power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

8. The "Blue Category" of industries, as defined by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), is mainly characterized by which of the following features?

- (a) High pollution potential and mandatory installation of advanced pollution control technologies.
- (b) Being crucial for core industrial production with moderate environmental impact.
- (c) Representing sectors essential for environmental management with relatively low pollution potential.
- (d) Focusing on Nuclear energy generation with stringent environmental regulations.

9. Consider the following statements regarding Alfalfa Hay:

1. It is a perennial legume that helps improve soil fertility by fixing nitrogen.
2. Its shallow root system makes it suitable for water-logged soils.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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

- 10.** With reference to the the International Solar Alliance (ISA), consider the following statements:
1. It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization, launched in 2015 by India and France.
 2. It aims to promote solar energy as a sustainable solution for energy access and climate change, with the goal of mobilizing USD 1 trillion in solar investments by 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 11.** With reference to the Malabar Grey Hornbill, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is endemic to the Western Ghats and plays the role of a keystone species.
 2. It lacks a prominent casque and is known for its loud, distinctive calls.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- 12.** With reference to the Similipal Biosphere Reserve, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.
 2. It is inhabited by tribal groups like Santhal and Ho.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- 13.** Why are Tardigrades of particular interest to astrobiologists and space scientists?
- (a) They are known to photosynthesize in low-light conditions.
 - (b) They can survive extreme conditions including desiccation, high radiation, and space vacuum.
 - (c) They have shown potential to cure radiation sickness in humans.
 - (d) They can regenerate lost body parts like planarians.

- 14.** With reference to The Stockholm Convention, consider the following statements:
1. It was adopted in 2001, aims to eliminate or restrict persistent organic pollutants — chemicals that cause long-term ecological and health damage.
 2. India has not ratified the convention.
 3. The treaty is not legally binding.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

15. With reference to the Greenhouse Gases Emissions Intensity (GEI), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. GEI refers to the amount of greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted per unit of product output.

2. GEI is measured in tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e).

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

16. Mahuadanr Wolf Sanctuary is located in which of the following states?

(a) Chhattisgarh

(b) Madhya Pradesh

(c) Odisha

(d) Jharkhand

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

Daria Shipilina, an evolutionary biologist, is studying how genetics contribute to observable traits, or phenotypes, in organisms, with a focus on migration in insects, **particularly butterflies**.

Statements 1 and 2 are incorrect: The painted lady butterfly is known for its remarkable ability to thrive in diverse climates, from temperate grasslands to deserts, and is found on **every continent except Antarctica and South America**.

- They are strong flyers, capable of high speeds and altitudes, with specialized thoracic muscles for long-distance flight.
- IUCN Red List status: **Least Concern**.

2. (b)

In News

- The government is inviting voluntary participation in sectors ranging from plantations to water conservation in exchange of tradable credits under the Green Credit Programme.

About Green Credit Programme

- **Launched by:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
- **Officially unveiled:** December 1, 2023, at COP28 in Dubai by PM Modi and UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan
- **Objective:** To incentivize voluntary pro-environmental actions through tradable “green credits”
- **Linked to:** Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)
- **Participation:** Open to individuals, companies, PSUs, and institutions on a voluntary basis.
- **Activities Eligible for Green Credits:** Tree plantation, Eco-restoration (grasses, shrubs, herbs), water conservation (rainwater harvesting, soil moisture conservation), Waste management & air pollution reduction.

3. (d)

When harmful substances (pollutants) – particles, gases, or matter – are released into the air and reduce its quality, the air is polluted.

- **Common air pollutants include:** Particulate Matter (PM), **Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)**, **Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂)**, Ozone (O₃), **Carbon Monoxide (CO)**, Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Lead etc.
- **Source:** These pollutants can originate from natural sources such as volcanic eruptions and wildfires, but human activities such as industrial production, transportation, agriculture, and residential heating are significant contributors to air pollution.

4. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Fluoride is a **naturally occurring, non-biodegradable pollutant found in minerals, soil, water, and air.**

- It is also released during the **burning of coal bricks.**
- The World Health Organization sets the maximum safe level of fluoride in **drinking water at 1.5 mg/liter.**
- In safe doses, **fluoride helps prevent tooth decay** and supports bone health.
- **In excessive amounts, it causes** dental and skeletal fluorosis, joint pain and stiffness & bone deformities. It also poses risks to wildlife and ecosystems.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: **Agasthyamalai Biosphere Reserve** is located in the southern Western Ghats in South India, spanning the **Kerala-Tamil Nadu border.**

- **UNESCO Recognition:** Added to UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves in **2016.**

Statement 2 is not correct: The reserve is home to **Kani tribes from both Tamil Nadu and Kerala**, which number in total approximately 30,000 inhabitants.

Statement 3 is correct: **Three wildlife sanctuaries, Shendurney, Peppara and Nayar**, are located in the site, as well as the **Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger reserve.**

6. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The **Nilgiri tahr** is the only **mountain ungulate in southern India** amongst the 12 species present in India. It is also the **state animal of Tamil Nadu.**

- It is the **endemic species** of the Western Ghats and is found in **Kerala and Tamil Nadu.**

Statement 2 is correct: It is listed as **Endangered** in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and is protected under **Schedule I** of the Wildlife (Protection) Act of India, 1972.

7. (c)

Both the statements are correct: As part of the updated NDC submitted to the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) in 2022:

- India has committed to reducing **its emissions intensity by 45% by 2030** (compared to 2005 levels), **achieving 50% of cumulative electric power capacity** from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030, and **promoting a sustainable way of living** through the 'LIFE' (Lifestyle for Environment) movement.
- These targets also contribute to **India's long-term goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2070.**

8. (c)

The "Blue Category" was introduced by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to classify industries essential for environmental management—such as **waste-to-energy plants, biomining, and landfill maintenance.**

9. (a)

Context

- The delay in India's approval of genetically modified (GM) alfalfa hay imports from the US has emerged as a contentious issue in ongoing Indo-US trade negotiations.
 - Despite clearance from India's Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), the final nod from the Agriculture Ministry remains pending.

About: Alfalfa Hay

- It is often referred to as the '**Queen of Forages**' and is a highly nutritious and versatile crop widely used in agriculture and livestock farming.
 - It is rich in protein, calcium, and essential vitamins, making it an ideal feed for dairy cattle, horses, and other livestock.
 - Its high fiber content aids in digestion and promotes overall animal health.
- Alfalfa is a **perennial legume** that thrives in **well-drained soils** and **moderate climates**.
 - It fixes nitrogen in the soil, reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers and improving soil fertility.
- It has a **deep root system**, which allows it to access nutrients and water from deeper soil layers, making it drought-resistant.

10. (c)

Both the statements are correct: It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization, launched in **2015 by India and France at the COP21 summit**.

- **Aim:** Promoting solar energy as a sustainable solution for energy access and climate change, with the goal of **mobilizing USD 1 trillion in solar investments by 2030**.
- **Members:** Currently, 100+ countries are signatories, with 90+ countries having ratified to become full members.
 - Initially focused on developing countries, the ISA's Framework Agreement **was amended in 2020 to allow all United Nations member states to join**.
- **Headquartered in Gurugram India**, the ISA is the first international organization established in the country.

11. (c)

Context

- A team of researchers from Kerala has been awarded the Future Conservationist Award by the Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP) for their project on conserving the Malabar Grey Hornbill.

About

- The Malabar grey hornbill is a keystone species, **endemic to the Western Ghats** in India.
- **Physical characteristics:** The bird is characterized by its **large, curved bill**, lack of a prominent casque (horn-like structure), and **grey plumage**.
 - It's known for its **loud and distinctive calls**.
- **Habitat:** Found in evergreen forests, plantations (coffee, rubber, arecanut), and other modified habitats.
 - Some specific locations include **Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Anamalai Tiger Reserve, and Dandeli National Park**.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable (VU)
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (India):** Schedule I

12. (c)

Context

- A strong objection has been raised against the proposed hotel project inside the Similipal Biosphere Reserve in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district.

Similipal Biosphere Reserve

- Similipal derives its name from 'Simul' (**Silk Cotton**) tree.
- **Location:** It is located in **Odisha's Mayurbhanj district** adjoining Jharkhand and West Bengal.
- **Fauna:** It hosts endangered species like the **Royal Bengal Tiger, Asian Elephant, Chausingha and Indian Bison**.
 - It is **Asia's second largest biosphere reserve**, and the country's only wild habitat for melanistic royal Bengal tigers.
- **Flora:** Tropical moist broadleaf forest, Tropical moist deciduous forest, Dry deciduous hill forest, Sal forests.
- **Tribes:** Inhabited by indigenous communities such as the **Santhal and Ho tribes**.
- **Rivers** like **Budhabalanga, Salandi** and many tributaries of **Baitarani river** pass from the Reserve.
- It was declared a biosphere reserve by the Government of India in **1994**.
 - UNESCO added it to its list of Biosphere Reserves in **2009**.

13. (b)

About

- **Tardigrades, also called water bears or moss piglets**, are micro-animals known for their extraordinary resilience to extreme environmental conditions.
- They were first discovered in **1773 by German zoologist Johann August Ephraim Goeze**.
- **Characteristics:** These creatures are usually between **0.3 mm to 0.5 mm long**.
 - They have **eight legs with claws** and segmented bodies protected by a cuticle.
 - Tardigrades can **survive extreme temperatures**, and can endure high radiation, desiccation, vacuum of space, and even intense pressure.
- Tardigrades are of particular interest to astrobiologists and space scientists as they can survive extreme conditions.

14. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: The Stockholm Convention, adopted in **2001**, aims to **eliminate or restrict persistent organic pollutants** — chemicals that cause long-term ecological and health damage.

Statement 2 and 3 are not correct: India ratified the **Stockholm Convention and Rotterdam Convention in 2006**.

- Both the conventions are **legally binding**.

15. (c)

Context

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the draft Greenhouse Gases Emissions Intensity (GEI) Target Rules, 2025.

What is Greenhouse Gases Emissions Intensity (GEI)?

- GEI refers to the amount of greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted per unit of product output (e.g., per tonne of cement or aluminium).

- GHGs include **carbon dioxide (CO₂)**, **methane (CH₄)**, **nitrous oxide (N₂O)**, **ozone (O₃)**, and **water vapour**, along with synthetic gases like **chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)** and **hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs)**.
- GEI is measured in **tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e)**, a standard unit accounting for the global warming potential of all GHGs.

16. (d)

Context

- A new study highlights how local cultural practices in Mahuadanr Wolf Sanctuary, support the breeding success of Indian grey wolves.

Mahuadanr Wolf Sanctuary (MWS)

- **Location:** Situated in Latehar district, Jharkhand and lies within the **Palamau Tiger Reserve**. It is India's only designated wolf sanctuary.
 - **The Burha River** passes through the sanctuary.
- **Ecological and Cultural Significance:** The region is inhabited predominantly by tribal communities, over **80%** of whom follow **Sarna Dharma**, a nature-worshipping belief system.
 - A key practice includes the seasonal avoidance of **Sal forests** during the winter months which is the wolf's breeding and denning season.

■■■■

MISCELLANEOUS

1. The Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL) has signed an agreement for lithium exploration in which of the following countries?
 - (a) Australia
 - (b) Chile
 - (c) Argentina
 - (d) Bolivia
2. The Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2024 was recently conferred upon which of the following applications?
 - (a) Poshan Tracker
 - (b) eSanjeevani
 - (c) DigiLocker
 - (d) Aarogya Setu
3. The "Gowariker Model," recently seen in the news, is related to:
 - (a) Monsoon rainfall prediction
 - (b) Agricultural biotechnology
 - (c) Space exploration
 - (d) Renewable energy development
4. With reference to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, consider the following statements:
 1. It is the first international treaty specifically addressing crimes committed via the internet and other computer networks.
 2. India had signed and ratified the convention in 2016.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. The Shinkansen E5 and E3, which were recently in the news, refer to
 - (a) Stealth fighter aircraft variants
 - (b) Earthquake-resistant skyscrapers
 - (c) High-speed bullet trains
 - (d) Next-generation electric vehicles
6. Which of the following organizations is responsible for releasing the "World Economic Outlook" report?
 - (a) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
 - (b) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

- (c) World Trade Organization (WTO)
- (d) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

7. The Resistance Front (TRF), recently seen in the news, is:

- (a) A civilian protest group advocating for environmental rights in Ladakh.
- (b) An insurgent group in Northeast India demanding statehood.
- (c) A proxy group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).
- (d) A cyber defense task force under India's Ministry of Home Affairs.

8. Consider the following statements:

1. Ensuring freedom of navigation and maritime security.
2. Addressing climate change impacts on marine ecosystems.
3. Countering piracy, narcotics trafficking, and illegal fishing.

Which of the statements given above best reflects the objectives of Operation Atalanta?

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

9. The Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978, recently seen in the news, is related to:

- (a) Universalization of Elementary Education
- (b) Global Climate Action Framework
- (c) International Labour Rights and Fair Wages
- (d) Importance of Primary Health Care

10. With reference to 'The Breakthrough Prize', consider the following statements:

1. It was founded in 2012 by a group of prominent Silicon Valley figures, including Yuri Milner and Mark Zuckerberg.
2. It honours pathbreaking discoveries in physics, life sciences, and mathematics.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. Consider the following statements regarding the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) India:

1. It is an autonomous body that functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
2. It implements anti-doping rules in alignment with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Code.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

- 12.** 'Palermo Protocol' of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is primarily related to:
- Zero Poverty
 - Gender Inequality
 - Racial Discrimination
 - Child Trafficking
- 13.** Recently launched 'Q-Shield platform' is related to which of the following?
- Developing India's Space Station.
 - Protect Critical Infrastructure.
 - Preventing Cross Border Terrorism.
 - None of the Above.
- 14.** With reference to North Eastern Region (NER) of India, consider the following statements:
- Assam is the largest state of the NER.
 - It shares the longest border with China.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 15.** The mascot "Gajsimha" of the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2025 draws inspiration from which historical dynasty's carvings?
- Maurya Dynasty
 - Gupta Dynasty
 - Chola Dynasty
 - Pala Dynasty
- 16.** Recently, Section 8(1)(j) of RTI Act 2005 was in news, primarily is in the context of:
- National Security & Sovereignty
 - Commercial Confidence & Trade Secrets
 - Personal Data & Privacy
 - Parliamentary Privilege & Cabinet Papers
- 17.** With reference to Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), consider the following statements:
- ASHA workers are part of the National Rural Health Mission launched in 2005.
 - They are full-time government employees with fixed salaries.
 - ASHA workers received the World Health Organization's Global Leaders Award in 2022.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
- 18.** Justice Shamim Akhter commission, recently seen in the news, is related:
- To investigate cases of police brutality.
 - To assess the implementation of the Right to Information Act.

- (c) To review the sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes.
- (d) To assess the environmental impact of urbanization on Kancha Gachibowli forest.
- 19.** Sarkaria Commission often seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
 - (a) Banking Reforms
 - (b) Monetary policy
 - (c) Centre State Relations
 - (d) Tax reforms in India
- 20.** The primary aim of UNESCO's BIOCOM programme is to:
 - (a) Establish new national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in biodiversity hotspots.
 - (b) Promote conservation of biodiversity while simultaneously improving the socio-economic conditions of local communities.
 - (c) Facilitate the relocation of communities living within protected areas to prevent human-wildlife conflict.
 - (d) Conduct scientific research on the impact of climate change on endangered species.
- 21.** "Pineapple Express," recently seen in the news, is best described as:
 - (a) A newly discovered ocean current in the Pacific Ocean.
 - (b) A fast-moving passenger train service between Hawaii and California.
 - (c) A moisture-laden atmospheric river that brings heavy rainfall from Hawaii to the U.S. West Coast.
 - (d) A military exercise between the U.S. and Pacific island nations.
- 22.** Who among the following is known as the "Father of Homeopathy"?
 - (a) Hippocrates
 - (b) Edward Jenner
 - (c) Paracelsus
 - (d) Samuel Hahnemann
- 23.** The term 'Penghu 1', was sometimes appeared in the news, is closely related to:
 - (a) Microsatellite
 - (b) Air to Air Missile
 - (c) Fossil of Hominin
 - (d) Small Nuclear Reactor
- 24.** Which of the following is a mandatory requirement for an area to be designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGP)?
 - (a) Possessing a diverse range of flora and fauna of international significance.
 - (b) Being managed by a body with legal existence recognized under national legislation.
 - (c) Having already been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
 - (d) Demonstrating significant historical or cultural heritage.
- 25.** Technology and Innovation Report 2025, recently seen in the news, was released by:
 - (a) World Bank
 - (b) World Economic Forum
 - (c) International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
 - (d) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

- 26.** Kancha Gachibowli, recently seen in the news, is:
- (a) A traditional tribal festival in Karnataka.
 - (b) A newly declared Ramsar wetland in Madhya Pradesh.
 - (c) A UNESCO tentative site for its ancient Buddhist heritage.
 - (d) A land parcel in Hyderabad facing developmental and environmental conflicts.
- 27.** 'RENOFARM Initiative', sometimes appeared in the news, was launched by:
- (a) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - (b) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 - (c) World Trade Organization (WTO)
 - (d) World Bank
- 28.** With reference to 22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- 1. It limits a person to being elected as President of the United States only twice.
 - 2. The amendment was ratified during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt.
- 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
- 29.** With reference to the World Health Day, consider the following statements:
- 1. It was founded by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1950.
 - 2. It is aimed at uniting governments, institutions, and communities to address global health priorities.
- 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
- 30.** With reference to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), consider the following statements:
- 1. The BWC prohibits only the use of biological and toxin weapons during armed conflict.
 - 2. The Convention supplements the 1925 Geneva Protocol.
 - 3. Anthrax and Botulinum toxin are examples of agents covered under the BWC.
 - 4. The BWC allows stockpiling of biological weapons for defensive research purposes.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
 - (d) 2, 3 and 4 only

- 31.** The Ottawa Declaration, recently seen in the news, is related to:
- Guidelines for repatriation of prisoners
 - The establishment of the Arctic Council
 - Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation
 - Trade agreements among G7 nations
- 32.** Maru Ram vs. Union of India case, recently seen in the news, is related to:
- Mercy Petition
 - Waqf Board
 - Right to Education
 - Economically Weaker Sections
- 33.** Which one of the following international organizations released the 'Global Risks Report 2025'?
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
 - World Economic Forum (WEF)
 - International Labour Organization (ILO)
 - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- 34.** Cape Town Convention, recently seen in the news, is associated with which of the following?
- Regulation of maritime trade
 - Protection of endangered species
 - Financing and leasing of aircraft
 - International taxation agreements
- 35.** With reference to the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), consider the following statements:
- It is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Science and Technology.
 - NCPOR operates two remote stations in Antarctica - Maitri and Bharati, one in the Arctic - Himadri, and one in the Himalayas - Himansh.
- Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 36.** The Baku to Belem Roadmap, recently seen in the news, is related to:
- Scaling up climate finance
 - Connectivity projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative
 - Counter-terrorism cooperation among BRICS nations
 - Reforming the United Nations Security Council
- 37.** Which of the following statements is correct regarding the Ottawa Convention?
- It prohibits the production and transfer of nuclear weapons.
 - It ensures the elimination of biological warfare agents.
 - It protects wounded and sick persons in armed conflicts.
 - It bans anti-personnel landmines.

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Critical minerals are **essential for clean energy technologies** like solar panels, wind turbines, EVs, and energy storage systems. To secure these resources, **India launched the NCMM** to ensure their long-term availability and processing.

- The NCMM mission aims to establish a **robust framework for self-reliance in the critical mineral sector**. Under this mission, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) has been tasked with conducting 1,200 exploration projects from 2024-25 to 2030-31.

Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL) has signed an agreement for lithium exploration in Argentina. This venture marks India's first lithium exploration and mining project by a government-owned entity. Argentina, part of the "**Lithium Triangle**" **along with Chile and Bolivia**, holds more than half of the world's total lithium resources, making it a strategic partner for India in securing critical minerals. Lithium is a vital component for batteries used in electric vehicles and renewable energy storage systems, aligning with India's goals to enhance its clean energy capabilities.

2. (a)

In News: Poshan Tracker Application of Ministry of Women and Child Development, Wins Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration 2024.

About Poshan Tracker:

- A mobile-based application developed to strengthen nutritional monitoring and service delivery under the POSHAN Abhiyaan.
- Enables real-time identification of stunting, wasting, underweight prevalence among children.

3. (a)

In News

- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted 'above normal' rainfall (105% of the long-period average) during the 2025 southwest monsoon season (June-September).

History of Monsoon Forecasting

- The IMD began forecasting the monsoon in 1877, driven by the need to understand rainfall patterns after the **devastating 1876-78 Great Famine**.
- **Henry Francis Blanford**, in the late 1800s, studied the relationship between Himalayan snow cover and monsoon rainfall.
 - He made the first long-range forecast in 1886.
- **Sir John Eliot** took **Blanford's work** forward by incorporating local weather conditions and data from the Indian Ocean and Australia, although his predictions were still limited in accuracy.
- **Sir Gilbert Walker in 1904**, introduced statistical models using 28 parameters, identifying the **Southern Oscillation (SO)** as a key influence on the Indian monsoon.
 - He divided India into three subregions for forecasting.

Scenario After Independence

- IMD continued using Walker's model until 1987, but it became less effective due to changes in climate patterns and loss of correlation with key parameters.
- In 1988, The IMD shifted to a new regression model (**Gowariker Model**) using 16 variables, but issues persisted with the accuracy of regional forecasts.

4. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Budapest Convention on Cybercrime (Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime): It is the **first** international treaty specifically addressing crimes committed via the internet and other computer networks.

- It includes provisions on offenses such as illegal access, data interference, system interference, and content-related crimes.

Statement 2 is not correct: India has **not signed and ratified the convention**.

5. (c)

Context

- Japan has decided to gift 2 bullet trains — The Shinkansen E5 and E3 — to India.

About

- These train sets are expected to arrive in India by early 2026 and will play an important role in gathering operational data for India's bullet train project, particularly in relation to the environmental challenges India faces, such as extreme temperatures and dust.
- India's First Bullet Train Project, the 508 Km Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) project, passes through high growth rate States of Gujarat and Maharashtra connecting business centres of Mumbai, Surat, Vadodara and Ahmedabad.
- The project, being implemented by the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), had faced delays due to land acquisition issues and the pandemic but is now gaining momentum.
- Notably, Japan is not just helping India with technical assistance, but also extending generous financial support—offering a 50-year loan at just 0.1% interest, covering nearly 80% of the project's total cost.

7. (c)

Context

- At least **26 people – mostly tourists – were killed** by terrorists at **Baisaran meadows** in South Kashmir's **Pahalgam**.

About

- The Pahalgam Terror Attack was claimed by **The Resistance Front (TRF)**, a proxy group of the banned Pakistan-based **Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)**.
- The group was created in August 2019 after the revocation of Article 370 to escape international scrutiny.

Geographical significance of Baisaran

- It is nearly six kilometres from the resort town of Pahalgam and is often dubbed the '**Switzerland of India**' for its scenic meadows, pine forests, and mountainous backdrop.
- It is a key destination for domestic and international tourists.

8. (b)

In News: European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) has proposed a joint maritime exercise with the Indian Navy.

Operation ATALANTA, officially part of the EUNAVFOR, is a key EU-led maritime security initiative. It was launched in December 2008 and operates primarily in the Western Indian Ocean and the Red Sea region.

- Operation Atalanta aims to ensure peace, stability, and maritime security by addressing:
 - Piracy and armed robbery at sea
 - Narcotics trafficking

- Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing
- Protection of vulnerable shipping, particularly World Food Programme (WFP) vessels

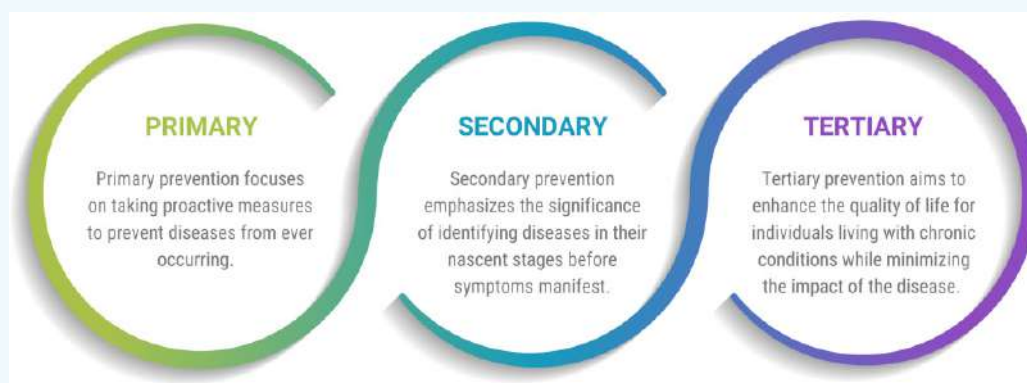
9. (d)

Context

- In India, the government has been working to **transform primary health care** through innovative policies and programs, addressing challenges such as accessibility, affordability, and visibility.

About the Primary Healthcare in India

- According to WHO, Primary Health Care (PHC) is a **whole-of-society approach** to effectively organize and strengthen national health systems to bring services for health and wellbeing closer to communities.
- It aims to provide **accessible, affordable, and comprehensive services** to all citizens.
- It focuses on **promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative, and palliative care**, ensuring equitable access to essential health services.
- **Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978** identified PHC as essential health care based on scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods.



10. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The Experimental High Energy Physics (HEP) group of Bose Institute (BI), has been awarded the Breakthrough Prize 2025 in Fundamental Physics as a part of ALICE at CERN.

The Breakthrough Prize

- It was founded in 2012 by a group of prominent Silicon Valley figures, including **Yuri Milner, Mark Zuckerberg**, Priscilla Chan, and Sergey Brin Yuri Milner.
- It honours pathbreaking discoveries in **physics, life sciences, and mathematics**, aiming to inspire the next generation of scientists.

11. (b)

Context

- The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) India has successfully organized a conference on “Building Together a Clean Sport Ecosystem” in New Delhi.

About: NADA India

- **Ministry:** Established in 2009 as an autonomous body under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports**, Government of India.
- **Objective:**
 - To implement anti-doping rules in line with the **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Code**.
 - To regulate the dope control programme.
 - To promote education, research, and awareness about doping and its harmful effects.

- **Key Functions:** Sample Collection (SC), Results Management (RM), Anti-Doping Education & Awareness, Research and Intelligence & Investigations (I&I).

12. (d)

In News: Recently, the Supreme Court of India has issued a warning to parents across the country, urging them to remain vigilant against the growing menace of child trafficking.

- It highlighted that traffickers exploit juvenile protection laws to force children into crime.
- **United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons:** It is known as the **Palermo Protocol (adopted by UNGA in 2000)**, that provides a framework for countries to combat trafficking through prevention, protection, and prosecution.

13. (b)

QNu Labs, one of the startups selected by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** under the **National Quantum Mission**, has launched the **world's first and unique platform, Q-Shield**.

- It empowers **enterprises to protect their critical infrastructure**.
- It also **enables seamless cryptography management** across any environment, including cloud, on-premises, or hybrid.
 - **Cryptography** is the process of hiding or coding information so that only the person a message was intended for can read it.
- **QShield** provides an end-to-end solution for securing sensitive data in transit and at rest.

14. (d)

Both the statements are not correct: The NER comprises eight States viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

- **Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state.**
- **This region is culturally and ethnically diverse** having **more than 200 ethnic groups** which have distinct languages, dialects and socio-cultural identities.
- **NER has 5,484 km of international border viz. Bangladesh (1,880 km), Myanmar (1,643 km), China (1,346 km), Bhutan (516 km) and Nepal (99 km).**

15. (d)

In News

- Bihar is going to host the **7th edition of the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2025** from May 4 to 15, across cities including Patna, Gaya, Rajgir, Begusarai, and Bhagalpur.
 - The 7th edition has the mascot **"Gajsimha"**—symbolizing an elephant's power and a lion's heart—draws inspiration from **Pala dynasty carvings**.

Background

- Khelo India was **launched in 2017** and it promotes grassroots sports in India through Youth, University, Para, and Winter Games, fostering young athletic talent nationwide.

Types of Khelo India Games

- There are four key events under the Khelo India movement:
 - **Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG)** – For school and junior athletes
 - **Khelo India University Games (KIUG)** – For university-level athletes
 - **Khelo India Para Games (KIPG)** – For para-athletes
 - **Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG)** – For winter sports enthusiasts

Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2025

- It is a flagship event of the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.
- Over 8,500 athletes will participate in this major sporting event, which is second only to the National Games.
- The games will feature around 27 disciplines, including popular sports like volleyball, football, boxing, kabaddi, and indigenous games like Malkhamb and Sepak Takraw.

16. (c)

In News: Recent amendments to the **RTI Act 2005**, particularly to **Section 8(1)(j)** through the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023** are seen as unnecessary and potentially detrimental to the Act's original intent.

- Section 8 & Section 9 of RTI Act 2005 are related with the Denial of Information
 - **Section 8(1)(a):** National Security & Sovereignty
 - **Section 8(1)(j):** Personal Data & Privacy
 - **Section 8(1)(i):** Parliamentary Privilege & Cabinet Papers
 - **Section 8(1)(d):** Commercial Confidence & Trade Secrets
 - **Section 8(1)(h):** Ongoing Investigations & Law Enforcement

17. (c)**Context**

- Kerala's ASHA community has been staging protests demanding better remuneration and retirement benefits.

About ASHAs

- An Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) is a community health worker employed by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)** as a part of **India's National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)**.
- The mission began in **2005** and full implementation was targeted for 2012.
- The idea behind the Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) was to connect **marginalized** communities to the health care system to ensure awareness and timely access to health and family welfare services, to act as first responders in underserved areas with limited access to medical care etc.
- ASHAs are considered **volunteers** and earn around ₹6,000–10,000 per month, including a monthly honorarium from the Central and State governments, along with performance-based incentives.
- ASHAs played a pivotal role during the **COVID-19 pandemic**, managing local surveillance, awareness, and care.
- In 2022, they received the **World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Leaders Award**, recognizing their unparalleled community service.

18. (c)**Context**

- Telangana just made history by becoming the first state in India to sub-categorize the Scheduled Caste (SC) reservations.

About

- Under the Telangana Scheduled Castes (Rationalisation of Reservations) Act 2025, 59 SC sub-castes have been divided into three groups — all within the existing 15% quota.

- Group I — 15 most backward: gets 1% reservation. They make up just 0.5% of the population.
- Group II — 18 moderately backward: allotted 9%.
- Group III — 26 relatively better off: allotted 5%.
- This move is based on recommendations from the **Justice Shameem Akhter Commission**, and backed by the Supreme Court's 2024 verdict in **Punjab vs Davinder Singh**, which allowed sub-categorisation within SCs and STs.
- *The classification takes into account social, economic, educational, employment, and political status of these communities. And yes — more changes may come after Census 2026.*

19. (c)

Sarkaria Commission (1983): To examine and review the working of the existing arrangements between the Centre and the States.

- **Key Recommendations:**
 - Strengthen the role of the Inter-State Council (Article 263) as a permanent, regular body.
 - Use Article 356 (President's Rule) sparingly and only as a last resort.
 - More financial autonomy to states; a greater share in central taxes.

20. (b)

About the BIOCUM Initiative

- **Launched by:** UNESCO, in collaboration with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).
- **Year of Launch:** 2020
- **Objective:** To conserve biodiversity while simultaneously promoting sustainable natural resource management and livelihood security for local communities exposed to:
 - Climate change vulnerabilities
 - Unsustainable forest exploitation
- **Key Features:**
 - Integrates ecological protection with community empowerment.
 - Encourages alternative livelihoods to reduce pressure on forests.
 - Builds climate resilience through nature-based solutions.
 - Promotes community engagement in managing protected areas sustainably.

21. (c)

In News

- Recently, a large part of the United States experienced heavy rain, strong winds, and severe thunderstorms caused by an atmospheric river

Atmospheric rivers

- They are narrow, fast-moving bands of moisture and wind—like rivers in the sky—that transport large amounts of water vapor from tropical oceans to land.
- They typically span 402 to 606 km in width and over 1,600 km in length.
- They often resemble hurricanes in intensity and are most common in mid-latitudes.
 - A famous example is the **Pineapple Express**, which carries moisture from Hawaii to the U.S. and Canadian West Coasts.
 - However, the recent storm in the U.S. originated from the Caribbean.

22. (d)

Context

- In 2025, India is hosting its largest Homoeopathic symposium on the occasion of World Homoeopathy Day in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

World Homoeopathy Day

- World Homoeopathy Day is observed on **April 10** every year, to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Dr. Samuel Hahnemann**, the founder of homeopathy.
- In India, Since 2016, the **Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH)** has been celebrating World Homoeopathy Day.

23. (c)

In News: A remarkable **fossil of jawbone** discovery off the coast of **Taiwan** has provided new insights into the **geographic reach of Denisovans**, an enigmatic group of archaic humans.

- The **jawbone** (known as Penghu 1) was recovered from the **Penghu Channel, near Taiwan**, during commercial fishing operations.
- The '**Penghu 1**' jawbone is a significant **fossil attributed to the Denisovans**, an **extinct group of archaic humans**.
- It is notable for its robust structure and large teeth, **distinguishing it from Neanderthals and Homo sapiens**.

24. (b)

Geopark are geographically unified areas of international geological significance, where landscapes are protected, and sustainable development is promoted through:

- Protection of the environment.
- Education about geology and heritage.
- Sustainable development for local communities.

For an area to be designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGP), it must meet several criteria. One of the mandatory requirements is that the area should be **managed by a body with legal existence recognized under national legislation**. This ensures that the area is properly managed in terms of protection, sustainable development, and educational activities.

25. (d)

In News

- The Technology and Innovation Report 2025 released by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Technology and Innovation Report

- It surveys the complex artificial intelligence landscape, aiming to help decision makers design science, technology and innovation policies that foster inclusive technological progress. It analyses the requirements and policies needed at all stages, from development to adoption, to foster inclusive technological progress for sustainable development.

The Report examines five core themes:

- A** AI at the technological frontier
- B** Leveraging AI for productivity and workers' empowerment
- C** Preparing to seize AI opportunities
- D** Designing national policies for AI
- E** Global collaboration for inclusive and equitable AI

26. (d)

Context: Nearly 1500 km from the National Capital, in Hyderabad's Kancha Gachibowli, a protest erupted over large-scale felling of trees.

About

- The Kancha Gachibowli is a 400-acre land parcel near the University of Hyderabad (UoH) campus and the Telangana government plans to auction this land to generate revenue of at least Rs 10,000 crore as well as build IT parks and improve urban connectivity in the IT corridor of Hyderabad.
- However, this green patch harbors rare wildlife, including the Hyderabad tree trunk spider (*Murricia hyderabadensis*), found nowhere else on Earth.
- The Supreme Court intervened, halting deforestation and making it a case study of the clash between urban expansion and ecological preservation.

27. (a)

In News: A recent study by the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** projects that global antibiotic use in livestock could increase by 30% by 2040, highlighting the urgent need for interventions to curb this trend.

- **'Reduce the Need for Antimicrobials on Farms for Sustainable Agrifood Systems Transformation' (RENOFARM) Initiative** was launched by **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, providing policy guidance and technical assistance to help countries curb antibiotic use.
- It is an action-oriented, country-focused, and country-led initiative responding to the global agrifood systems transformation agenda.

28. (a)

Context

- The 22nd Amendment to the U.S. constitution was in the spotlight after the U.S. President Donald Trump made remarks on a two-term limit for American Presidents.

22nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

- The **22nd Amendment** to the US Constitution says that **no one can be elected more than twice as President**.
 - The Amendment was ratified in **1951**, after President **Franklin D Roosevelt** had been elected **four consecutive times**, from **1932 to 1944**.
- If someone has served as President for more than two years of another's term (for example, a Vice President who became President due to the President's death or resignation), they can only be elected once.
 - Thus, effectively, the maximum U.S. Presidential tenure can be 10 years (two years as a successor plus two full terms).

29. (c)

Both the statements are correct: World Health Day, observed annually on 7 April, highlights pressing global health issues and mobilises action to improve public health outcomes.

- It was founded by WHO in **1950**.
 - The idea for World Health Day originated from the **first World Health Assembly, held in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1948**.
- It is aimed at **uniting governments, institutions, and communities to address global health priorities**.

- **2025 Theme:** “Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures” focuses on **maternal and newborn health**, urging countries to **reduce preventable deaths and prioritize women’s long-term well-being**.
- **India’s Commitment:** The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, strengthens efforts for **equitable, accessible, and quality healthcare**.

30. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The BWC goes beyond the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which prohibited only the use of such weapons. BWC prohibits development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling, and use.

Statement 2 is correct: The BWC supplements the Geneva Protocol by expanding the scope of prohibition.

Statement 3 is correct: Anthrax (bacteria) and Botulinum toxin (toxin) are classic examples of biological agents covered under BWC.

Statement 4 is not correct: The BWC does not allow stockpiling even for defensive research. While research for protective purposes may be interpreted as permissible, stockpiling is explicitly prohibited.

31. (b)

Context

- The Arctic has become a **geopolitical hotspot** due to climate change, resource competition, and strategic rivalries among major powers.

Arctic Council

- It is composed of eight nations (U.S., Canada, Russia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland), and aims to promote environmental protection and scientific cooperation.
 - It was formally established in 1996 through the **Ottawa Declaration**.
 - India is an Observer in the Arctic Council.

32. (a)

In News

- The Maharashtra government formed a dedicated cell under the **Additional Secretary (Home)** for dealing with mercy petitions filed by death row convicts.

Mercy Petition

- **What is a Mercy Petition?**
 - A mercy petition is a formal request submitted by a **convict (especially on death row or serving a long sentence) to seek clemency**—in the form of pardon, commutation, or remission—from the President of India or the Governor of a State, as a last resort after all judicial remedies are exhausted.
 - **No fixed time limit** is prescribed for the President’s decision on the mercy petition.
- **Constitutional & Legal Provisions:**
 - The Constitution granted the **President (Article 72) and Governor (Article 161)** the power to grant pardons or commute sentences.
 - In the **Supreme Court’s ruling in Maru Ram vs. Union of India (1981)**, it was established that the President must act based on the **Council of Ministers’ advice in mercy petitions**.

33. (b)

In News:

- India, with over 1.4 billion people and a multilingual landscape, is uniquely vulnerable to disinformation.

- According to the **Global Risks Report 2025 of World Economic Forum (WEF)**, misinformation and disinformation are the most pressing short-term global threats.
 - India is particularly vulnerable to manipulated narratives, voter influence, and economic disruptions, with **over 900 million Internet users**.
 - WEF defines '**global risk**' as an event that can adversely affect a sizable portion of the population, the global GDP, and natural resources.

34. (c)

In Context

- The Rajya Sabha passed '**The Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2025**', a landmark legislation aimed at giving legal force to international treaties governing aviation finance.
 - It seeks to implement the **Cape Town Convention and Aircraft Protocol within the Indian legal system**.

What Is the Cape Town Convention?

- **About:**
 - Adopted in 2001, the Cape Town Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and its Aircraft Protocol were designed to create a uniform legal framework to facilitate asset-based financing and leasing of high-value mobile equipment like aircraft, helicopters & aircraft engines.
- **Objectives of the Convention:**
 - Safeguard the rights of lessors and creditors
 - Provide legal remedies in cases of default
 - Reduce cross-border legal complexities
 - Enable quick repossession and deregistration of aircraft in case of payment failures
- **Ratification:**
 - India ratified the Convention in 2007, but until now, had no domestic legislation to operationalize its provisions.

35. (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) Goa, has observed the 25th foundation day.

- NCPOR is an **autonomous body** under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**.
- It was created to **manage national expeditions and strategic interests in polar regions**.

Statement 2 is correct: NCPOR operates two remote stations in Antarctica - Maitri and Bharati, one in the Arctic - Himadri, and one in the Himalayas - Himansh.

- It also manages a **floating oceanographic platform called Sagar Kanya**.

36. (a)

In News

- India called upon BRICS nations to unite behind the '**Baku to Belem Roadmap**', aimed at mobilizing **USD 1.3 trillion to support the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** of developing countries.

What is the Baku to Belém Roadmap?

- The **Baku to Belém Roadmap** is a strategic framework adopted at COP29 (2024) to guide negotiations and actions on:
 - Defining a new collective quantified goal (NCQG) on climate finance post-2025.

- Ensuring greater predictability, adequacy, and accessibility of climate finance.
- Supporting low-carbon and climate-resilient development pathways in developing countries.
- Enabling the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

37. (d)

Poland, Finland, and all three Baltic states have announced plans to withdraw from the 1997 Ottawa Convention banning **anti-personnel landmines**, citing growing security threats from Russia.

- Ottawa Convention is formally known as the **Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction**.
- **It is an international agreement that bans anti-personnel landmines.**
- It was adopted in 1997 during a diplomatic conference in Oslo and opened for signature in Ottawa later that year.
- The treaty came into force on March 1, 1999.

