

# Solutions

DATE : (27<sup>th</sup> Oct – 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov )

1)  Correct Answer: (b) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change

## Explanation

### 1. Institutional Framework

- The **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** is a **statutory, autonomous body** functioning under the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**.
- It was established in **2003** under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, emphasizing India's commitment to **biodiversity conservation, sustainable utilization, and equitable benefit sharing**.

### 2. Functional Mandate

- **Regulatory Role:** Approves the use of Indian biological resources by foreign entities and ensures **fair benefit sharing**.
- **Advisory Role:** Guides Central and State Governments on biodiversity management policies.
- **Collaborative Framework:** Works with **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)** and **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** to promote **decentralized governance**.
- **International Alignment:** Ensures India's compliance with the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** and **Nagoya Protocol**.

### 3. Option Analysis

- (a)  **Ministry of Agriculture** – Not responsible for biodiversity governance.
- (b)  **MoEFCC** – Correct; NBA operates under this ministry.
- (c)  **Ministry of Science and Technology** – Oversees research, not biodiversity regulation.
- (d)  **Ministry of Rural Development** – No jurisdiction over biological resources.

### 4. Current Relevance

- Supports **People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)** for local community participation.
- Helps implement the **Global Biodiversity Framework (2022–2030)** and **India's biodiversity targets**.

**Conclusion:** NBA ensures **ecological sustainability** and **community-inclusive governance** of biological resources.

2)  Correct Answer: (b) Invisible glue that holds the universe together

## Explanation

### 1. Concept Overview

- **Dark Matter** is a **hypothetical, non-luminous form of matter** that does not emit, absorb, or reflect light.
- It exerts a **gravitational influence**, essential for understanding the **structure and dynamics of galaxies** and the **cosmic web**.

### 2. Characteristics

- Constitutes about **27% of the universe's mass-energy content**.
- **Interacts only via gravity**, not electromagnetic or nuclear forces.
- Detected **indirectly** through **galactic rotation curves, gravitational lensing, and cosmic microwave background (CMB) observations**.

### 3. Option Analysis

- (a)  Not antimatter – antimatter annihilates ordinary matter producing gamma rays.
- (b)  **Correct** – Acts as **gravitational glue** holding galaxies together.
- (c)  Not radiation – it doesn't emit energy.

- (d)  Not ionized gas – that refers to interstellar medium.

#### 4. Contemporary Relevance

- Research ongoing at **CERN**, **Fermilab**, and via **James Webb Telescope** to identify **dark matter particles** like **WIMPs** or **axions**.

**Conclusion:** Dark Matter remains a **mystery of modern cosmology**, explaining **galactic cohesion** and **mass distribution** in the universe.

#### 3) Correct Answer: (b) Co-developing the Hoyle–Narlikar Theory of Gravity

##### Explanation

##### 1. Background

- **Prof. Jayant Vishnu Narlikar**, a leading Indian astrophysicist, collaborated with **Sir Fred Hoyle** to develop an **alternative gravitational theory** integrating **Mach's Principle**.
- The **Hoyle–Narlikar Theory of Gravity** provides a unique explanation of the **continuous creation of matter**, challenging the **Big Bang model**.

##### 2. Key Contributions

- Integrates **Mach's Principle** with cosmology.
- Suggests **continuous creation** instead of a singular beginning.
- Provided a **new mathematical model** for cosmic evolution.

##### 3. Option Analysis

- (a)  Germ Theory – Louis Pasteur, Robert Koch.
- (b)  Correct – Hoyle–Narlikar theory of gravity.
- (c)  Polio Vaccine – Jonas Salk, Albert Sabin.
- (d)  Electron Discovery – J.J. Thomson.

##### 4. Recognition

- Founder of **IUCAA, Pune**.
- Recipient of **Padma Vibhushan, Vigyan Ratna**.

**Conclusion:** Prof. Narlikar's work represents **India's intellectual leadership** in **theoretical astrophysics** and **alternative cosmological models**.

#### 4) Correct Answer: (b) Timor Leste

##### Explanation

##### 1. Context

- The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** was established on **8 August 1967** by the **Bangkok Declaration**.
- The founding aim: to promote **peace, stability, and economic cooperation** in Southeast Asia.

##### 2. Founding Members

1. **Indonesia**
2. **Malaysia**
3. **Philippines**
4. **Singapore**
5. **Thailand**

Later joined by: Brunei (1984), Vietnam (1995), Laos (1997), Myanmar (1997), Cambodia (1999).  
Recently, **Timor Leste** became the **11th member (2023)**.

##### 3. Option Analysis

- (a)  Indonesia – Founding member.

- (b)  **Timor Leste – Not an original member**, joined recently.
- (c)  Thailand – Founding member.
- (d)  Malaysia – Founding member.

#### 4. Contemporary Relevance

- ASEAN is central to **India’s Act East Policy** and **Indo-Pacific Vision**.
- Plays key role in **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)**, **East Asia Summit (EAS)**, and **RCEP**.

**Conclusion:** Timor Leste’s inclusion marks ASEAN’s **regional expansion** and enduring importance in **Asian geopolitics**.

#### 5) **Correct Answer:** (b) **Arunachal Pradesh and Assam**

#### Explanation

##### 1. Project Overview

- The **Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project (HEP)** is a **run-of-the-river hydropower project** located on the **Subansiri River**, a **major tributary of the Brahmaputra**.
- Implemented by **NHPC Limited**, it lies on the **Arunachal Pradesh–Assam border**, near **North Lakhimpur**.

##### 2. Project Features

- Designed capacity: **2000 MW**, one of India’s largest hydro projects.
- Objective: to enhance **renewable energy generation** in the **Northeast region**.
- **Benefits:** Power generation, flood moderation, and regional connectivity.

##### 3. Option Analysis

- (a)  Assam–Tripura – Incorrect geography.
- (b)  **Arunachal Pradesh–Assam – Correct location.**
- (c)  Assam–Mizoram – No such project alignment.
- (d)  Arunachal Pradesh–Nagaland – Incorrect pairing.

##### 4. Current Status

- The project is in **testing and commissioning stages**.
- Expected to supply power to **Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, and neighboring states**.

**Conclusion:** Subansiri Lower HEP is a **strategic renewable energy initiative**, symbolizing **clean power development and cooperative federalism** in the Northeast.

#### 6) **Correct Answer:** (c) **I, II and III**

#### Explanation

##### 1. Topic: The Western Ghats – Ecological Significance

##### 1.1 Context and Background

- The **Western Ghats** stretch for about **1,600 km** along India’s western coast, covering **six states** — Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.
- They are one of the **eight “hottest” biodiversity hotspots** globally and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
- Their unique topography regulates the **Indian monsoon system**, supports major **river systems** (Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Periyar), and sustains **agriculture, biodiversity, and local livelihoods**.

##### 1.2 Key Aspects

- **Policy Framework:** Recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and a **global biodiversity hotspot**, monitored under the **IUCN World Heritage Outlook** program.
- **Environmental Role:** Acts as a **climatic barrier**, intercepting **southwest monsoon winds**, influencing **rainfall distribution** across peninsular India.

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- **Ecological Value:**  
Home to **over 300 globally threatened species**, with high levels of **endemism** (flora and fauna found nowhere else).
- **Threats:**  
Faces degradation due to **deforestation, mining, infrastructure expansion, agricultural intensification, and climate change**.

### 1.3 Analysis of Statements

- **Statement (I): Correct** – The Western Ghats are a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and one of the **world's eight hottest hotspots**, recognized for both high endemism and threats.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – They **act as a climatic barrier**, intercepting **monsoon winds** and influencing **rainfall and climate** across India.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – The **IUCN World Heritage Outlook** categorizes the Western Ghats (along with **Manas National Park** and **Sundarbans National Park**) as sites of **“Significant Concern.”**

**1.4 Conclusion:** The **Western Ghats** are vital for **biodiversity, monsoon regulation, and ecological balance**, but their **conservation status** requires urgent attention.

✓ Hence, the correct answer is (c) — **Statements I, II, and III are correct.**

7) ✓ **Correct Answer: (c) I and III only**

### Explanation

#### 2.1 Context

- The **MedTech sector** in India is a **rapidly growing sunrise industry**, valued at **\$14 billion** and projected to reach **\$30 billion by 2030**.
- Government programs like the **MAHA-MedTech Mission** and **Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)** aim to **boost domestic innovation, reduce imports, and strengthen medical technology ecosystems**.

#### 2.2 Key Aspects

- **Policy Framework:** Supported by initiatives such as the **PLI Scheme, PRIP, and MAHA-MedTech Mission** for research, manufacturing, and innovation.
- **Implementation Mechanism:** Provides **milestone-linked funding**, up to **₹50 crore** in exceptional cases, to MedTech start-ups and research institutions.
- **Sectoral Context:** India is the **fourth-largest medical device market** in Asia — behind **Japan, China, and South Korea**.
- **Challenges:** High **import dependence** and **limited R&D ecosystem** constrain competitiveness.

#### 2.3 Analysis of Statements

- **Statement (I): Correct** – The sector's valuation is projected to grow from **\$14 billion to \$30 billion by 2030**.
- **Statement (II): Incorrect** – India is **not the largest exporter** in Asia; it ranks **fourth in market size**.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – The **MAHA-MedTech Mission** provides funding up to **₹50 crore** in exceptional cases.

**2.4 Conclusion:** India's MedTech sector exemplifies the nation's **push for health innovation, self-reliance, and digital health infrastructure**, with strong **policy and funding support**.

✓ Hence, the correct answer is (c) — **Statements I and III only.**

8) ✓ **Correct Answer: (c) I, II and III**

### Explanation

#### 3.1 Context

- Adopted by the **UN General Assembly in 2024**, this is the **first-ever global, legally binding treaty** addressing **cybercrime**.
- It harmonizes laws, strengthens international cooperation, and standardizes mechanisms for **investigation, prosecution, and evidence handling**.

#### 3.2 Key Aspects

- **Policy Background:** Designed to address both **cyber-dependent crimes** (like hacking) and **cyber-enabled crimes** (like online fraud, data theft).
- **Implementation:** Comes into force **90 days after ratification by 40 UN member states**.
- **Scope:** Includes offences like **non-consensual dissemination of intimate images, identity theft, and online child exploitation**.
- **Broader Impact:** Promotes **digital sovereignty, data security, and international collaboration**.

### 3.3 Analysis of Statements

- **Statement (I): Correct** – It is the **first global treaty** to criminalize both cyber-dependent and cyber-enabled crimes.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – Establishes **global standards for handling electronic evidence** in all serious cyber offences.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – Recognizes **non-consensual dissemination of intimate images** as a punishable offence.

**3.4 Conclusion:** The **UN Convention Against Cybercrime (2024)** marks a historic milestone in **global digital governance**, ensuring **cooperation, accountability, and cyber justice**.

✓ Hence, the correct answer is (c) — Statements I, II and III.

9) ✓ Correct Answer: (c) II, III and IV only

### Explanation

#### 4.1 Context

- India is a **major global coffee producer**, renowned for its **shade-grown, eco-friendly coffee varieties**.
- Coffee cultivation supports **rural livelihoods, exports, and agro-biodiversity**, mainly across **southern India**.

#### 4.2 Key Aspects

- **Policy Framework:** Supported by the **Coffee Board of India** for marketing, R&D, and export promotion.
- **Geographic Distribution:** Predominantly grown in **Karnataka (70%), Kerala, and Tamil Nadu** — notably in **Chikmagalur, Coorg, and Hassan**.
- **Production Status:** India ranks **seventh globally**, contributing around **3% of world production**.
- **Export Orientation:** **70% of India's coffee is exported**, mainly to Europe.

#### 4.3 Analysis of Statements

- **Statement (I): Incorrect** – India is the **7th largest**, not **2nd largest**, producer globally.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – Around **70% of India's coffee is exported**.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – Grown in **deep, fertile, slightly acidic soils**, ideal for high-quality coffee.
- **Statement (IV): Correct** – **Chikmagalur, Coorg, and Hassan (Karnataka)** are major producing regions.

**4.4 Conclusion:** The **Indian coffee sector** remains a pillar of **agricultural exports and livelihood security**, balancing **sustainability and economic growth**.

✓ Hence, the correct answer is (c) — Statements II, III and IV only.

10) ✓ Correct Answer: (c) I, II and IV only

### Explanation

#### 5.1 Context

- The **National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)** was established in **2003** under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**.
- It serves as India's apex body for **biodiversity regulation, sustainable use, and equitable benefit sharing**.

#### 5.2 Key Aspects

- **Framework:** Created under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002** (✗ not under the Environment Protection Act).
- **Functions:**
  - **Regulatory:** Approves access to biological resources for research/commercial use.
  - **Advisory:** Provides policy recommendations to the government.

- **Institutional Coordination:** Works with **State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)** and **Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs)** for **decentralized conservation**.
- **Location:** Headquarters in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.

### 5.3 Analysis of Statements

- **Statement (I): Correct** – NBA is headquartered in **Chennai**.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – **SBBs** and **BMCs** function under the same Act, complementing NBA's objectives.
- **Statement (III): Incorrect** – Established under the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**, not the **Environment Protection Act**.
- **Statement (IV): Correct** – Performs **regulatory** and **advisory** functions on biological resources.

**5.4 Conclusion:** The **NBA** is vital to India's **biodiversity governance**, ensuring **decentralized conservation** and **equitable resource management**.

✓ Hence, the correct answer is (c) — **Statements I, II and IV only**.

**11) ✓ Correct Answer: (d) Ratio of a building's total built-up area to its plot area**

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept and Definition

- The **Floor Space Index (FSI)**, also called **Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**, is a key **urban planning parameter** that determines how much construction is allowed on a given plot of land.
- **Formula:**

$$\text{FSI (or FAR)} = \frac{\text{Total Built-up Area of all floors}}{\text{Total Plot Area}}$$

#### 2. Urban Policy Framework

- FSI/FAR is regulated by **urban local bodies (ULBs)** through **zoning regulations** and **development control rules (DCRs)**.
- It ensures a **balance between built-up density, infrastructure capacity, and environmental sustainability**.

#### 3. Implementation Context

- **Low FSI:** Leads to **urban sprawl**, increased travel distances, and higher infrastructure costs.
- **High FSI:** Encourages **vertical development, efficient land use**, and supports **affordable housing** and **public transport-oriented growth**.

#### 4. Contemporary Significance

- In cities like **Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru**, **higher FSI norms** are being adopted to address **housing shortages** and promote **compact, climate-resilient cities**.
- FSI reform is central to **India's National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF)** and **Smart Cities Mission**.

#### 5. Option Analysis

- (a) ✗ Refers to **population density**, not FSI.
- (b) ✗ Refers to **green cover ratio**.
- (c) ✗ Indicates **housing density**, not built-up area ratio.
- (d) ✓ **Correct** – FSI/FAR = Ratio of **total built-up area to plot area**.

✓ **Conclusion:** **FSI/FAR** is a critical measure for **urban density control and sustainable city planning**, directly influencing the **built environment and livability**.

**12) ✓ Correct Answer: (b) Digitize and catalog India's manuscript heritage**

### Explanation

#### 1. Context

- The **Gyan Bharatam Mission (2025)**, launched by the **Ministry of Culture**, focuses on **preserving India's manuscript heritage** through **digitization, cataloging, and dissemination**.
- It represents a **cultural-technological initiative** integrating **AI, blockchain, and OCR** for heritage management.

### 2. Key Aspects

- **Policy Framework:** Part of India's **Knowledge Heritage Preservation Program**, under the **National Mission on Manuscripts (NMM)**.
- **Institutional Collaboration:** MoUs signed with **17 institutions**, including archives, libraries, and research centers.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Establishes a **National Digital Repository** for 1 crore manuscripts.
- **Technological Integration:** Uses **AI-based indexing** and **blockchain** for authenticity and provenance tracking.

### 3. Significance

- Preserves **ancient Indian knowledge systems**, literature, and philosophy.
- Enables **public and scholarly access** to digitized content.
- Strengthens India's **soft power and cultural diplomacy**.

### 4. Option Analysis

- (a) ❌ Not related to archaeological excavation.
- (b) ✅ **Correct** – Mission's core focus is **digitization and cataloging of manuscripts**.
- (c) ❌ Not linked to space or digital health.
- (d) ❌ Not about translation of foreign texts.

✅ **Conclusion:** The **Gyan Bharatam Mission** symbolizes **India's digital cultural renaissance**, ensuring **knowledge preservation and accessibility** through technology.

13) ✅ **Correct Answer:** (a) **Loaning or gifting giant pandas to other countries as a symbol of goodwill**

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview

- **Panda Diplomacy** is a hallmark of **China's soft power diplomacy**, where **giant pandas** are loaned or gifted to other countries as **symbols of friendship and goodwill**.
- The practice blends **wildlife conservation** with **international relations**.

#### 2. Policy and Historical Context

- Originated in the **1950s**, popularized during **Premier Zhou Enlai's era**.
- Pandas were gifted to allies, but since the **1980s**, they are **loaned** under long-term conservation and research agreements.
- Recipients pay **annual fees**, with proceeds funding **panda conservation** in China.

#### 3. Global Context

- Pandas have been sent to the **U.S., Japan, U.K., and France** as part of major diplomatic milestones.
- Similar examples include **Koala Diplomacy** (Australia) and **Elephant Diplomacy** (Thailand).

#### 4. Option Analysis

- (a) ✅ **Correct** – Panda Diplomacy = gifting or loaning pandas as goodwill symbols.
- (b) ❌ Musical diplomacy not relevant.
- (c) ❌ Sending scientists abroad unrelated.
- (d) ❌ Exporting herbs not applicable.

✅ **Conclusion:** **Panda Diplomacy** showcases **China's soft power**—a blend of **symbolic goodwill, cultural outreach, and strategic diplomacy**.

14) ✅ **Correct Answer:** (b) **II only**

### Explanation

#### 1.1 Policy Framework

- Announced in **April 2025** by the **Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY)**.
- Financial outlay: **₹22,919 crore**.
- Aims to make India a **global hub for electronics component manufacturing**, reducing import dependency.

### 1.2 Incentive Mechanisms

- **Turnover Linked Incentive (TLI):**
  - Duration: **6 years** with **1-year gestation**.
  - Based on incremental turnover.
- **Capex Incentive:**
  - Duration: **5 years**, not 7 (X).
  - Covers capital investments in sub-assemblies and core components.

### 1.3 Significance

- Complements **PLI Scheme** and **National Policy on Electronics (NPE 2019)**.
- Promotes **Atmanirbhar Bharat**, **job creation**, and **high-value exports**.
- Encourages **domestic + FDI participation** in India's electronics ecosystem.

### 2. Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Incorrect** – Capex incentive is for **5 years**, not 7 years.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – ECMS targets both **domestic and international investments** to boost manufacturing.

✓ **Conclusion:** ECMS is a critical step toward **self-reliant electronics manufacturing**, ensuring **supply chain resilience and global competitiveness**.

Hence, the correct answer is **(b) — II only**.

15) ✓ **Correct Answer:** (a) I, II and III only

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview

- **Coal Gasification** is a **thermochemical process** that converts coal into **syngas** (mixture of CO, H<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>).
- Conducted under **high temperature and pressure** with **limited oxygen**, i.e., **partial oxidation**.

#### 2. Policy Framework

- Promoted under the **National Coal Gasification Mission (NCGM)** to achieve **100 MT coal gasification capacity by 2030**.
- Aims to utilize India's **high-ash domestic coal** for **cleaner fuel production**, reducing crude oil imports.

#### 3. Key Environmental Mechanism

- Integrated with **Carbon Capture, Utilisation, and Storage (CCUS)** to reduce **carbon footprint** and enable **low-emission fuel cycles**.

#### 4. Challenges

- Most global technologies are designed for **low-ash coal** (e.g., Australian/Indonesian coal).
- Indian coal has **high ash content (30–45%)**, requiring **technology adaptation** (e.g., fluidized bed gasifiers).
- **High input cost** and **environmental risk** remain operational challenges.

#### 5. Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Correct** – CCUS integration enhances environmental sustainability.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – Global gasification technologies require modification for high-ash Indian coal.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – Coal gasification involves **partial oxidation under high temperature and pressure**.

✓ **Conclusion:** Coal Gasification with CCUS is vital for India's **clean coal strategy**, enabling **energy diversification and low-carbon growth**.

Hence, the correct answer is **(a) — I, II and III only**.

16) **Answer:** (b) I and III only

### Explanation:

• **Conceptual clarity — What is Burevestnik?**

- **Burevestnik (SSC-X-9 Skyfall)** is a **nuclear-powered, long-range cruise missile** under Russia's strategic modernization.

- Designed for **extended endurance**, **low-altitude flight**, and **unpredictable paths**, complicating missile defense.
- **Statement check**
  - **(I) Part of Russia's new nuclear arsenal — Correct.** It's repeatedly showcased as a **next-gen strategic system**.
  - **(II) Short-range, solid-fuel ballistic missile — Incorrect.** It is **not** a ballistic missile and **not** solid-fuel; it's a **nuclear-powered cruise missile**.
  - **(III) NATO name SSC-X-9 Skyfall — Correct.** That is its **reported NATO designation**.
- **Contemporary relevance / implications**
  - Raises **arms-control**, **safety**, and **environmental** concerns (nuclear propulsion).
  - Demonstrates a shift toward **non-traditional propulsion** to **evade air defenses**.

**17) Answer:** (a) II and III only

**Explanation:**

- **Conceptual clarity — What are stablecoins?**
  - **Stablecoins** are **blockchain-based tokens** designed to **maintain stable value** by **pegging** to **fiat** (USD, EUR, JPY) or other **reserve assets**.
- **Statement check**
  - **(I) Bitcoin is a stablecoin — Incorrect.** Bitcoin is **volatile** and **not pegged**.
  - **(II) Pegged to fiat for stability — Correct.** Pegs (e.g., **USDT, USDC, JPYC**) reduce price swings.
  - **(III) Enable fast, low-cost, secure transactions — Correct.** Used for **remittances, settlement**, and **on/off-ramps** between crypto and TradFi.
- **Contemporary relevance / implications**
  - Growing **regulatory** focus (reserve quality, transparency).
  - Use cases in **cross-border payments** and **DeFi** rails.

**18) Answer:** (a) I, II and III

**Explanation:**

- **Conceptual clarity — Loktak & Keibul Lamjao**
  - **Loktak Lake (Manipur): largest freshwater lake** in NE India; famous for **phumdis** (floating biomass).
  - **Keibul Lamjao National Park** (within Loktak): the **world's only floating national park**; critical habitat of the **Sangai** (brow-antlered deer).
- **Statement check**
  - **(I) Montreux Record (since 1993) — Correct.** Signals **ecological concerns** under the Ramsar framework.
  - **(II) Largest freshwater lake in NE India with phumdis — Correct.** Defining ecological feature.
  - **(III) Only floating national park globally — Correct.** Unique conservation value.
- **Contemporary relevance / challenges**
  - **Eutrophication, encroachment**, hydrological alterations; need **integrated wetland management**, community participation, and **regulated tourism**.

**19) Answer:** (a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II explains Statement-I

**Explanation:**

- **Conceptual clarity — Western Indian Ocean Region (WIOR)**
  - Connects **Asia-Africa-Middle East**; hosts **vital sea lanes** for **energy** and **trade**.
- **Statement check**
  - **Statement-I (Rising geopolitical importance) — Correct.** WIOR is central to **energy security, trade flows**, and **power projection**.

- **Statement-II (Chokepoints: Hormuz, Bab-el-Mandeb) — Correct.** Hormuz carries ~20% of global oil; Bab-el-Mandeb links Asia–Europe routes.
- **Explanation link:** The **presence and throughput of these chokepoints** directly **explain** WIOR’s **heightened geopolitical significance** → II explains I.
- **Contemporary relevance / India angle**
  - **SAGAR doctrine, IFC-IOR, Operation Sankalp;** focus on **maritime domain awareness, anti-piracy, and resilient supply chains.**

**20) Answer:** (b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, but Statement-II does not explain Statement-I

**Explanation:**

- **Conceptual clarity — UAE Consensus (COP28)**
  - The **UAE Consensus (COP28)** reaffirms the **1.5°C goal** and **net-zero by 2050**, with directions to **triple renewables, double efficiency, and scale climate finance.**
- **Statement check**
  - **Statement-I — Correct.** It reaffirms **1.5°C** and **net-zero by 2050** within the **Global Stocktake.**
  - **Statement-II — Correct.** It calls for a “**transition away from fossil fuels**” in a **just and balanced** manner.
  - **Why II doesn’t explain I:** The **transition-away clause** is **one component** of the broader package; it does **not logically explain** why the **1.5°C/net-zero targets** are reaffirmed (which stem from **Paris architecture** and **science-based pathways**). Thus, both are true, but **II is not the explanatory basis** for I.
- **Contemporary relevance / implications**
  - Emphasis on **equity, finance, adaptation, and loss & damage;** operationalizes **accelerated NDCs** and **sectoral transitions** while safeguarding **developmental needs.**

**21) ✓ Correct Answer:** (c) **The GST Council providing a platform for both Union and State governments**

**Explanation**

### 1. Conceptual Clarity — “Self-rule with Shared-rule”

- The Indian Constitution embodies a **federal system** where **power is divided** between the **Union and the States.**
- The principle of “**self-rule with shared-rule**” implies that while States enjoy **autonomy**, they also participate in **collective national decision-making.**
- This cooperative mechanism promotes **unity in diversity** and ensures **balanced governance.**

### 2. Key Constitutional Framework

- **Federal Features:**
  - Dual polity – Union and States
  - Written Constitution and Supremacy of the Constitution
  - Division of powers (Union, State, Concurrent Lists)
  - Independent Judiciary
- **Cooperative Instruments:**
  - **GST Council** – Promotes fiscal federalism through joint decision-making.
  - **NITI Aayog** – Platform for policy dialogue between Centre and States.

### 3. Option Analysis

- **(a) ✗** Refers to central unilateral powers; lacks shared-rule.
- **(b) ✗** Indicates central dominance, not cooperative federalism.
- **(c) ✓ Correct** – The **GST Council** institutionalizes cooperative federalism, exemplifying “**shared-rule**” between Centre and States.
- **(d) ✗** Refers to a **unitary feature**, not federal collaboration.

### 4. Contemporary Relevance

- The **GST regime** showcases both **cooperation and friction** between Centre and States.
- It reflects **dynamic fiscal federalism** where joint policy design fosters **harmonized taxation** and **resource sharing.**

✔ **Conclusion:** The **GST Council** epitomizes “**self-rule with shared-rule**”, representing **cooperative federalism** — a balance between **state autonomy** and **national unity**.

22) ✔ **Correct Answer:** (c) Carry energy from the Sun’s surface into the corona, contributing to its high temperatures

### Explanation

#### 1. Conceptual Overview — Alfvén Waves

- **Alfvén waves** are **magnetohydrodynamic (MHD)** waves that travel through **ionized plasma** along the **Sun’s magnetic field lines**.
- They are named after **Hannes Alfvén**, who first proposed them in **1942**.

#### 2. Scientific Significance

- **Energy Transfer:**
  - Carry energy from the **solar surface (photosphere)** to the **corona**, heating it to **millions of Kelvin** — a phenomenon called the **coronal heating problem**.
- **Wave Properties:**
  - Generated by magnetic disturbances and propagate at the **Alfvén speed**, depending on magnetic field strength and plasma density.
- **Detection:**
  - Observed through **Doppler shifts** in coronal imaging studies (Solar Orbiter, Parker Solar Probe).

#### 3. Option Analysis

- (a) ✘ Related to **solar flares**, not Alfvén waves.
- (b) ✘ They are **magnetic plasma oscillations**, not **gravitational waves**.
- (c) ✔ **Correct** – They **transport magnetic energy** to the corona, explaining its high temperature.
- (d) ✘ **Sunspots** are formed by localized magnetic field concentrations, unrelated to wave propagation.

✔ **Conclusion:** **Alfvén waves** are crucial to understanding **solar dynamics**, **space weather prediction**, and **coronal heating mechanisms**, bridging solar and astrophysical research.

23) ✔ **Correct Answer:** (b) Switzerland

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview — Baltic Sea Region

- The **Baltic Sea** is a **brackish inland sea** in **Northern Europe**, bounded by **nine countries**:
  - **Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark, and Russia**.
- It is connected to the **North Sea** via the **Danish Straits** and the **Kiel Canal**.

#### 2. Economic and Strategic Importance

- A crucial route for **energy transport, trade, and fisheries**.
- Strategic for **NATO, EU, and Baltic energy security**, especially amid evolving **Russia–Europe relations**.

#### 3. Option Analysis

- (a) ✘ **Poland** borders the Baltic Sea.
- (b) ✔ **Correct** – **Switzerland** is **landlocked**, does **not** border the Baltic Sea.
- (c) ✘ **Latvia** borders the Baltic Sea.
- (d) ✘ **Germany** has a Baltic coastline (Kiel, Lübeck).

✔ **Conclusion:** **Switzerland**, being **landlocked**, does **not** border the **Baltic Sea**, distinguishing it from other listed nations.

24) ✔ **Correct Answer:** (c) Both I and II

### Explanation

#### 1. Context — Global Nuclear Treaties

The **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** and **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** are the **two cornerstones** of global nuclear governance.

### 2. Treaty Frameworks

- **NPT (1970):**
  - Seeks to **prevent proliferation** of nuclear weapons and promote **peaceful use of nuclear energy**.
  - Has **191 members**, except **India, Israel, Pakistan, South Sudan**.
  - Divides countries into **Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS)** and **Non-Nuclear-Weapon States (NNWS)**.
- **CTBT (1996):**
  - **Prohibits all nuclear explosions** for any purpose.
  - Not yet in force; pending ratification by key states (U.S., China, North Korea, India, Pakistan).

### 3. Statement Analysis

- **(I) Correct** – NPT’s membership and exclusions are accurate.
- **(II) Correct** – CTBT prohibits nuclear testing; India, Bhutan, and Pakistan have not signed.

### 4. Relevance for India

- India maintains **non-signatory status** citing **security, sovereignty, and discriminatory classification** (NWS vs. NNWS).

✅ **Conclusion:** Both NPT and CTBT aim to **limit nuclear proliferation** and promote **global disarmament**, forming the bedrock of **nuclear diplomacy**.

25) ✅ **Correct Answer: (d) I and III only**

#### Explanation

##### 1. Concept — UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

- The **UCCN**, launched by **UNESCO in 2004**, connects cities that prioritize **creativity and cultural industries** as drivers of **sustainable urban development**.

##### 2. Key Features

- **Seven Creative Fields:**
  - Crafts & Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Music, and Media Arts.
- **Purpose:** Promote **innovation, knowledge sharing, and urban revitalization**.
- **India’s Participation:** Jaipur (Crafts), Chennai (Music), Hyderabad (Gastronomy), Gwalior (Music), and **Lucknow (Music)**.

##### 3. Statement Analysis

- **(I) Correct** – UCCN was launched in **2004**, not 2014.
- **(II) Incorrect** – **Lucknow** is not India’s first city in its category; **Hyderabad** joined earlier.
- **(III) Correct** – The **seven creative fields** are correct as per UNESCO’s classification.

##### 4. Broader Relevance

- Aligns with **SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities)** and **SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth)**.
- Encourages **urban innovation** and **cultural diplomacy**.

✅ **Conclusion:** The **UCCN (2004)** integrates **culture into development planning**, and India’s participation underscores its **diverse creative potential**.

Hence, the correct answer is **(d) — I and III only**.

26) ✅ **Correct Answer: (a) II and III only**

#### Explanation

##### 1.1 Context

- The **Iberian Lynx (Lynx pardinus)** is a **flagship conservation species** native to the **Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal)**.

- Once **Critically Endangered**, its population recovery through sustained conservation makes it a global **model of species restoration**.

### 1.2 Conservation Framework

- **IUCN Red List Status: Vulnerable** (upgraded from *Endangered* in 2015).
- **Key Conservation Strategies:**
  - **Habitat restoration** and reforestation.
  - **Reintroduction programs** in Andalusia and Portugal.
  - **Boosting prey population** (wild rabbits).
  - **Monitoring genetic diversity** to prevent inbreeding.

### 1.3 Ecological Characteristics

- Prefers **mosaic habitats**—a mix of scrubland, forest edges, and open meadows.
- Exhibits **crepuscular and nocturnal behavior**, active during dawn and dusk; rests in the day.
- Serves as an **indicator species** for **Mediterranean ecosystem health**.

### 1.4 Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Incorrect** – IUCN status is **Vulnerable**, not *Endangered*.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – The lynx requires **mosaic habitats** for prey and cover.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – It is mainly **nocturnal and crepuscular** but may show **daytime activity** in winter.

✔ **Conclusion:** The **Iberian Lynx** demonstrates a **conservation success story** through **habitat recovery and species reintroduction**, but remains vulnerable to **habitat loss and disease**.

Hence, the correct answer is (a) II and III only.

27) ✔ **Correct Answer: (d) II and III only**

### Explanation

#### 2.1 Conceptual Overview

- **Savings Rate** = The proportion of **national income (GDP)** that is **saved rather than consumed**.
- It includes savings by **households, corporates, and the government** sector.

#### 2.2 Economic Relevance

- A **higher savings rate** promotes **domestic capital formation** and **investment-led growth**, reducing dependence on external borrowing.
- India's **gross savings rate** in **2024** stood at approximately **30.2% of GDP** (as per RBI and MoSPI data).

#### 2.3 Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Incorrect** – Savings rate  $\neq$  Sum of investments; it is the **portion of income not spent** on consumption.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – It represents **aggregate savings** from **households, businesses, and government**.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – **Current savings rate (~30.2%)** confirms India's sound domestic savings base.

✔ **Conclusion:** India's savings rate remains **crucial for sustaining economic growth** and financing investment without external dependence.

Hence, the correct answer is (d) II and III only.

28) ✔ **Correct Answer: (d) I and III only**

### Explanation

#### 3.1 Context

- The **Baltic Sea** is the **world's largest brackish inland water body**, bounded by **nine nations: Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark, and Russia**.
- Connected to the **North Sea** via the **Kiel Canal** and **Danish Straits**.

#### 3.2 Key Characteristics

- **Brackish Water:** Due to low salinity from large **river inflows** (Vistula, Neva) and limited exchange with the Atlantic.
- **Economic Importance:** A crucial route for **energy transport** and **maritime trade**; under **environmental stress** due to eutrophication.
- **Strategic Importance:** Key region for **EU-NATO-Russia** geopolitics.

### 3.3 Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Correct** – It is indeed the **largest brackish inland sea** in the world.
- **Statement (II): Incorrect** – The **Baltic Sea has lower salinity** (not higher) than open oceans.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – The **Kiel Canal** links the **Baltic** with the **North Sea**.

✓ **Conclusion:** The **Baltic Sea** is central to **European trade, ecology, and security**, balancing economic use and environmental preservation.

Hence, the correct answer is (d) I and III only.

29) ✓ **Correct Answer:** (c) Statement I is correct, but Statement II is incorrect

### Explanation

#### 4.1 Context

- India's **federal structure** balances **national unity** with **regional autonomy**, governed by **Schedule VII** and **Article 3** of the Constitution.
- The framework defines how **powers are divided** and **states can be reorganized**.

#### 4.2 Key Constitutional Provisions

- **Schedule VII:**
  - Divides legislative powers into **Union, State, and Concurrent Lists**.
- **Article 3:**
  - **Parliament** can form new states or alter boundaries.
  - Requires the **President to refer** the Bill to the concerned **State Legislature** for its **views** (not consent).

#### 4.3 Statement Analysis

- **Statement-I: Correct** – Schedule VII forms the **basis of India's federal structure**.
- **Statement-II: Incorrect** – State **consent is not binding**; Parliament can proceed even if the state disagrees.

#### 4.4 Relevance

- Highlights India's "**federal but not confederal**" nature.
- Reflects **strong centre tendencies**, yet maintaining **state participation** through institutions like **GST Council** and **Inter-State Council**.

✓ **Conclusion:** India's system combines **federal distribution** with **unitary flexibility**, enabling adaptability and national coherence.

Hence, the correct answer is (c) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect.

30) ✓ **Correct Answer:** (c) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect

### Explanation

#### 5.1 Context

- The **Arya Samaj**, founded by **Swami Dayanand Saraswati** in **1875**, was a major **19th-century reform movement** advocating **rationality, equality, and Vedic purity**.
- It sought to remove **superstition, caste discrimination, and ritualism** from Hindu society.

#### 5.2 Key Principles

- Emphasized **Vedic authority** and **monotheism**.
- Rejected **idolatry, ritual worship, and priestly dominance**.
- Promoted **education**, especially through **DAV institutions**.
- Stood for **social equality** and **women's empowerment**.

### 5.3 Statement Analysis

- **Statement-I: Correct** – Arya Samaj denounced **idol worship** and upheld **Vedic rationalism**.
- **Statement-II: Incorrect** – It **opposed the hereditary caste system**, promoting **social equality** and **merit-based status**.

### 5.4 Broader Impact

- Influenced **nationalist thought, reformist movements**, and **constitutional ideals of equality and rationality**.
- Inspired leaders like **Lala Lajpat Rai** and movements such as **Shuddhi (reconversion)**.

✔ **Conclusion:** The Arya Samaj symbolized the **fusion of Vedic revivalism and social reform**, aligning religion with **reason and equality**.

Hence, the correct answer is (c) **Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect**.

### 31) ✔ Correct Answer: (b) Food and Beverages

#### Explanation

#### 1. Conceptual Overview – Consumer Price Index (CPI)

- The **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** is India's **primary inflation indicator**, measuring **changes in the retail prices** of goods and services consumed by households.
- It is compiled by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** and used by the **RBI** for monetary policy decisions under the **Flexible Inflation Targeting Framework (4% ± 2%)**.

#### 2. Structure of CPI

The CPI basket represents the **average household consumption pattern** and includes:

- **Food & Beverages**
- **Housing**
- **Miscellaneous (Health, Education, Transport, etc.)**
- **Fuel & Light**
- **Clothing & Footwear**

Weights are derived from the **Household Consumer Expenditure Survey (HCES)** to ensure accurate representation of spending habits.

#### 3. Current Weight Distribution (Base Year 2012 = 100)

Category	Weight (All India)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
<b>Food &amp; Beverages</b>	<b>45.86</b>	54.18	36.29
<b>Housing</b>	10.07	0.00	21.67
<b>Clothing &amp; Footwear</b>	6.53	7.36	5.57
<b>Fuel &amp; Light</b>	6.84	7.94	5.58
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	28.31	22.10	31.31

➡ **Food & Beverages has the highest weight**, making it the **most influential component** in determining CPI inflation trends.

#### 4. Option Analysis

- (a) ✗ *Housing* – Weight is **10.07%** (all-India); **not the highest**.
- (b) ✔ *Food & Beverages* – **Highest share (45.86%)**, drives CPI fluctuations.
- (c) ✗ *Fuel & Light* – Only **6.84%** weight.
- (d) ✗ *Miscellaneous* – **28.31%**, less than Food & Beverages.

#### 5. Contemporary Relevance

- Food inflation accounts for **~50% of CPI inflation** in India, influencing **RBI's repo rate decisions**.
- **Supply shocks** (due to monsoon, global commodity prices) cause sharp CPI variations.
- CPI is vital for **wage indexation, DA adjustments, and policy planning**.

✓ **Conclusion:** The **Food & Beverages** category has the **largest weight (45.86%)** in CPI, making it the **dominant driver** of inflation in India.

Hence, the correct answer is **(b)**.

32) ✓ **Correct Answer: (b) National Education Policy 2020**

### Explanation

#### 1. Conceptual Overview – Mera Yuva Gram Sabha (MYGS)

- **Mera Yuva Gram Sabha (MYGS)** is a **participatory governance and civic education initiative**.
- Launched in **2024** by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**, in collaboration with the **Ministries of Education and Tribal Affairs**.
- Aims to build **democratic consciousness and leadership among youth** through **simulated Gram Sabha sessions**.

#### 2. Policy Linkage

- **Aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which promotes **experiential learning, citizenship education, and community engagement**.
- Encourages youth to participate in **local self-governance**, fostering **Janbhagidari (public participation)**.

#### 3. Implementation Mechanism

- Conducted in **Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, Eklavya Model Residential Schools, and State Government Schools**.
- Involves students in **mock Gram Sabhas** to discuss **local development issues**, enhancing awareness of **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**.
- Promotes **inclusivity** by engaging **tribal and rural youth**.

#### 4. Option Analysis

- **(a) ✗** Not related to health sector.
- **(b) ✓** **Correct** – Directly linked to **NEP 2020's experiential education and democratic learning framework**.
- **(c) ✗** Digital literacy is not the mission's focus.
- **(d) ✗** Skill development is incidental, not the primary goal.

#### 5. Contemporary Relevance

- Reinforces **grassroots democracy and civic learning**.
- Encourages the youth to become **active citizens and future leaders** of participatory governance.

✓ **Conclusion:** MYGS aligns with NEP 2020, integrating **democratic education with civic engagement** to foster **inclusive, participatory governance**.

Hence, the correct answer is **(b)**.

33) ✓ **Correct Answer: (c) Both I and II**

### Explanation

#### 1. Context – Cryptocurrency Regulation in India

- Cryptocurrencies are **decentralized digital assets** built on **blockchain technology**.
- India's stance has evolved from **regulatory prohibition** to **legal supervision** emphasizing **AML (Anti-Money Laundering)** compliance.

#### 2. Key Legal Developments

- **2018:** RBI restricted banks from dealing in crypto.
- **2020:** Supreme Court struck down RBI's ban (violated Article 19(1)(g) – Freedom to Trade).
- **2023:** Government extended **PMLA (Prevention of Money Laundering Act)** provisions to **crypto exchanges**, mandating **KYC norms and reporting standards**.

#### 3. Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Correct** – In **March 2023**, crypto entities brought under **PMLA** to curb **illicit fund flows** and ensure **compliance**.

- **Statement (II): Correct** – The **Supreme Court’s 2020 judgment** upheld **trade freedom**, reversing RBI’s circular.

#### 4. Policy Impact

- Moves India toward **regulated acceptance** of digital assets.
- Balances **innovation, investor protection, and financial stability**.
- Aligns with **global FATF (Financial Action Task Force)** norms on virtual assets.

✓ **Conclusion:** India’s crypto framework now ensures **regulatory oversight and judicial protection**, marking a shift from **prohibition to supervision**.

Hence, the correct answer is (c) Both I and II.

34) ✓ **Correct Answer:** (b) I and II only

#### Explanation

##### 1. Topic – Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar

- **Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar (1908–1963)** was a **nationalist, social reformer, and political leader** from **Tamil Nadu**.
- Prominent associate of **Subhas Chandra Bose** and supporter of **Forward Bloc** ideology.

##### 2. Contributions

- **Temple Entry Movement:** Advocated for **caste equality** and **social justice**.
- **Repeal of Criminal Tribes Act (CTA):** Worked for **rehabilitation and dignity** of marginalized communities.
- **Political Role:** Strengthened **Congress organization** in rural Tamil Nadu and later supported **Netaji’s inclusive nationalism**.

##### 3. Statement Analysis

- **(I): Correct** – Close associate of **Subhas Chandra Bose**; expanded Congress influence in South India.
- **(II): Correct** – Played key role in **Temple Entry** and **CTA repeal** movements.
- **(III): Incorrect** – Never served as **Chief Minister**; popularly called the “**Netaji of the South**.”

##### 4. Broader Impact

- His life symbolizes **integration of social reform with freedom struggle**.
- Continues to inspire movements for **social equality** and **self-respect** in Tamil Nadu.

✓ **Conclusion:** **Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar** remains a **symbol of equality, reform, and nationalism**, blending **social justice with patriotic leadership**.

Hence, the correct answer is (b) I and II only.

35) ✓ **Correct Answer:** (b) I and II only

#### Explanation

##### 1.1 Constitutional Basis

- Governed by **Article 124(2)** of the Constitution.
- Appointment made by the **President of India** based on **seniority convention** and **consultation process**.

##### 1.2 Procedure

1. **Outgoing CJI Recommendation:** Suggests the name of the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court.
2. **Law Ministry:** Processes the recommendation and forwards it to the **Prime Minister**.
3. **Prime Minister:** Advises the **President** to appoint the next CJI.
4. **President:** Issues warrant of appointment.

##### 1.3 Convention and Exceptions

- **Convention:** Senior-most judge is appointed as CJI.
- **Exceptions:** In rare cases (e.g., during 1970s), deviations occurred leading to debates over **executive interference**.

### 1.4 Statement Analysis

- **(I): Correct** – Prime Minister advises **President** for appointment.
- **(II): Correct** – Law Ministry initiates process by **seeking recommendation** from the outgoing CJI.
- **(III): Incorrect** – Seniority is a convention, not a **binding rule**, though widely followed.

✓ **Conclusion:** The CJI appointment process reflects **executive consultation with judiciary**, ensuring **continuity, seniority, and independence**.

Hence, the correct answer is **(b) I and II only**.

**36) Answer:** (b) I, III and IV only

**Explanation:**

• **Concept & scope:**

- **Secondary sanctions** are penalties imposed by a country (e.g., USA) on **third-party states/firms** that transact with a **primary-sanctioned** target, thereby **extending extraterritorial reach** of sanctions.

• **Statement-wise validation:**

- **(I) Force multiplier for primary sanctions — Correct.** They amplify pressure by threatening third parties with loss of market access, dollar clearing, financing, etc.
- **(II) Only penalize the target state — Incorrect.** By design, they **penalize third countries/entities** that engage with the target.
- **(III) Restrict normal commerce by third states — Correct.** They deter banks, shippers, insurers, refiners, etc., from “**business as usual**” with the target.
- **(IV) Extraterritorial application — Correct.** They apply **beyond the sanctioning state’s territory**, often via leverage over global finance and supply chains.

• **Contemporary relevance:**

- Shapes **energy trade** (e.g., Russian oil), **shipping/insurance**, and **financial flows**, forcing recalibration of **trade routes and payment mechanisms**.

**37) Answer:** (c) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect

**Explanation:**

• **Legal position in India:**

- **Statement-I (Correct):** Crypto assets are recognized in law as **Virtual Digital Assets (VDAs)** via the **Finance Act, 2022**, with a **30% tax regime**, **1% TDS**, and subsequent **PMLA coverage** mandating KYC/record-keeping. They are **not** treated as “speculative transactions” under **Sec. 43(5) IT Act**.
- **Statement-II (Incorrect):** The **RBI’s 2018 circular** restricted banks from servicing crypto businesses but **did not outlaw holding/using crypto**. The **Supreme Court (2020)** set aside the banking restriction for violating **Article 19(1)(g)**; hence **no blanket ban** exists.

• **Policy trajectory:**

- From de-facto banking curbs to a **regulated-oversight model**: taxation, **AML/KYC** obligations, and compliance under **PMLA**, while a comprehensive statute is still evolving.

**38) Answer:** (a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II explains Statement-I

**Explanation:**

• **Concept of G-2:**

- Envisions the **US and China** as **co-managers** of global order—coordinating on **economy, security, technology**, while competing elsewhere—signaling a drift toward **bipolarity**.

• **Statement-wise validation:**

- **Statement-I — Correct:** G-2 implies two dominant powers **steering global governance**, a move away from uni/multipolarity.
- **Statement-II — Correct & explanatory:** The idea **specifically names the US-China dyad** coordinating on global problems; this **operationalizes** the bipolar premise in Statement-I, hence **II explains I**.

### • Implications for India/Global South:

- Necessitates **strategic autonomy**, **issue-based coalitions** (Quad/BRICS/IOA), and hedging within a **bipolar strategic theatre**.

**39) Answer:** (c) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect

### Explanation:

#### • What is KBF/KMGBF?

- **Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF):** A multi-partner trust fund to finance implementation of the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)**, prioritizing **developing countries** (capacity, finance, implementation).
- **KMGBF:** Adopted at **CBD CoP-15** with **4 goals (2050)** and **23 targets (2030)** (e.g., **30x30**), but **non-binding**—relies on **NBSAPs**, monitoring, and voluntary national commitments.

#### • Statement-wise validation:

- **Statement-I — Correct:** KBF's raison d'être is **accelerating KMGBF implementation** via funding/support.
- **Statement-II — Incorrect:** KMGBF is **not legally binding**; it lacks treaty-style enforcement.

#### • Policy salience:

- Delivery hinges on **finance**, **domestic policy uptake**, and **transparent monitoring** (targets, indicators, disclosure).

**40) Answer:** (b) Only two

### Explanation:

#### • Techniques & matching:

- **Blue Carbon Sinks** → **Incorrectly matched** in the pair: Blue carbon refers to **natural carbon storage in coastal ecosystems** (mangroves, salt marshes, seagrasses), **not** aquifer recharge/saltwater intrusion.
- **Ocean Fertilization** → **Correct:** **Micronutrient addition** (e.g., iron) to stimulate **phytoplankton blooms** that draw down CO<sub>2</sub>; some carbon sinks to **deep ocean**.
- **Ocean Alkalinity Enhancement (OAE)** → **Correct:** Adding **alkalinity-enhancing minerals** (e.g., lime/olivine) increases **seawater alkalinity**, shifting carbonate chemistry to **absorb more CO<sub>2</sub>**.

#### • Net assessment:

- **Two pairs (2) and (3) are correct;** pair (1) is **incorrect**.
- Benefits: potentially **durable CO<sub>2</sub> removal**; Risks: **ecological impacts**, **MRV challenges**, **governance gaps**—hence the push for **pilot studies and guardrails**.

**41)  Correct Answer:** (d) **Rapid spread of information across a quantum system, making it inaccessible to local measurements**

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview – Quantum Information Scrambling

- **Quantum Information Scrambling (QIS)** is a phenomenon where **information stored in a few qubits** becomes **rapidly distributed (entangled)** across an entire quantum system.
- The information isn't lost — it becomes **delocalized** and **impossible to retrieve from local measurements**, even though it's still present globally within the system.

#### 2. Key Principles

- **Mechanism:**
  - Scrambling occurs due to **quantum entanglement** and **unitary evolution**, which mix information across many qubits.
- **Difference from Classical Systems:**
  - In classical systems, information diffuses through thermalization; in quantum systems, it **spreads non-locally** due to entanglement.
- **Physical Meaning:**
  - It describes **how fast quantum systems lose track of local information**, crucial for **quantum chaos**, **cryptography**, and **black hole information paradox**.

### 3. Implementation Context

- Experimentally verified by **Google's Sycamore quantum processor**, demonstrating how **scrambling helps preserve quantum coherence** and ensures **security** in **quantum communication**.
- Related to the concept of "**quantum advantage**", where quantum systems outperform classical computers in processing complex operations.

### 4. Option Analysis

- (a) ❌ **Quantum Key Distribution**—concerns secure key sharing, not information dispersal.
- (b) ❌ Scrambling **redistributes**, not **erases**, information.
- (c) ❌ Does not involve **hardware destruction** or data erasure.
- (d) ✅ **Correct** – Information spreads rapidly across qubits, becoming **inaccessible to local observations**, i.e., **scrambled**.

### 5. Contemporary Relevance

- Foundation for **quantum encryption** and **fault-tolerant quantum computing**.
- Used in studying **information paradox in black holes** — theorized that black holes "scramble" information rather than destroy it.

✅ **Conclusion:** Quantum information scrambling demonstrates **how quantum data spreads via entanglement**, making it **secure and globally encoded** — central to **quantum computing, cryptography, and physics of information**.

42) ✅ **Correct Answer: (b) Subsidies contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods**

### Explanation

#### 1. Context – WTO Subsidy Rules

- The **WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM)** classifies subsidies as:
  - **Prohibited Subsidies:** Directly trade-distorting.
  - **Actionable Subsidies:** Cause adverse effects to other members.
  - **Non-actionable Subsidies:** Allowed under certain conditions (rare today).

#### 2. What Are Prohibited Subsidies?

- **Two categories:**
  1. **Export-contingent subsidies** (conditional on export performance).
  2. **Local content subsidies** (conditional on using domestic over imported goods).

➡ Both distort trade by incentivizing domestic production unfairly.

#### 3. Implementation and Impact

- These rules apply equally to **developed and developing countries** (with limited transition periods for LDCs).
- Violation allows affected countries to take **countervailing measures** (tariffs, restrictions).
- Some of India's **PLI schemes** have drawn **scrutiny under SCM** for domestic content criteria.

#### 4. Option Analysis

- (a) ❌ Export subsidies are not automatically prohibited for developing countries with special exceptions.
- (b) ✅ **Correct.** "Local content" subsidies—conditional use of **domestic goods**—are explicitly **prohibited** under **Article 3.1(b)** of the SCM.
- (c) ❌ Subsidies linked to R&D or environmental objectives are not prohibited.
- (d) ❌ Generic fiscal support or tax holidays are not directly prohibited unless contingent.

#### 5. Broader Relevance

- Ensures **fair global trade** and **WTO compliance**.
- Promotes **non-discriminatory access** to markets for all members.

✅ **Conclusion:** Under the **SCM Agreement**, subsidies contingent upon **using domestic inputs** instead of imports are **prohibited** as they distort fair competition.

43)  Correct Answer: (b) Their per capita emissions are 75 times higher than those of the bottom 50% by consumption

### Explanation

#### 1. Context – Climate Inequality Report 2025

- Published by the **World Inequality Lab (WIL)**, the report examines **global disparities in carbon emissions** linked to **wealth and consumption**.
- Highlights how **climate change** and **inequality** reinforce each other.

#### 2. Key Findings

- **Top 1% of global population:**
  - Responsible for **15% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**.
  - Their **per capita emissions** are **75 times higher** than the **bottom 50%**.
- **Top 10%** emit **half of global emissions**.
- **Bottom 50%** contribute less than **10%** of total emissions.

#### 3. Policy Significance

- Calls for **progressive climate action** — linking **emission responsibility with wealth and consumption**.
- Reinforces principles of **climate justice** and **Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR-RC)**.
- Impacts **carbon taxation, climate finance, and just transition policies**.

#### 4. Option Analysis

- (a)  Wrong data — not a key finding.
- (b)  **Correct** – Matches WIL’s major statistic (75x higher emissions for the top 1%).
- (c)  Incorrect number.
- (d)  71% applies to **corporations**, not **individuals**.

**Conclusion:** The **Climate Inequality Report 2025** underscores that **wealthiest individuals drive global emissions disproportionately**, demanding **equitable climate responsibility and financial transfers**.

44)  Correct Answer: (c) Both I and II

### Explanation

#### 1. Context – India’s COP26 Energy Commitments

- At **COP26 (Glasgow, 2021)**, India announced its **Panchamrit** commitments, including:
  - 50% installed capacity from **non-fossil fuel sources** by **2030**.
  - **500 GW** renewable energy capacity by 2030.
  - Net zero emissions by 2070.

#### 2. India’s Progress (as of 2025)

- **Achieved Goal Early:**
  - Non-fossil fuel capacity crossed **51%** in **2025**, **five years ahead** of the 2030 target.
- **Energy Mix:**
  - **Solar:** ~127 GW (largest share)
  - **Wind:** ~53 GW
  - **Hydro:** ~47 GW
  - **Nuclear & Bio-energy:** remaining portion.

#### 3. Policy Mechanisms

- **Schemes:** PLI for solar modules, PM-KUSUM, Green Energy Corridors, Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPOs).
- **Financing:** Green bonds, sovereign green fund initiatives.
- **Institutional Support:** MNRE and SECI enabling large-scale project rollouts.

#### 4. Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Correct** – India achieved the 50% non-fossil capacity target ahead of 2030.

- **Statement (II): Correct** – Solar is the largest component of India’s renewable mix (~127 GW).

### 5. Broader Impact

- Strengthens India’s **climate leadership** and **energy security**.
- Encourages **domestic manufacturing** under **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.
- Challenges remain in **grid integration**, **energy storage**, and **import dependence**.

✔ **Conclusion:** India has achieved its **non-fossil capacity target ahead of time**, with **solar power leading the transition**, reaffirming its role as a **global climate leader**.  
Hence, the correct answer is (c) Both I and II.

45) ✔ **Correct Answer:** (d) Neither I nor II

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview – ICCVAI and Operation Greens

- **Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure (ICCVAI)** and **Operation Greens** are flagship schemes promoting **agricultural value addition**, **cold chain modernization**, and **price stability** for perishable produce.
- Both aim to reduce **post-harvest losses**, ensure **remunerative prices** for farmers, and support **food processing infrastructure**.

#### 2. Scheme Details

Scheme	Implementing Ministry	Main Focus Areas	Coverage
ICCVAI	<b>Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)</b> under <i>Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)</i>	Integrated cold chain, storage, value addition, transport & processing	Farm to retail – fruits, vegetables, dairy, fish, meat, etc.
<b>Operation Greens</b>	<b>MoFPI</b>	Price stabilization, supply chain management, and loss reduction	Originally <b>TOP crops</b> (Tomato, Onion, Potato); expanded to <b>fruits, vegetables, and shrimp</b> under Atmanirbhar Bharat (2020)

#### 3. Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Incorrect** – The **ICCVAI Scheme** is implemented by the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI)**, not by the **Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare**.
- **Statement (II): Incorrect** – **Operation Greens** covers **fruits, vegetables, and shrimp**, not just fruits and vegetables. It was expanded beyond the original **TOP crops** to include wider perishables under the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Package**.

#### 4. Policy Significance

- Both schemes align with:
  - **Doubling Farmers’ Income Initiative** (NITI Aayog).
  - **PMKSY** for agri-infrastructure and cold chain development.
  - **Food security and export diversification** through perishables.

✔ **Conclusion:** Both statements are incorrect — the **ICCVAI Scheme** is implemented by **MoFPI**, and **Operation Greens** includes **shrimp** along with fruits and vegetables.  
Hence, the correct answer is (d) Neither I nor II.

46) ✔ **Correct Answer:** (c) In 2024–25, it contributed nearly 55% of Gross Value Added (GVA)

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview – Services Sector in India

- The **Services Sector** is the **largest contributor to India’s economy**, encompassing **IT, finance, health, trade, transport, education, tourism, and professional services**.
- It is central to India’s transition toward a **knowledge and urban economy**, driving **growth, innovation, and exports**.

#### 2. Key Economic Role

- **Contribution to GVA:**
  - As of 2024–25, services contributed ~55% of India's **Gross Value Added (GVA)**.
- **Employment:**
  - Provides less than **one-third of total jobs**, indicating a **jobless growth pattern** compared to its share in output.
- **Employment Drivers:**
  - IT-BPM, trade, transport, financial services, and construction-led spillovers.

### 3. Statement/Option Analysis

- (a)  Incorrect – Services sector is not the largest employer; **agriculture and construction** dominate employment.
- (b)  Incorrect – Construction has added more jobs than services in recent years.
- (c)  **Correct** – As per latest data (Economic Survey 2024–25), **Services Sector = ~55% GVA**.
- (d)  Incorrect – Employment contribution is below one-third of total jobs.

### 4. Contemporary Context

- Major government initiatives driving the sector:
  - **Digital India, Gati Shakti, PM Vishwakarma, Startup India, Make in India 2.0**, etc.
- **Export potential:** Services exports crossed **\$340 billion (2024–25)**, led by **IT & financial services**.

**Conclusion:** The **Services Sector** remains the **backbone of India's GVA (~55%)**, though its employment generation lags behind.

Hence, the correct answer is (c).

47)  **Correct Answer:** (b) I, II and III

#### Explanation

##### 1. Concept Overview – Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006

- FRA aims to **correct historical injustice** faced by **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** and **Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs)** by recognizing **individual and community forest rights**.
- It ensures **livelihood security** and promotes **participatory forest governance**.

##### 2. Key Legal Provisions

- **Section 4(5):** No eviction or removal of forest dwellers until verification and recognition of rights are completed.
- **Applicability:** Extends to **National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Tiger Reserves**.
- Recognizes **Individual Forest Rights (IFRs)** and **Community Forest Resource (CFR)** rights.

##### 3. Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Correct** – No eviction permitted before completion of rights recognition and verification process.
- **Statement (II): Correct** – FRA legally safeguards forest dwellers against forced eviction and displacement.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – FRA explicitly applies to all protected areas, including National Parks and Tiger Reserves.

##### 4. Relevance & Challenges

- **Relevance:** Aligns with **SDG-1 (No Poverty)** and **SDG-13 (Climate Action)** through inclusive conservation.
- **Challenges:** Implementation delays, conflicting forest and wildlife laws, and awareness gaps.

**Conclusion:** All statements are correct — FRA protects forest dwellers' rights, ensures due process before eviction, and applies across all protected areas.

Hence, the correct answer is (b) I, II and III.

48)  **Correct Answer:** (d) I and III only

#### Explanation

##### 1. Context – International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- The **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** is a **treaty-based intergovernmental organization** co-founded by **India and France** in 2015 at **COP21 (Paris)**.
- It promotes **solar energy deployment, investment, and technology cooperation** across member states.

### 2. Key Institutional Features

- **Headquarters:** Gurugram, India.
- **Membership:** Originally for **tropical countries** (between Tropics of Cancer & Capricorn), but **opened to all UN members** via **2020 amendment**.
- **Mandate:** Scale up **solar financing, capacity building, and cross-border energy trade**.

### 3. Statement Analysis

- **Statement (I): Correct** – Headquarters is in **Gurugram**, symbolizing India's leadership.
- **Statement (II): Incorrect** – Post-2020, ISA's membership includes **all UN states**, not only tropical countries.
- **Statement (III): Correct** – ISA was co-founded by **India and France** at **COP21** in 2015.

### 4. Relevance

- ISA has **124 members/signatories**.
- Major initiatives: **SolarX Grand Challenge, Global Solar Facility, and One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG)** vision.

✔ **Conclusion:** ISA exemplifies India's global climate leadership, with headquarters in **Gurugram** and **universal membership** post-2020 amendment.

Hence, the correct answer is **(d) I and III only**.

49) ✔ **Correct Answer:** (c) I, II and III only

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview – Soil Health Card (SHC) Scheme

- **Launched in 2015** to evaluate **soil fertility and nutrient status** and promote **balanced fertilizer use**.
- Provides farmers with **individual soil reports** containing nutrient data and recommendations.

#### 2. Implementation Framework

- Implemented by the **Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DoA&FW)**.
- Measures **12 key parameters**:
  - **Macronutrients (N, P, K, S)**
  - **Micronutrients (Fe, Mn, Zn, Cu, B)**
  - **Soil Organic Carbon, pH, and Electrical Conductivity (EC)**

#### 3. Statement Analysis

- **(I) Correct:** Integrated into **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) Cafeteria** since 2022–23.
- **(II) Correct:** **Urea** dominates fertilizer usage ( $\approx 68\%$  of total consumption in 2023–24).
- **(III) Correct:**  $\sim 43\%$  of **climate-risk districts** have **low soil organic carbon**, highlighting degradation.
- **(IV) Incorrect:** SHC includes both **macro & micronutrients** plus **pH, EC, and organic carbon**, so the claim that it excludes them is wrong.

#### 4. Relevance

- Enhances **soil productivity, fertilizer efficiency, and climate resilience**.
- Aids in **reducing input costs** and promoting **sustainable agriculture**.

✔ **Conclusion:** The **SHC Scheme** effectively addresses soil degradation and nutrient imbalance, now embedded under **RKVY** for integrated management.

Hence, the correct answer is **(c) I, II and III only**.

50) ✔ **Correct Answer:** (b) I, II and III

### Explanation

#### 1. Concept Overview – East Asia Summit (EAS)

- The **East Asia Summit (EAS)** is a **leaders-led regional platform** founded in **2005** in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.
- It includes **ASEAN's 10 members** plus **8 dialogue partners** — making **18 members** in total.

## An Institute for Civil Services

### 2. Structure & Mandate

- Anchored under **ASEAN's leadership**, promoting **peace, stability, and economic cooperation** in the Indo-Pacific.
- Addresses issues like **maritime security, connectivity, trade, terrorism, and climate resilience**.

### 3. Statement Analysis

- **(I) Correct:** EAS was established in **2005**.
- **(II) Correct:** The **first EAS summit** was held in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.
- **(III) Correct:** All listed countries (India, China, Japan, USA, Russia, etc.) are **EAS members**.

### 4. Relevance

- Strengthens **ASEAN centrality** and **regional security architecture**.
- Acts as a bridge between **Indo-Pacific powers** for dialogue and cooperation.

**Conclusion:** The **East Asia Summit (EAS)**, established in 2005, remains vital to Asia-Pacific diplomacy and regional governance.

**Hence, the correct answer is (b) I, II and III.**