DAILY MCQs COMPILATION

with

EXPLANATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2025

NEXT IAS

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HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. Consider the following pairs

	Languages	**State**
1.	Bhili	Madhya Pradesh
2.	Mundari	Jharkhand
3.	Gondi	Chhattisgarh

How many of the pairs are correctly matched?

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

2. With reference to Dadabhai Naoroji, consider the following statements:

1. He was the first Indian to be elected to the British Parliament as a Liberal Party candidate.
2. He authored Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, which laid out the Drain of Wealth theory.
3. He presided over the Indian National Congress (INC) session of 1906, where Swaraj was declared as its political goal.

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

3. He was the first Indian elected to the House of Commons. He formulated the famous Drain of Wealth theory, gave early expression to the demand for Swaraj at the Indian National Congress, founded the Gujarati fortnightly Rast Goftar, and started the newspaper Voice of India.

Who among the following personalities is described above ?

(a) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
(b) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
(c) Dadabhai Naoroji
(d) Gopal Krishna Gokhale

4. With reference to the 'Dr. Bhupen Hazarika', consider the following statements:

1. He was elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly in 1967.
2. He was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 2019.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only

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

5. Consider the following pairs:

	Crafts	State
1.	Blue Pottery	Uttar Pradesh
2.	Nettippattam	Kerala
3.	Channapatna Toys	Karnataka

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

6. The Langkhon (Langkhun) Festival is celebrated by which of the following tribes?

(a) Toda
(b) Kurumba
(c) Irula
(d) Tiwa

7. He was a staunch advocate of non-violence and human rights. He was often regarded as Mahatma Gandhi's spiritual successor and the National Teacher of India. He is best known for leading the Bhoodan Movement, which promoted land redistribution for social justice. He also translated the Bhagavad Gita into Marathi, naming it Geetai.

Which of the following personalities described above ?

(a) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
(b) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
(c) Vinoba Bhave
(d) Gopal Krishna Gokhale

8. Consider the following statements

1. Munda was the hereditary village head, resolved socio-political disputes while Manki handled unresolved cases.
2. The Manki-Munda system was a self-governing structure with no role in land and revenue matters.

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 Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. He served as the Diwan of Mysore and President of the All-India Manufacturers Organisation.
2. He built the Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) Dam in 1932, creating Asia's largest reservoir.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

10. With reference to the Sarnath, consider the following statements:

1. It is located in Varanasi and is one of the four major Buddhist pilgrimage sites.
2. After attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon at Sarnath.

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 Gussadi dance, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a traditional dance performed by the Raj Gond tribe in Gujarat.
2. The dance is performed only by women who wear headgear decorated with peacock feathers, deer horns, and goat skins

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. Consider the following statements about Chhath Mahaparva:

1. It is celebrated extensively in Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.
2. It is a six-day festival, known for its ecological and egalitarian ethos.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

13. The Sirarakhong Hathei Chilli Festival, recently seen in the news, is primarily associated with which of the following states?

(a) Nagaland
(b) Assam
(c) Meghalaya
(d) Manipur

14. This aboriginal community once had its own independent kingdom before the advent of Ahom rule. Historically, they inhabited the southeastern Brahmaputra valley and had chiefdoms such as the Matak country under leaders like Bodousa.

This description refers to which of the following tribes?

(a) Mising
(b) Moran
(c) Karbi
(d) Tiwa

15. The building of the National Archives of India in New Delhi was designed by:

(a) Le Corbusier
(b) Sir Edwin Lutyens
(c) Herbert Baker
(d) Charles Correa

16. Consider the following statements regarding Mysore Dasara:

1. It is also called Nadahabba and is the state festival of Karnataka.
2. Mysore Dasara is celebrated for 12 days, ending on Vijayadashami.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. Rosh Hashanah, recently in the news, is:

(a) A Buddhist festival marking the birth of Gautama Buddha
(b) An Islamic festival commemorating the end of Ramadan
(c) A Christian festival celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ
(d) A Jewish festival marking the creation of the world and the beginning of a new year

18. With reference to the statue of Dancing Girl of Indus Valley Civilization, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It was found in 1926 at Mohenjo-daro by archaeologist Ernest Mackay.
2. It is made of bronze using the lost-wax casting technique.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

19. He was a political thinker, economist, and leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. He is remembered for his philosophy of Integral Humanism (Ekatma Manav Darshan) which emphasized a harmonious blend of spiritual and material value. He started a monthly magazine "Rashtra Dharma", a weekly 'Panchajanya', and a daily 'Swadesh'.

Which of the following personalities described above?

(a) Syama Prasad Mookerjee
(b) Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya
(c) Lala Lajpat Rai
(d) Bal Gangadhar Tilak

20. She was born in 1793 in a Mahishya zamindar family, took charge of her family's zamindari and business, opposed British authorities by blocking Hooghly river traffic to protect fishermen, contributed to public welfare through philanthropy, and most notably founded the Dakshineswar Kali Temple where Shri Ramakrishna Paramhansa served as priest.

Which of the following personalities has been described above?

(a) Rani Rashmoni
(b) Sarojini Naidu
(c) Ahilyabai Holkar
(d) Begum Hazrat Mahal

21. Consider the following statements regarding Unmesha – International Literature Festival:

1. It is Asia's largest and most inclusive international literature festival.
2. The third edition of Unmesha – International Literature Festival was held in Patna, Bihar.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

22. Consider the following statements with reference to Ritual theatre of India.

1. Kutiyattam, practiced in Kerala, is one of India's oldest surviving theatrical traditions, dating back over 2,000 years.
2. Mudiyettu is a ritual dance-drama of Sikkim depicting the mythological battle.
3. Ramman is an annual religious festival celebrated in Uttarakhand to honour the local deity Bhumiyal Devta.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

In News : The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched the beta version of "Adi Vaani," app.

"Adi Vaani" is an AI-powered translation tool designed to support a future large language model for tribal languages.

- It combines advanced technology with community efforts to protect and revive tribal languages and cultures in India.
- It is **India's first AI-powered translator** for tribal languages which was developed under Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh.
- Adi Vaani supports: **Santali (Odisha), Bhili (Madhya Pradesh), Mundari (Jharkhand), Gondi (Chhattisgarh)**
  - Additional languages including Kui and Garo are under development for the next phase.

2. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Dadabhai Naoroji was the first Indian to be elected to the British Parliament as a candidate of the Liberal Party in 1892.

Statement 2 is correct: He authored the influential book Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, which laid out the Drain of Wealth theory describing how British rule drained India's resources.

Statement 3 is not correct: Dadabhai Naoroji did preside over the Indian National Congress session in 1906. However, while the concept of Swaraj as a goal was advocated and discussed there but it was not formally "declared" as the exclusive political goal in that specific session—rather, Naoroji personally championed Swaraj, but the INC formally adopted it as its goal in later years.

3. (c)

The 200th birth anniversary of Dadabhai Naoroji known as '**The Grand Old Man of India 'was** recently observed .

- Dadabhai Naoroji was born in Bombay on 4 September 1825 in a priestly Parsi family.
- He was the **first Indian to be elected to the House of Commons (1892).**
- He formulated the **famous drain-of-wealth theory,** which became India's cornerstone argument against British rule.
    - He used statistics on wages, prices, trade, and taxation to argue that **British policies increased poverty in India—culminating in his seminal work Poverty and Un-British Rule in India (1901).**
- He was the **first to give expression to the demand for Swaraj** from the platform of **Indian National Congress (1906)**.
- In **1851, he founded Rast Goftar (Truth Teller)**, a Gujarati fortnightly with a Persian name.
    - It was a progressive journal educating readers on duties of citizenship.
- He was appointed a**s Justice of the Peace in 1883, started a newspaper called 'Voice of India'.**

4. (c)

In News: Recently, the Prime Minister of India penned a heartfelt tribute on the occasion of Bhupen Hazarika's 99th birth anniversary.

Statement 1 is correct

- He was elected to the **Assam Legislative Assembly in 1967** and served as **President of the Assam Sahitya Sabha in 1993.**
- He worked to bridge diverse communities, promoting fraternity across Northeast India's many tribes and cultures, through IPTA.

Statement 2 is correct

- Dr. Bhupen Hazarika received numerous national and international honors:
    - **Dadasaheb Phalke Award (1992);**
    - **National Film Award (1975)** for Chameli Memsahab;
    - **Padma Shri (1977), Padma Bhushan (2001), Padma Vibhushan (2012, posthumous), Bharat Ratna (2019, posthumous);**
    - **Muktijoddha Padak (2011, Bangladesh, posthumous).**
- He was honored with commemorative postal stamps and the naming of the **Dr. Bhupen Hazarika Setu**, India's longest river bridge.

5. (b)

Lok Samvardhan Parv is a **flagship initiative** of the **Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA)**, held under the framework of the **Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) scheme**.

- **Objective:** Provide minority community artisans, craftspersons, weavers, and culinary specialists a **structured platform** for:
  - Market linkages, National visibility and Economic empowerment.
- **Highlights:** 100 stalls showcased crafts from **25 States and Union Territories**. Crafts displayed included:
  - **Blue Pottery** (**Rajasthan**)
  - **Channapatna Toys** (**Karnataka**)
  - **Nettippattam** (**Kerala**)
  - **Banarasi Zari & Chikankari** (Uttar Pradesh)
  - **Phulkari** (Punjab)
  - **Bastar Iron Craft** (Chhattisgarh)

6. (d)

Context

- **The Tiwa tribesmen** celebrated the Langkhon (Langkhun) Festival in Umsowai village of Karbi Anglong district, Assam.

About

- The festival involves the **worship of bamboo over four days**, symbolizing fertility, resilience, and the close bond between nature and human life.
- It is primarily celebrated in the **Karbi Anglong district of Assam**, but also holds importance in other Tiwa-inhabited regions.
- The tribe celebrates the **annual harvest festival** to offer their sacrament to **Ramsa Devota** and other Gods seeking wellbeing of their paddy from pests and a good yield.

7. (c)

In News: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid homage to Acharya Vinoba Bhave on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave was born September 11, 1895 and was a renowned spiritual leader, freedom fighter, and social reformer.

- He was a staunch advocate of non-violence and human rights.
- He was often regarded a**s Gandhi's spiritual successor and the National Teacher of India .**
- He is best known for leading the **Bhoodan Movement**, which promoted land redistribution for social justice.
- He also translated the Bhagavad Gita into Marathi, naming it Geetai

8. (c)

In News : Adivasis from the Ho tribe protested in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum accusing the Deputy Commissioner of interfering with their **traditional Manki-Munda governance system**.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : The Ho tribe of Jharkhand's Kolhan region traditionally followed a **decentralized**, hereditary governance system led by village heads called **Mundas** and regional leaders called **Mankis**.

- **Mundas resolved local socio-political disputes**, while **unresolved cases were escalated to the Manki,** who oversaw a group of villages (pir).
  - This system resolved **social and political issues, not land or revenue matters.**
- This self-contained system operated independently, without external authority or taxation.
  - The arrival of the East India Company disrupted this autonomy by introducing taxes and external control.

9. (c)

Context

- PM Modi paid homage to Sir Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya on his birth anniversary, observed nationwide as Engineers' Day.

About

- **Born on September 15, 1861,** Visvesvaraya is regarded as one of **India's greatest engineers** whose pioneering work revolutionised infrastructure development.
- He served as the **Diwan of Mysore** and **President of the All-India Manufacturers' Organisation.**
- He was conferred with the **Bharat Ratna in 1955.**

Contributions of Sir M. Visvesvaraya

- **Innovative Flood Management Systems:** After the **1908 Musi River** floods, Sir M.Visvesvaraya designed reservoirs like **Osman Sagar and Himayat Sagar** and proposed systematic flood control solutions.
- **Pioneering Dam Construction and Irrigation:** As Chief Engineer of Mysore, Sir Visvesvaraya built the **Krishna Raja Sagara (KRS) Dam in 1932,** creating Asia's largest reservoir.
  - His **automatic sluice gates** improved water regulation at multiple dams.
- **Literary Works:** Reconstructing India (1920), Planned Economy for India (1936), and Unemployment in India: Its Causes and Cure (1932).
  - **Autobiography:** Memoirs of my Working Life (1951)

10. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Sarnath is situated near Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

- One of the four major Buddhist pilgrimage sites (others: Lumbini, Bodh Gaya, Kushinagar).

- **Historical Importance:**
  - After attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, Gautama Buddha **delivered his first sermon** at Sarnath (around 528 BCE).
  - This event is called **"Dhammachakrapravartana"** or "Turning of the Wheel of Dharma".
  - It marked the **beginning of the Buddhist Sangha** (community of monks).
- **Monuments & Structures:**
  - **Dhamek Stupa** – built by Ashoka, commemorates the Buddha's first sermon.
  - **Chaukhandi Stupa** – marks the spot where Buddha met his first disciples.
  - **Ashokan Pillar** – erected by Emperor Ashoka; its lion capital is now the National Emblem of India.
  - **Monasteries & remains** – ruins of ancient viharas, temples, and sculptures.

11. (d)

Context

- Members of the Raj Gond Tribe from Adilabad district of Telangana are going to perform Gussadi dance for the 78th Hyderabad Liberation Day.

Gussadi Dance

- Gussadi is a traditional dance of the Raj Gond tribe, especially from Adilabad (Telangana), as well as parts of **Maharashtra.**
- The dance is performed **by men**, organized into groups called **Dandari**, and smaller groups within them called **Gussadi.**

- **Attire:** They dress in **saffron and turmeric-colored clothes** and wear bandages around their legs and waist.
  - During the Dance, the **performers wear vibrant attire**, including **turbans studded with peacock feathers**, deer horns, and goat skins.
- **Instruments:** Dappu, Tudumu, Pipri, and Kolikammu.
- The famous exponent **Kanaka Raju**, from the Raj Gond community, was awarded the **Padma Shri in 2021** for his role in preserving/teaching the Gussadi dance.

12. (a)

Context

- India is exploring a multinational nomination of 'Chhath' for inscription in UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

About Chhath

- Chhath Mahaparva, dedicated to the **Sun God** and **Goddess Chhathi Maiya**, is among India's oldest festivals.
- It is celebrated extensively in **Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal**, and by diaspora communities in **Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, UAE, and the Netherlands**.
- The **four-day festival**, known for its ecological and egalitarian ethos, fosters reverence for nature, sustainability, inclusivity, and community spirit.

India and UNESCO Intangible Heritage

- India already has **15 elements** inscribed (e.g., Yoga, Kumbh Mela, Durga Puja).
- **Nodal Agency:** Sangeet Natak Akademi coordinates India's nominations.
- For inclusion, **state parties** must submit a **nomination dossier** under the 2003 UNESCO Convention.

Do You Know?

- **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH):** Includes song, music, drama, skills, crafts, and the other parts of culture that can be recorded but cannot be touched.

13. (d)

Context

- The 14th Sirarakhong Hathei Chilli Festival was recently inaugurated in Manipur.

About

- **Sirarakhong Hathei** is renowned for its **unique flavour, vibrant red colour, and intense spiciness**.
- It is grown in **fertile, well-drained soils** at high altitudes in Sirarakhong Village of Manipur.
- The chilli has significant **culinary and medicinal uses**:
  - Dry chilli is extensively used as a **spice in curries and other dishes**.
  - Dehydrated green chilli is a **rich source of vitamin C**.
- In **2021**, Sirarakhong Hathei earned a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**, recognizing its **distinct aroma and flavour**.

14. (b)

In News

- The **Moran community** launched an indefinite economic blockade demanding **Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.**

About Moran Community

- The Moran community is an **aboriginal tribe of Assam** that once had its own independent kingdom before the advent of **Ahom rule.**
- Historically, they lived in the **southeastern Brahmaputra valley** and had prominent chiefdoms, including the Matak country ruled by chiefs such as Bodousa.
- In the 17th century, **Sri Aniruddhadeva**, a disciple of Srimanta Sankardeva converted the **Morans to Vaishnavism**, leading to the rise of the Moamoria (Mayamara) sect and a period of social and cultural renewal.
- They are predominantly Vaishnava, with the **Moamoria uprising (1769–1799)** acting as a major challenge to Ahom power, stemming in part from their low-caste origins and reformist religious leadership.

15. (b)

In News: 50th Golden Jubilee Meeting of the **National Committee of Archivists (NCA)** organized by the **National Archives of India (NAI).**

About National Archives of India (NAI)

- It is the **premier repository** of the Government of India for preserving and maintaining the **nation's documentary heritage.**
- It was **originally established in 1891** in Calcutta (Kolkata) as the Imperial Record Department, and later shifted to **New Delhi in 1911**, where it is housed in a building **designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens**, located near the India Gate on Janpath.
- The NAI functions as an **attached office of the Ministry of Culture** and is the custodian of non-current records of the Government of India.
- It holds over 40 million documents, dating from the 16th century to the present, in multiple languages, including Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit, Urdu, and English.
- It is **headed by the Director General of Archives**, who is responsible for implementation of the Public Records Act, 1993 and Rules, 1997.

16. (a)

Context

- The Supreme Court reminded a petitioner opposing **"Muslim" Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq** inaugurating **Mysuru Dasara festival** that the Preamble upholds secularism, liberty, equality, and fraternity as core ideals of national unity.

Mysore Dasara

- Mysore Dasara, also called **Nadahabba (state festival of Karnataka)**, is the royal version of Dussehra, celebrated in Karnataka.
- It marks the **victory of good over evil** – Goddess Chamundeshwari (a form of Durga) killing the demon Mahishasura, after whom Mysuru (Mysore) is named.
- **It is celebrated for 10 days, ending on Vijayadashami.**

17. (d)

In News

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has greeted the warmest Rosh Hashanah to the Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu.

Rosh Hashanah

- Rosh Hashanah is a Jewish holiday celebrating the creation of the world and the start of a new year.

- It is a holy which focuses on reflection, forgiveness, and setting priorities for the year ahead.
- Jewish people believe that during this time, God judges their actions from the past year to determine their fate for the next.

18. (c)

Context

- A professor from Haryana, was booked for allegedly stealing a replica of the Mohenjodaro 'Dancing Girl' bronze figurine from the National Museum in Delhi.

About

- The "Dancing Girl" is a **4,500-year-old bronze statuette** from the **Indus Valley Civilization.**
- **Discovery:** Unearthed in **1926** at **Mohenjo-daro** (present-day Pakistan) by archaeologist **Ernest Mackay.**
- **Material and Technique:** Made of bronze using the **lost-wax casting technique,** the statuette reflects the advanced metallurgical knowledge of the Harappans.
- The statue is around 10.5 centimetres tall and is adorned with a **necklace** and a large number of **bangles stacked on her arms.**

19. (b)

In News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid rich tributes to **Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya** on his birth anniversary, calling him a guiding force in India's journey toward a **"Viksit Bharat."**

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya (1916–1968) was a political thinker, economist, and leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

- He was an exceptional scholar and dedicated nationalist.
- He studied in Kanpur and joined the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and became a full-time pracharak in 1942.
- He was a visionary thinker, known for his doctrine of **Integral Humanism((Ekatma Manav Darshan)** which emphasized a **balance between spiritual and material development** and promoted decentralization and self-reliant village-based economy.
- He contributed to ideological journalism by starting **'Rashtra Dharma' (monthly), 'Panchajanya' (weekly), and 'Swadesh' (daily)**.

20. (a)

In News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to Rani Rashmoni on her birth anniversary.

Rani Rashmoni

- She was born on 28 September 1793 into a Mahishya zamindar family in Kona village (now North 24 Parganas) and emerged as a formidable figure in 19th-century Bengal's male-dominated society.
- Her deep spirituality and commitment to justice earned her the title **"Rani."**

Major Roles

- Rani Rashmoni took charge of her **family's zamindari and business**, showcasing exceptional administrative and supervisory skills.
  - She expanded her enterprises and became a **champion of public welfare.**
- She was Known for her **bold defiance against British authorities**—such as blocking Hooghly river traffic to protect fishermen.

- She also made lasting contributions through **philanthropy**, including building ghats, funding educational institutions, and most notably founding the **Dakshineswar Kali Temple,** where she appointed Shri Ramkrishna Paramhansa as priest.

21. (c)

In News

- The Vice-President of India, C.P. Radhakrishnan, graced the valedictory session of the third edition of Unmesha – International Literature Festival in Patna, Bihar, as the Chief Guest.

Unmesha

- It is **Asia's largest** and most **inclusive international literature festival**.
- It is a celebration of literature in multiple languages, offering an excellent platform for writers, scholars, publishers, and poets from **15 countries, representing more than 100 languages.**
- It was organized by the Sahitya Akademi in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Government of Bihar
- It featured over 550 writers, poets, scholars, translators, and other cultural figures from more than 100 languages and 15 countries, across 90 sessions.
  - It included poetry readings, panel discussions on diverse themes like Dharma literature, Dalit literature, literary feminism, machine translation, tribal and LGBTQ+ writing, cinema, and education.

22. (b)

In News : India's ritual theatres are living cultural traditions that connect the divine and daily life through myth, music, and community participation.

Statements 1 and 3 are correct : Kutiyattam, practiced in Kerala, is one of India's oldest surviving theatrical traditions, dating back over 2,000 years. Blending Sanskrit classicism with Kerala's local traditions, it uses a codified language of eye expressions (neta abhinaya) and hand gestures (hasta abhinaya) to explore a character's emotions and thoughts.

- **Ramman** is an annual religious festival celebrated in late April in the twin villages of Saloor-Dungra, **Uttarakhand**, in honour of the local deity **Bhumiyal Devta.**
- It features complex rituals, recitations of the Ramayana, songs, and masked dances, with each caste and group playing distinct roles.

Statement 2 is not correct : Mudiyettu is a ritual dance-drama of Kerala depicting the mythological battle between **goddess Kali and the demon Darika**. Performed annually in Bhagavati Kavus after the harvest, it begins with purification rituals and the drawing of a sacred kalam of Kali. The performance involves the entire village, with each caste contributing, reinforcing community identity and cooperation.

■■■■

ECONOMY

1. With reference to the draft Indian Insurance Companies (Foreign Investment) Amendment Rules, 2025, consider the following statements:

1. They have been issued by the Ministry of Finance under the powers of the Insurance Act, 1938.
2. The draft rules propose to raise the foreign direct investment (FDI) cap in insurance companies from 74% to 100%.
3. Such foreign investment will be permitted only through the government approval route, with oversight by IRDAI.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

2. Consider the following statements about the repo rate:

1. The repo rate is the rate at which RBI lends short-term funds to commercial banks.
2. Cutting the repo rate signals monetary easing and usually lowers borrowing costs and bond yields.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

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

3. Which of the following is NOT a function of the Coconut Development Board?

(a) Providing technical advice for coconut cultivation
(b) Regulating imports and exports of coconut and coconut products
(c) Managing fisheries related to coconut growers
(d) Providing financial assistance for expanding coconut cultivation area

4. With reference to the Coffee, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Coffee is traditionally a tropical crop and grows well in warm, humid conditions.
2. Karnataka contributes nearly 70% of India's total coffee production.

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

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

1. India is the second largest producer and consumer and importer of pulses after China.
2. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan are the top three pulses-producing states in the country.

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. Which among the following teas is known for its brisk, floral, and citrus-like taste, often described as the "champagne among teas," and received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2008?

(a) Darjeeling Tea
(b) Assam Tea
(c) Kangra Tea
(d) Nilgiris Tea

7. With reference to the Stablecoins, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. They are a type of cryptocurrency designed to maintain price stability by pegging their value to assets such as fiat currencies or commodities.
2. Stablecoins are always issued and controlled by the central bank of a country.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

8. The term "Pink Tax", often seen in news, refers to:

(a) A government-imposed surcharge on luxury cosmetic products for women.
(b) A pricing phenomenon where women pay more for certain products and services marketed to them.
(c) A tax levied by states on female hygiene products.
(d) None of the above.

9. The term 'Involution', recently seen in the context of China's economy, refers to which of the following?

(a) A process of technological innovation leading to higher productivity in industrial sectors.
(b) A situation where rival firms indulge in intense price wars, reducing prices below production costs, leading to unsustainable competition.
(c) A strategy of inward economic protectionism aimed at shielding domestic industries from foreign competition.
(d) A financial mechanism of debt restructuring followed by state-owned enterprises to reduce insolvency risks.

10. With reference to Makhana (Euryale ferox), consider the following statements:

1. It is an aquatic crop commonly cultivated in stagnant ponds and wetlands.
2. Bihar accounts for nearly 90% of India's production of Makhana.
3. 'Mithila Makhana' received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2022.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. With reference to Stablecoins , consider the following statements:

1. They are a form of cryptocurrency designed to maintain a stable value in relation to a certain asset.
2. They are typically pegged to a traditional currency such as the US dollar.
3. They enable cheap and fast transactions without the need for intermediaries in traditional payment mechanisms.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

12. Which of the following is a key feature of the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM) for infrastructure projects?

(a) The entire project is financed by the private developer, who collects tolls for a fixed period.
(b) The government provides a fixed annuity to the developer for 15 years after the project is completed.
(c) The private developer receives 60% of the project cost from the government in the form of debt.
(d) The government and the private developer share the financial burden, and the government handles the revenue risk.

13. In the context of India's economic resilience, which of the following explains the growing importance of remittances?

(a) They are a source of foreign exchange that helps manage the current account deficit.
(b) They drastically increase government tax revenues.
(c) They substitute entirely for FDI inflows in capital formation.
(d) They reduce the need for foreign exchange reserves.

14. Consider the following statements regarding the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS):

1. LRS was introduced by the Reserve Bank of India in 2004.
2. It is governed under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only

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

15. Consider the following statements regarding World Tourism Day:

1. It is an initiative of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).
2. The theme for World Tourism Day 2025 is "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation."

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

16. With reference to Ways and Means Advances (WMA), consider the following statements:

1. WMA is a temporary advance given by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to both the Central and State governments to meet temporary mismatches in receipts and payments.
2. WMA can be used as a permanent instrument for financing fiscal deficit.
3. The interest rate on WMA is linked to the RBI's repo rate.

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

17. With reference to the Status of port development in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. India has a vast coastline with 15 major ports and over 280 non-major ports.
2. The Vizhinjam Seaport is India's first dedicated transshipment port, aimed at reducing dependence on foreign ports.

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. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The draft Indian Insurance Companies (Foreign Investment) Amendment Rules, 2025 were issued by the Ministry of Finance, utilizing powers conferred by the Insurance Act, 1938. This is a standard legislative process for rules governing insurance sector foreign investments in India.

Statement 2 is correct: The proposed amendment aims to increase the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit for insurance companies from 74% to 100%, marking a significant policy change intended to attract more foreign capital and investment into India's insurance sector.

Statement 3 is not correct: The draft rules do not require all such foreign investment to be made solely through the government approval route. Instead, the rules permit FDI under the automatic route, subject to overall regulatory oversight by IRDAI. The automatic route enables investment without prior government approval, making it easier for foreign investors to participate.

2. (c)

In News

- India's 10-year government bond yield has increased by 26 basis points (bps) in the past month, even though the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cut the repo rate by 100 bps over seven months, bringing it down to 5.50%.

Key Concepts

- **Repo Rate:** The rate at which RBI lends short-term funds to commercial banks.
  - Cutting repo rate → signals monetary easing, usually lowers borrowing costs and bond yields.
- **Government Bond Yield:** Yield = effective return an investor earns from a government security (G-Sec).
  - **Inverse relation:** Bond prices ↑ → Yields ↓; Bond prices ↓ → Yields ↑.
  - 10-year G-Sec yield = benchmark for overall borrowing costs in the economy.

3. (c)

The Coconut Development Board (CDB) is a statutory body established under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, with its inception on 12 January 1981. Its primary aim is the integrated development of coconut cultivation and the coconut industry, focusing on enhancing productivity and product diversification

The CDB functions to adopt measures for the development of the coconut industry, provide technical advice, and offer financial assistance to expand coconut cultivation. It encourages the adoption of modern technology in coconut processing, supports marketing improvements, regulates imports and exports, and promotes sustainable farming practices.

4. (c)

Context

- India's coffee heartland, Chikmagaluru, Coorg, and Hassan districts of Karnataka, has been hit by **incessant rains, extreme cold, and lack of sunlight**.

Geographical Condition for Coffee production

- **Climate:** Coffee grows well in tropical climates. It requires a **warm, humid climate with mild winters**. Shade is essential for healthy growth, and coffee is often grown under tree cover.
- **Soil:** Requires **well-drained, fertile soils, rich in humus** and **organic matter.**
  - Soil should be slightly acidic, with a pH of **6.0–6.5.**
- **Temperature:** Ideal annual temperature ranges between **15°C and 28°C.**
  - Frost is harmful to **coffee plants**, and **extreme hot or dry conditions** also reduce yield.
- **Precipitation:** Coffee thrives in hilly regions with elevations of **600–1,600 metres** above sea level.
  - Sloping terrain ensures proper **drainage** and **prevents waterlogging.**
- **Major Coffee producing states** are **Karnataka** (largest producer, contributes nearly **70%** of India's coffee), Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.
  - **Other emerging states are:** Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and the North-Eastern region (mainly Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Meghalaya).

5. (b)

Context

- A report titled "Strategies and Pathways for Accelerating Growth in Pulses towards the Goal of Atmanirbharta" was released by the NITI Aayog.
  - India is the **largest producer and consumer**, accounting for **~38%** of global area and **~28%** of production. India remains the **second-largest importer** of pulses, after **China.**
  - **Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan** are the top three pulses-producing states in the country, accounting for over **55%** of production.

Challenges Highlighted by the Report

- **India's Low Yield:** Despite this, **India's average yield (0.74 t/ha)** is below the global average **(0.97 t/ha)** .
  - **India ranks lowest** in yield among the top ten pulse producers.
- **Technological Gaps:** Limited progress in developing and adopting high-yielding varieties compared to cereals.
  - **Weak extension support and inadequate farmer access** to quality seeds and modern production technologies.
  - Poor management of pests and diseases in pulse crops.
- **Environmental Constraints:** Predominance of rainfed cultivation with inadequate irrigation infrastructure.
  - **High vulnerability to climatic vagaries** such as droughts, erratic rainfall, and El Niño/La Niña shocks.
- **Economic and Market Challenges:** Volatile market prices and frequent supply-demand fluctuations discourage farmers.
  - **Lower profitability of pulses** compared to cereals reduces farmer incentives.
  - **Weak and fragmented marketing** channels restrict farmer access to stable markets.

6. (d)

Context

- The Nilgiris tea, famous for "champagne among teas," is facing prolonged crisis as small growers face unstable green tea leaf prices, high production costs, and inadequate institutional support.

About Nilgiris Tea

- **Region:** Grown mainly in the Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu (Western Ghats, Blue Mountains), at an altitude of around **900–2,600 metres** above sea level.
- **History:** Introduced by the British in the **mid-19th** century (**first plantations around Coonoor, 1850s**).
- **Taste Profile:** Fragrant, brisk, floral, citrus-like; suitable for iced tea.
- **Geographical Indication (GI):** Granted GI tag in **2008.**

7. (a)

Context

- Stablecoins have grown rapidly, with their market capitalization more than doubling in the past 18 months to nearly **$280 billion.**

What are stablecoins?

- Stablecoins are **cryptocurrencies designed to maintain price stability** by pegging their value to underlying assets such as:

- Fiat currencies (e.g., USD, Euro),
- Commodities (e.g., gold),
- Other cryptocurrencies, or
- Algorithm-based systems.

- Stablecoins are **different from CBDCs, or Central Bank Digital Currencies,** which are digital currencies officially issued and controlled by a government's central bank.
  - Meanwhile, stablecoins can be privately issued and can also be pegged to foreign currencies.

Global Scenario in stablecoins

- **The U.S.** passed the **Genius Act,** which mandates that stablecoins be **fully backed by liquid assets** (like cash or Treasury bills) and requires regular disclosures.
- **Japan & Singapore** have introduced targeted regulations for stablecoins.
- **China** has long prioritized the development of its **sovereign digital yuan**, however it is now also examining the rising use of **yuan-backed stablecoins.**

8. (b)

Pink tax is neither a real tax, nor is it a government-imposed fee.

- It's just a **pricing phenomenon** wherein **women pay more** for buying a product exclusively made for them or enjoying a service tailor-made for them.
  - Pink toys, haircuts, drycleaning, razors, shampoos, body lotions, deodorants, facial care, skincare items, beauty care, clothing, T-shirts, jeans, salon services etc. suffer the tax.
- **The term "Pink Tax"** is believed to have originated in the U.S. in California in 1994.

9. (b)

For some years now, the **Chinese economy** has faced what has locally come to be called **nêijuân, or an involution.**

- It is a process in which **rivals in certain sectors indulge in price wars,** attempting to capture market share and clear out oversupply of goods.
  - However, these price wars are **counterproductive**, as they reach thresholds where the **retail price of the product is so low** that even the production costs **cannot be realised, pushing firms into losses.**
- This has been most apparent lately in **China's electric vehicle sector,** so much so that China's President Xi Jinping has **prescribed corrective measures.**
  - This phenomenon is **not new in China;** a similar trend has been witnessed in the solar industry as well.
- **Involution** is derived from the **Latin phrase involūtiōn-em,** meaning **'to turn inwards.'**
  - According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the earliest known use of the noun **"involution"** dates back to **1611**, in the writings of **lexicographer Randle Cotgrave.**

10. (d)

Context

- PM Modi launched the National Makhana Board in Purnea, **Bihar,** approving a development package of about **₹475 crore** for the makhana sector.

What is Makhana?

- Makhana (Euryale ferox), also known as fox nut, is an **aquatic crop** cultivated in **stagnant ponds and wetlands**.
  - This plant is found in freshwater ponds throughout **South and East Asia.**

- The edible part of the Makhana plant consists of **small, round seeds** that have an outer layer ranging from **black to brown**.
  - This has led to it being referred to as the **'Black Diamond.'**
- **Climatic conditions:** For optimal growth and development, Makhana requires a temperature range of **20-35°C,** relative humidity of **50-90%,** and annual rainfall between **100-250 cm.**
- **In India**, Bihar produces about **90% of the country's makhana**, particularly the regions of **Mithilanchal and Seemanchal.**
  - In smaller quantities it is cultivated in the states of **Assam, Manipur, West Bengal, Tripura, and Odisha**, as well as in neighboring countries like **Nepal, Bangladesh, China, Japan, and Korea.**
- **GI Tag to Mithila Makhana:** In **2022**, 'Mithila Makhana' was conferred a Geographical Indication tag.

11. (c)

In News : Crypto groups in the UK oppose the Bank of England's proposal to limit stablecoin ownership, arguing it would disadvantage the country and be costly to enforce. The BOE plans to cap ownership between £10,000-£20,000 for individuals and £10 million for businesses, citing risks to the banking system without crypto regulation.

Statements 1,2 and 3 are correct: Stablecoins are a **form of cryptocurrency designed to maintain a stable value in relation to a certain asset.** Unlike Bitcoin and other such cryptocurrencies that experience price volatility**, stablecoins are typically pegged to a traditional currency such as the US dollar**. Stablecoins are not generally used for transactional purposes, but instead by crypto investors to park their profits without converting them back into real money**. They enable cheap and fast transactions without the need for intermediaries in traditional payment mechanisms**. Their ownership is simultaneously registered in digital ledgers, eliminating the costs and lengthy processing times involved with traditional cross-border transitions.

12. (d)

Under HAM, typically the government pays 40% of the project cost in installments linked to completion milestones, while the private developer arranges the remaining 60% through debt and equity.

The government takes responsibility for toll collection and revenue risk, providing annuity payments to the developer, rather than leaving them exposed to unpredictable traffic or toll income.

This risk-sharing mechanism makes HAM distinct from models where either entity bears the full risk and cost, with the government ensuring predictable, performance-linked payments.

13. (a)

Context

- Outward remittances by resident individuals under the Reserve Bank of India's Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) fell nearly **11%** year-on-year in July 2025, totalling **$2,452.93 million** against **$2,754.05 million** in the same period last year.

What are Remittances?

- **Remittances** are a way to electronically send funds to people, often family, in another country.
  - Usually sent by individuals working in foreign countries, especially those employed in blue-collar or skilled jobs.
- **Remittances are a significant source** of income for many countries, contributing to their **economic stability,** supporting local economies**,** and sometimes helping to **finance national trade deficits.**

- **Modes of Transfer:** Remittances can be sent through banks, money transfer operators, or digital platforms.
- **Outward Remittance:** Outward remittance refers to the **transfer of money in foreign currency** by a resident of India to a person or entity outside India, for purposes such as education, travel, medical treatment, investment, or gifting.

India's Remittances: Key Facts

- **India's remittances have more than doubled** from $55.6 billion in 2010-11 to $118.7 billion in 2023-24.
- **As per the World Bank,** India has been the **top recipient of remittances since 2008,** with its share in world remittances rising from around 11 per cent in 2001 to about 14 percent in 2024.
- Remittances from the U.S. and U.K. nearly doubled to **40% of total inward remittances in FY24**, up from 26% in FY17.
- The U.S. became the top source of remittances in FY21, contributing 23.4% followed by the UAE contributing 19.2%.
- Half of the remittances went to Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. Other states like Haryana, Gujarat, and Punjab had smaller shares (below 5%).

14. (c)

Context

- Outward remittances by resident individuals under the Reserve Bank of India's Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) fell nearly **11%** year-on-year in July 2025, totalling **$2,452.93 million** against **$2,754.05 million** in the same period last year.

What is the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS)?

- LRS was introduced in **2004** by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI).**
- It allows resident individuals (including minors) to remit up to **$250,000 per financial year** for permissible current or capital account transactions.
- Initially launched with a $25,000 limit, later increased to current levels.
- Remittances can be made for;
  - Education and studies abroad,
  - Travel and tourism,
  - Medical treatment abroad,
  - Purchase of property,
  - Investment in foreign securities or businesses.
- LRS is governed under the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.**

15. (c)

Context

- India celebrated World Tourism Day 2025, highlighting sustainable tourism and advancing the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

About

- World Tourism Day, observed annually on **September 27**, is an initiative of the **United Nations World Tourism Organisation** (UNWTO).
- It commemorates the adoption of the **UNWTO statutes** in 1970 and was celebrated for the first time in 1980.
- The **theme for 2025** is "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation."

16. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Ways and Means Advances (WMA) is a temporary advance given by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to both the Central and State governments to meet temporary mismatches in their receipts and payments. This facility helps the government manage short-term liquidity issues and is repayable generally within three months.

Statement 2 is not correct: WMA cannot be used as a permanent instrument for financing the fiscal deficit. It is meant only for temporary mismatches in cash flows and is not a long-term borrowing mechanism. If the advance continues beyond 90 days, it is classified as an overdraft and interest rates differ.

Statement 3 is correct: The interest rate on WMA is linked to the RBI's repo rate. Typically, WMA interest rates are equal to the repo rate, and if the advance exceeds the stipulated period and becomes an overdraft, then the interest rate is higher (repo rate plus a penalty).

17. (b)

Context

- The Indian Ports Act, 2025 marks a transformative milestone in India's maritime governance - replacing the **Indian Ports Act of 1908** with a forward-looking framework.

Status of port development in India

- India has a vast coastline with **13 major ports** and over **200 non-major ports.** Together, they handle around **95% of India's foreign trade by volume** and **70% by value.**
- **As of 2024–25,** India ranks among the top **20 countries** in global shipbuilding.
- Two Indian ports, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and Mundra Port, are among the **top 30 globally.**
- As per the **World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI), 2023** India moved up to **22nd** Rank in the Global Ranking in International Shipments category and the overall **38th Rank** in Logistics Performance Index score.
- **The Vizhinjam Seaport** is India's first dedicated transshipment port, aimed at reducing dependence on foreign ports as **75%** of India's transshipment occurs abroad currently.
- A **shipbuilding and repair cluster** is being developed in **Kochi** under the Sagarmala initiative.

■■■■

INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. With reference to the Census in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. India's first synchronous decennial (every ten years) census was conducted in 1891 under W.C. Plowden.
2. It is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

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 Right to Education Act 2009, consider the following statements:

1. It operationalises Article 21A of the Constitution, guaranteeing free elementary education for children aged 6–14.
2. It requires private unaided schools to reserve 25% of entry-level seats for children from disadvantaged groups.
3. It exempted institutions imparting primarily religious instruction like madrasas and Vedic pathshalas.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

3. With reference to the 'Sample Registration Survey (SRS) Statistical Report', consider the following statements:

1. It was released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) within the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
2. It uses a dual-record system, a continuous enumeration and retrospective half-yearly surveys.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. With reference to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 2008 to investigate offences affecting India's sovereignty, security, international treaties, etc.

2. It can also investigate the scheduled offences committed outside India involving Indian citizens/interests.

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 Subramanian Swamy v. Union of India (2016) case' is related to which of the following issues?

(a) Right to Privacy and Aadhaar Authentication
(b) Judicial Review of the President's Power of Pardon
(c) Right to Free Speech
(d) Reservation in Promotions for Backward Classes

6. Angikaar 2025, recently seen in the news, is primarily:

(a) A nationwide campaign to promote organic farming practices.
(b) An outreach initiative under PMAY-Urban 2.0 to accelerate housing implementation.
(c) A programme for skill development of urban poor under DAY-NULM.
(d) A digital literacy programme under the Ministry of Electronics & IT.

7. '97th Constitutional Amendment Act' is related to which of the following?

(a) Introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST).
(b) Establishment of National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC).
(c) Reservation in promotions for SCs and STs in government jobs.
(d) Constitutional status to Co-operative Societies.

8. Consider the following statements

1. The Vice-President is elected by an Electoral College comprising members of both Houses of Parliament, including nominated members.
2. Article 64 of the Constitution assigns the Election Commission the authority to resolve disputes related to the election of Vice-President.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. With reference to Article 201 of the Indian Constitution, consider the following statements:

1. If a State Bill is reserved for the consideration of the President, he/she may either give assent or withhold assent.
2. The President may also direct the State Legislature to reconsider the Bill.
3. If the State Legislature re-passes the Bill, the President is bound to give assent.

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

10. With reference to the Vice-President of India, consider the following statements:

1. To be eligible, a person must be a citizen of India, at least 35 years old, and qualified to be a member of the Rajya Sabha.
2. The Vice-President cannot hold any office of profit under the Government of India or any State Government.
3. The Vice-President has a fixed five-year term and cannot continue beyond it, even if a successor has not assumed office.
4. The Vice-President may be removed by a resolution of the Rajya Sabha, which must be agreed to by the Lok Sabha.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

11. With reference to the institution of Waqf in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Central Waqf Council was established in 1954 for better management of Waqf properties.
2. Uttar Pradesh has the highest share of Waqf properties 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

12. With reference to the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is the National Standards Body of India under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
2. Hallmarking of gold and silver jewellery/artefacts is one of the certification schemes operated by BIS.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

13. With reference to the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), consider the following statements:

1. It is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization.
2. It was originally established in 1895 as the Engineering and Iron Trades Association and later renamed as CII in 1992.
3. It has its headquarters in Mumbai with over 9,000 direct members and 300,000 indirect members.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

14. Consider the following statements

1. The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) is a civil law which prevents money laundering and allows the confiscation of property.
2. The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) is criminal law designed to regulate and promote smooth external trade and foreign exchange in India.
3. The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 aims to prevent economic offenders from avoiding Indian law by staying outside the country's jurisdiction.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

15. Consider the following statements regarding the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO):

1. It was established in 1951 under the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. EPFO covers establishments with 10 or more employees and manages provident fund, pension, and insurance schemes.
3. It is administered solely by government representatives without employer or employee participation.

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

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

16. Consider the following statements about the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India:

1. It is the supreme audit authority of India, responsible for auditing government accounts and ensuring accountability in public finance management.
2. The CAG submits audit reports directly to the Prime Minister of India, who then forwards them to Parliament.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. With reference to the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), consider the following statements:

1. It was established under the Ministry of Finance in 2008.
2. It is a public-private partnership (PPP) where the government owns the majority stake.

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. The three-language formula was first proposed by the Education Commission headed by Madan Mohan Punchhi.
2. The three-language formula in National Education Policy 2020 recommends that students learn three languages, at least two of which must be native 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

19. With reference to the Personality Rights, consider the following statements:

1. Personality rights refer to the right of a person to protect his/her personality under the right to privacy or property.
2. The idea is that only the owner of these distinct features has the right to derive any commercial benefit from it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

20. With reference to Foreigners Tribunals (FTs) in India, consider the following statements:

1. They are established under the Foreigners Act, 1946 to decide on questions of citizenship.
2. Their members are appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs and can include retired judges or advocates.
3. They exercise powers similar to those of a civil court, such as summoning witnesses and ordering the production of documents.

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

21. Which of the following rights have been explicitly recognized by the Supreme Court of India as flowing from Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty)?

1. Right to Livelihood and Shelter.
2. Right to a Safe and Secure Working Environment.
3. Right to Privacy.
4. Right to Die with Dignity.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

22. With reference to the Attorney General of India, consider the following statements:

1. The office of the Attorney General of India is provided under Article 76 of the Constitution.
2. The Attorney General must be qualified to be appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court.
3. The Attorney General has the right to participate and vote in the proceedings of both Houses of Parliament.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

23. Consider the following pairs:

	Commission/Committee	Key Observation on AFSPA
1.	Jeevan Reddy Committee (2005)	Suggested repeal and incorporation into UAPA
2.	Santosh Hegde Commission (2013)	Reported misuse in Manipur, fake encounters
3.	Sarkaria Commission (1983)	Recommended phased withdrawal of AFSPA

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Context

- The **Registrar General of India (RGI)** has sought a Rs 14,618.95-crore budget to conduct the Census 2027, which will be the **first "Digital Census"** and collect data on caste.

Census in India

- **A census is a survey of the population** of an area that includes collecting details of a country's demographics including **age, sex and occupation**.
- **History:** Under **W.C. Plowden**, the Census Commissioner of India, the first synchronous decennial (every ten years) census was conducted in **1881,** building on an earlier non-synchronous effort in 1872.
  - **Independent India's first census** was held in **1951** and since then it has happened in the first year of every decade.
- **The Constitution mandates** that enumeration is carried out but the **Census of India Act of 1948** does not specify its timing or periodicity.
- The population census is conducted by the **Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India** under the **Ministry of Home Affairs.**

2. (c)

Context: A two-judge Supreme Court Bench questioned the validity of the 2014 Constitution Bench judgment in Pramati Educational and Cultural Trust v Union of India which had exempted minority educational institutions from the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

Statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct : The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act operationalises **Article 21A of the Constitution, guaranteeing free elementary education for children aged 6–14.**

It requires:Government schools to provide free education to all enrolled children.

- Aided schools to provide free seats proportionate to the aid they receive.
- **Private unaided schools to reserve 25% of entry-level seats for children from disadvantaged groups**, reimbursed by the State (Section 12(1)(c) of RTE Act).
- The Act set standards on pupil-teacher ratios, teacher eligibility, infrastructure, and banned corporal punishment and capitation fees. It also placed an obligation on all schools to contribute to universal education.
- The law exempted only institutions imparting primarily religious instruction (like madrasas or Vedic pathshalas). It did not initially exempt schools run by minority communities, though Section 1(4) said its application was "subject to Articles 29 and 30" of the Constitution, which protect the cultural and educational rights of linguistic and religious minorities.

3. (b)

The latest **Sample Registration Survey (SRS) Statistical Report 2023** points to falling fertility and birth rates, improved survival outcomes, and a rising elderly population.

Statement 1 is not correct: The **Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report** is released by the **Office of the Registrar General of India**, which functions under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).**

Statement 2 is correct: Sample Registration Survey (SRS) uses a **dual-record system:** continuous enumeration and retrospective half-yearly surveys.

- It covers over 8.1 million people across all States and Union Territories.
- It ensures high reliability through field verification and cross-checking of birth and death events.

4. (c)

Both the statements are correct:

National Investigation Agency (NIA)

- **Established under:** NIA Act, 2008 after 26/11 Mumbai attacks.
- **Function:** Central counter-terrorism law enforcement agency.
- **Mandate:** Investigates offences affecting India's sovereignty, security, international treaties, etc.
- **NIA (Amendment) Act, 2019:**
  - **Jurisdiction extended:** Can investigate scheduled offences committed outside India involving Indian citizens/interests.
  - **Expanded mandate:** Covers offences under Explosive Substances Act, 1908 Human Trafficking, Cyber Terrorism Arms Act, 1959.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Special Courts:** Total NIA Special Courts: 51
  - Exclusive NIA Courts: 2 (Ranchi & Jammu).

5. (c)

Subramanian Swamy v. Union of India (2016)

- The Supreme Court upheld **criminal defamation as valid.**
- It **upheld criminal defamation,** ruling that reputation is part of **Article 21,** and **free speech under Article 19(1)(a)** can be **reasonably restricted** to protect dignity.

6. (b)

Context

- The Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, launched "Angikaar 2025", under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0)**, in New Delhi.

What is Angikaar 2025?

- It is an **outreach campaign** to accelerate the implementation of **PMAY-U 2.0** by creating widespread awareness about the scheme across the country.
- **Duration & Coverage:** The campaign will run from **4th September 2025 to 31st October 2025** across **5,000+ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** in the country.
- It will also **fast-track verification of applications** under the scheme and expedite the completion of already sanctioned houses under PMAY-U.
- It includes promoting the Credit Risk Guarantee Fund Trust for Low Income Housing (CRGFTLIH), integrating benefits from schemes like **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, and prioritizing housing for Special Focus Groups.**

7. (d)

97th Constitutional Amendment Act 2011

- It established the right to form cooperative societies as a **fundamental right (Article 19).**
- It included a **new Directive Principle of State Policy** on the **Promotion of Cooperative Societies (Article 43-B).**
- It added a new **Part IX-B to the Constitution** titled **"The Co-operative Societies" (Articles 243-ZH to 243-ZT).**
- It authorizes the **Parliament to establish relevant laws** in the case of **multi-state cooperative societies (MSCS)** and state legislatures in the case of other cooperative societies.

8. (a)

In News: Voting began for the vice presidential poll with Prime Minister Narendra Modi the first to cast his vote.

Statement 1 is correct : The Vice-President of India, established under **Article 63 of the Constitution,** holds the second-highest constitutional office after the President.

- As per **Article 64**, the Vice-President serves as the ex officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.
- The Vice-President is elected by an **Electoral College** comprising members of both Houses of Parliament, including **nominated members**.
  - State legislatures play no role in this election.
- The election is conducted under the supervision of the Election Commission, which appoints a Returning Officer, typically a senior parliamentary official, to oversee the process.

Statement 2 is not correct: Article 71 of the Constitution assigns the Supreme Court the authority to resolve disputes related to the election of the President or Vice-President, with its decisions being final.

- If an election is declared void, actions taken during the term remain valid. Parliament can also legislate on matters related to these elections.

9. (a)

Context

- Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, observed that Governors must act as "true guides and philosophers" to State governments.

Constitutional Framework of Governor's Assent to Bills

- **Article 200:** It outlines the Governor's role in the assent process. When a bill is presented to the Governor after being passed by the State Legislature, they have four options;
  - **Grant Assent:** The Governor may approve the bill, making it a law.
  - **Withhold Assent:** The Governor may reject the bill, effectively stopping it from becoming law.
  - **Return the Bill for Reconsideration:** The Governor can send the bill back to the legislature with suggestions. However, if the legislature passes the bill again without modifications, the Governor is bound to give assent.
  - **Reserve the Bill for Presidential Assent:** If the bill is contrary to the Constitution, affects the powers of the High Court, or contradicts central laws, the Governor may reserve it for the President's decision.
- **Article 201:** If a bill is reserved for the president's consideration, the President has two options;
  - **Give Assent:** The bill becomes law.
  - **Withhold Assent or Direct Reconsideration:** The President may send the bill back to the State Legislature for reconsideration. If the Legislature re-passes the bill, the President is not bound to give assent.

10. (b)

In News: C.P. Radhakrishnan was elected as the 15th Vice-President of India.

Eligibility and term of office

- To be eligible for Vice-President, a person must be an Indian citizen, at least 35 years old, and qualified to be a Rajya Sabha member.
- They must not hold any office of profit under the government.
- The Vice-President serves a five-year term but continues until a successor takes over.
  - They may resign to the President or be removed by a Rajya Sabha resolution approved by the Lok Sabha.

11. (c)

Both statements are correct: Meaning of 'Waqf': Refers to **properties dedicated solely for religious or charitable purposes** under **Islamic law.**

Origin of the Concept of 'Waqf':

- **1954:** Established Central Waqf Council and State Waqf Boards for better management.
- **States with the highest share of Waqf properties: Uttar Pradesh** (27%), West Bengal (9%), Punjab (9%).

12. (b)

Context

- In the past three years, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has issued **84 Quality Control Orders (QCOs)** covering **343 products**, accounting for nearly 45 per cent of all 187 QCOs notified so far.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

- The Bureau of Indian Standards is the National Standards Body of India under the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution,** Government of India.
- It is established by the **Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016** which came into effect on **12 October 2017.**
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Functions:**
  - **Formulation of Indian Standards (IS)** across many sectors.
  - **Product Certification Schemes**, both voluntary and compulsory.
  - **Release of Quality Control Orders (QCOs):** Making compliance with certain Indian Standards mandatory for some products.
- **The schemes operated by BIS are**, Product Certification (ISI mark), Management Systems Certification, **Hallmarking of Gold and Silver Jewellery/Artefacts** and Laboratory Services for the benefit of the industry and in turn aiming at consumer protection.

13. (a)

Context: The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has unveiled a proposed **National Framework for Global Capability Centres (GCCs).**

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

- **Type:** Non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization.
- **Established:** 1895 (as Engineering and Iron Trades Association; renamed CII in 1992).
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Membership:** Over 9,000 direct members (private and public enterprises, SMEs, MNCs) and 300,000 indirect members (through sectoral associations).
- **Coverage:** All sectors of economy across 62 offices in India and 8 overseas offices.
- CII charts change by working closely with governments and thought leaders and enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and business opportunities for industry.

14. (a)

In News : The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has achieved a 94% conviction rate in PMLA cases, with 50 convictions out of 53 cases, and has facilitated the restitution of over ₹34,000 crore to victims and rightful claimants.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : The Directorate of Enforcement is a multi-disciplinary organization mandated with investigation of the offence of money laundering and violations of foreign exchange laws. The statutory functions of the Directorate include enforcement of following Acts:

- The **Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA)** is a **criminal law** enacted to prevent money laundering and to provide for confiscation of property derived from, or involved in, money-laundering and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. ED has been given the responsibility to enforce the provisions of the PMLA by conducting investigation to trace the assets derived from proceeds of crime, to provisionally attach the property and to ensure prosecution of the offenders and confiscation of the property by the Special court.
- **The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) is a civil law** enacted to consolidate and amend the laws relating to facilitate external trade and payments and to promote the orderly development and maintenance of foreign exchange market in India. ED has been given the

responsibility to conduct investigation into suspected contraventions of foreign exchange laws and regulations, to adjudicate and impose penalties on those adjudged to have contravened the law.

Statement 3 is correct: The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 (FEOA): This law was enacted to deter economic offenders from evading the process of Indian law by remaining outside the jurisdiction of Indian courts.

15. (b)

In News

- The **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** launched '**Passbook Lite'**.

About Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

- It is India's largest social security organisation under the **Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.**
- It was **established in 1951** with the enactment of the **Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.**
- EPFO manages the provident fund, pension, and insurance schemes for the organised workforce in India, covering establishments with **20 or more employees**.
- EPFO is administered by a **tripartite body called the Central Board of Trustees (CBT)**, consisting of representatives from the government (both Centre and States), employers, and employees.
- It has also introduced initiatives like **Universal Account Number (UAN)** to facilitate portability of PF accounts, and digital claim settlement systems to improve efficiency.

16. (a)

Context

- The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has released a decadal analysis of the fiscal health of India's 28 states, highlighting a sharp rise in public debt over the last decade.

Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)

- The CAG is the **supreme audit authority of India,** responsible for auditing government accounts and ensuring accountability in public finance management.
- **Articles 148 to 151** of the Indian Constitution provide the framework for the appointment, duties, and reporting structure of the CAG.
- **The Comptroller and Auditor General's (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971**, determines the CAG's service conditions and prescribes the duties and powers of their office.

Audits Reports Submitted by CAG to the President of India

- Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India submits **three audit reports** to the President of India (Article 151).
  - **Audit report on appropriation accounts:** This report shows how the legislature-granted money was allocated to different heads of expenditure and grants. It also verifies if the money was spent for the intended purpose.
  - **Audit report on finance accounts:** This report shows the annual receipts and expenditures of the country.
  - **Audit report on public undertakings:** This report covers the finances and expenditures of various Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- After receiving the reports, the President lays them before both houses of Parliament. **The Public Accounts Committee (PAC)** then examines the reports and submits its findings to Parliament.

17. (a)

In News: The ongoing crisis like financial irregularities, weak oversight, and structural misalignment in the **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** has revealed **deep flaws in India's approach to public-private partnerships (PPPs)** in skill development.

Statement 1 is correct

- The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was **established in 2008** under the **Ministry of Finance**, and **now operates under** the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** as a not-for-profit public-private partnership (PPP).
- Its **initial mandate** was to **act as a financial bod**y supporting training institutes that could equip workers with employable skills.

Statement 2 is not correct

- The **Government of India holds 49% of its equity** through the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), while the **private sector holds 51%.**

18. (b)

in News : The Maharashtra government has revoked previous government resolutions that made Hindi the compulsory or optional third language in primary schools.

Statement 1 is not correct : Three-language policy was first proposed by the **Education Commission (1964-66), officially known as the Kothari Commission.**

- It was formally adopted in the **National Policy on Education (NPE) 1968 and** It mandated teaching Hindi in non-Hindi speaking states, leading to protests in Tamil Nadu, which instead followed a two-language policy (Tamil and English).

Statement 2 is correct : The NEP 2020 retains the **three-language formula** but allows states, regions, and students **to choose the languages**, as long as at least **two are native Indian languages,** removing any imposition of Hindi.

19. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Personality rights refer to the **right of a person to protect his/her personality** under the **right to privacy or property.**

  - These could include **a pose, a mannerism or any aspect of their personality.**
- These rights are important to celebrities as their **names, photographs or even voices** can easily be misused in various advertisements by different companies to boost their sales.
- Many celebrities even register some aspects as a trademark to use them commercially.
  - For example, **Usain Bolt's "bolting"** or lightning pose is a registered trademark.

Reasons for providing these Rights

- The idea is that **only the owner** of these distinct features has the **right to derive any commercial benefit from it.**
- **Exclusivity** is a big factor in attracting commercial dividends for celebrities.
- Personality rights are not expressly mentioned in a Laws in India but **fall under the right to privacy.**

20. (d)

All three statements are correct: Foreigners Act, 1946 empowers the Government to detect, detain, and deport illegal foreigners.

- **Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964** was issued under this Act to create tribunals to decide on questions of citizenship.

- **Composition & Appointment:**
  - FTs are quasi-judicial bodies.
  - Appointed by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
  - Members can be retired district judges, additional district judges, or advocates with at least 10 years' experience.
- **Jurisdiction & Powers:**
  - Decide whether a person is a foreigner (illegal migrant) under the Foreigners Act, 1946.
  - **Have powers similar to a civil court:** Summon witnesses, Take evidence on oath, Order production of documents, Issue commissions for witness examination.

21. (d)

Right to Livelihood & Shelter: In Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985), the court recognized the right to livelihood as an integral part of the right to life under Article 21.

- It held that the eviction of pavement dwellers without providing alternative arrangements would violate their right to life and personal liberty.
- **Right to Dignity & Safe Environment:** In Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997), the court held that the right to a safe and secure working environment is a fundamental right flowing from Article 21.
- **Right to Privacy: In K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017) judgment,** the Supreme Court recognized the right to privacy as a fundamental right protected under Article 21.
- **Right to Die with Dignity:** In Common Cause v. Union of India (2018), the court legalized passive euthanasia and recognized the right to die with dignity as a fundamental right under Article 21.

22. (a)

About Attorney General of India

- The Attorney General of India (AGI) is the highest law officer and the chief legal advisor to the Government of India, appointed by the President under **Article 76** of the Constitution.
- Represents the Union Government in the Supreme Court and High Courts in all cases where the government is a party.
- Appointed by the President and holds office during the pleasure of the President without a fixed tenure.
- Must be qualified to be appointed a judge of the **Supreme Court** (i.e., a Supreme Court judge or an advocate for at least 10 years, or an eminent jurist as per the President's opinion).
- AGI can participate in parliamentary debates **but cannot vote**.

23. (b)

Jeevan Reddy Committee (2005): It recommended the repeal of AFSPA and suggested incorporating essential provisions into the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Santosh Hegde Commission (2013): It reported misuse of AFSPA in Manipur, including cases of extrajudicial executions and fake encounters by security forces.

Sarkaria Commission (1983): The Sarkaria Commission did not recommend the phased withdrawal of AFSPA. Its focus was on Centre-State relations and federalism, not specifically on AFSPA.

■■■■

GEOGRAPHY

1. With reference to the seismic waves, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. P-waves are compressional in nature and can travel through solids, liquids, and gases.
2. S-waves are slower than P-waves and can travel through both solids and liquids.

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

1. Meanders are only formed in the upper course of a river where vertical erosion dominates.
2. They are created due to both erosion and deposition along the river banks.

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

3. It is an archipelago of 115 islands. It lies east of Kenya and northeast of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. Which among the following nations is this?

(a) Mauritius
(b) Maldives
(c) Seychelles
(d) Comoros

4. With reference to demographic indicators, consider the following statements:

1. Total Fertility Rate (TFR) refers to the number of live births per 1,000 people in the mid of a given year.
2. Under-Five Mortality Rate (U5MR) measures the probability per 1,000 that a newborn will die before reaching the age of five, if subject to current mortality patterns.
3. Crude Birth Rate (CBR) indicates the average number of children a woman would have during her reproductive years.
4. Sex Ratio denotes the number of females per 1,000 males in a population.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

5. Consider the following statements:

1. The Hindu Kush Himalaya region only includes Pakistan, India, Nepal and China.
2. Hindu Kush Himalaya is the source of the Indus, Irrawaddy and Brahmaputra rivers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. Which of the following countries borders the Red Sea?

(a) Egypt, Djibouti and Ethiopia
(b) Saudi Arabia, Niger and Ethiopia
(c) Egypt, Djibouti and Eritrea
(d) Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Niger

7. With reference to Katchatheevu Island, consider the following statements:

1. It is located in the Palk Strait, between Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram and Sri Lanka's Jaffna.
2. The island is uninhabited, with St. Anthony's Catholic Shrine being the only permanent structure.
3. The 1974 Indo–Sri Lankan Maritime Agreement formally ceded India's claim over Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

8. It is the largest Pacific Island nation by land mass and population, located at the crossroads of Southeast Asia and Oceania. It serves as a key partner in regional forums like the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC). The country described here is:

(a) Fiji
(b) Papua New Guinea
(c) Solomon Islands
(d) Vanuatu

9. Consider the following countries:

1. Turkey
2. Iraq
3. Syria
4. Armenia
5. Turkmenistan
6. Uzbekistan
7. Azerbaijan

How many of the above countries share its border with Iran?

(a) Only four countries
(b) Only five countries

(c) Only six countries
(d) All seven countries

10. With reference to the Blue Nile river, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The Blue Nile originates in Lake Tana, located in South Sudan.
2. After joining the White Nile the river empties into the Mediterranean Sea as the Nile.

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. Consider the following statements about Vembanad Lake:

1. It is the longest lake in India and the largest in Kerala..
2. The Thanneermukkom salt water barrier, located in Vembanad Lake, is India's largest mud regulator.

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 of the following Indian states share an international boundary with Nepal?

1. Uttarakhand
2. Uttar Pradesh
3. Bihar
4. West Bengal
5. Sikkim
6. Himachal Pradesh

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
(b) 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 only
(c) 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 6 only

13. The Aravalli Range spans across which of the following states/Union territories?

(a) Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh
(b) Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan
(c) Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi
(d) Madhya Pradesh ,Rajasthan and Delhi

14. With reference to the Taiwan Strait, consider the following statements:

1. It separates Taiwan from Japan.
2. It connects the South China Sea to the East China Sea.

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 Indian states share a land boundary with Manipur?

1. Nagaland
2. Mizoram
3. Assam
4. Arunachal Pradesh

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

16. With reference to the 'Scarborough Shoal', consider the following statements:

1. It is located within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of China.
2. It is part of the Spratly Islands group.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. Which of the following straits is a strategic chokepoint that connects the South China Sea to the Pacific Ocean?

(a) Malacca Strait
(b) Hormuz Strait
(c) Luzon Strait
(d) Bering Strait

18. Consider the following statements with reference to the Carlsberg Ridge:

1. It lies specifically in the Arabian Sea and northwest Indian Ocean.
2. It forms the boundary between the Indian and Arabian tectonic plates

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. Consider the following:

	Geothermal sites in India	**Locations**
1.	Bhimband	Uttarakhand
2.	Surajkund	Haryana

3.	Anhoni	Madhya Pradesh
4.	Bakreshwar	Gujarat

How many of the above pair(s) is / are correctly matched?

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

20. With reference to the 'East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP)', consider the following statements:

1. It is a crude oil pipeline connecting Kenya and Ethiopia.
2. It aims to transport crude oil from Uganda's Lake Albert basin to the Indian Ocean for export.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

21. Machu Picchu, known as the "Lost City of the Incas," is located in which country?

(a) Peru
(b) Ecuador
(c) Chile
(d) Bolivia

22. Venezuela shares its boundary with which of the following countries?

1. Colombia
2. Guyana
3. Ecuador
4. Brazil

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

23. With reference to Manganese Ore in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Government of India has designated MOIL as the State Trading Enterprise (STE) for the export of manganese ore below 46% Mn grade.
2. Odisha holds the largest reserves/resources of manganese ore in India.
3. Manganese is silvery grey in colour, soft in nature, and malleable.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 2 and 3 only

24. Consider the following statements regarding Balochistan province of Pakistan:

1. It is the largest province of Pakistan by area, covering nearly 44% of the country's total landmass.
2. It shares borders with both Iran and Afghanistan.
3. Gwadar, the world's largest deep-sea port, is located in this province.
4. It is the most populated province of Pakistan.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

25. The Deccan Traps at Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar are part of which among the following protected areas?

(a) Sanjay Gandhi National Park
(b) Bhimashankar Wildlife Sanctuary
(c) Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve
(d) Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary

26. The Erra Matti Dibbalu (Red Sand Hills), showcasing paleo-climatic records, are located in which among the following places?

(a) Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
(b) Mangaluru, Karnataka
(c) Bhubaneswar, Odisha
(d) Chennai, Tamil Nadu

27. Consider the following statements about India's coastline and ports:

1. India has a coastline of about 7,500 km, including both mainland and island territories.
2. The number of Major Ports in India is 13, while the rest are classified as non-major ports under State governments.
3. The Andaman & Nicobar Islands contribute the maximum length to India's island coastline.

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

28. The Sawalkote Hydroelectric Power Project, recently in news, is proposed on which of the following rivers?

(a) Chenab
(b) Jhelum
(c) Ravi
(d) Beas

29. Bagram Air Base, recently seen in the news, is located in which country?

(a) Iraq
(b) Iran
(c) Syria
(d) Afghanistan

30. With reference to Swell Waves, consider the following statements:

1. Swell waves are generated by distant weather systems such as storms or cyclones, and can travel thousands of kilometres across the ocean.
2. Unlike wind waves, swell waves have longer wavelengths and carry energy with minimal loss, even in calm weather.

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

31. With reference to the Morocco, consider the following statements:

1. Morocco is a mountainous country of western North Africa that lies directly across the Strait of Gibraltar from Spain.
2. It is the only African country with coastal exposure to both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

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

32. 'Oju Hydroelectric Project' is located in which of the following Indian states?

(a) Assam
(b) Karnataka
(c) Gujarat
(d) Arunachal Pradesh

33. Tirah Valley, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following countries?

(a) Tajikistan
(b) Armenia
(c) Afghanistan
(d) Pakistan

34. Consider the following statements regarding Super Typhoon and tropical cyclones:

1. A Super Typhoon is a tropical cyclone with wind speeds exceeding 185 kmph (100 knots).
2. Tropical cyclones are warm-core low-pressure systems characterized by spiral inflow at lower levels and spiral outflow at upper levels.
3. They always form within 5° latitude of the equator due to maximum Coriolis force.
4. The term "Willy-willy" is used for tropical cyclones occurring in the eastern part of the Southern Indian Ocean.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

35. With reference to the geography of Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh, consider the following statements:

1. It lies in the rain shadow of the Himalayas.
2. It shares international borders with Pakistan and China only.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

36. Match the following terms for tropical cyclones with their respective regions:

Terms:	**Regions:**
1. Hurricane	A. Western North Pacific Ocean
2. Cyclone	B. North Atlantic, Eastern North Pacific, and South Pacific Oceans
3. Typhoon	C. Indian Ocean
4. Willy-willy	D. Eastern part of the Southern Indian Ocean

(a) 1–B, 2–C, 3–A, 4–D
(b) 1–A, 2–B, 3–C, 4–D
(c) 1–B, 2–A, 3–C, 4–D
(d) 1–D, 2–C, 3–A, 4–B

37. The term Engels' Pause, coined by Robert Allen, refers to which historical period?

(a) The Great Depression in the 1930s
(b) Post–World War II economic recovery in Europe
(c) Early 19th-century Britain during the Industrial Revolution
(d) The stagflation crisis of the 1970s

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Context

- The recent earthquake in Afghanistan, with a 6.0 magnitude, resulted in over 800 deaths and 2,000 injuries due to shallow depth and poor building structures.

Seismic Waves

- Seismic waves are **energy waves generated by an earthquake** that travels through the Earth's layers, causing ground shaking.
- They are mainly classified into two types: **body waves and surface waves.**
  - **Body Waves:**These waves travel through the interior of the Earth. They are faster and arrive before surface waves during an earthquake.

- **Surface waves** travel along the Earth's surface and are slower than body waves but cause the most damage due to their larger amplitude.

Types of Body Waves

- **P-Waves (Primary Waves):** They are the fastest seismic waves and the first to be recorded by seismographs. They move in a **compressional** or longitudinal manner.
  - P-waves can travel through **solids, liquids, and gases.**
- **S-Waves (Secondary Waves):** They move in a transverse manner, where particles move perpendicular to the wave's direction of propagation.
  - S-waves can **travel only through solids**, as liquids and gases do not support shear stress.

2. (b)

What are Meanders?

- Meanders are large bends or curves in the **middle and lower course** of a river, formed due to both erosion and deposition processes.
- A meander is formed when the **water flow velocity diminishes in the river,** reducing its ability to cut downwards. Instead, it begins to erode laterally (sideways).
  - **On the outer concave bank**, the river's current is stronger, causing **erosion.**
  - **On the inner convex bank**, the current is weaker, leading to **deposition** of sediments (point bars).
- This combination of erosion and deposition creates a winding channel, forming meanders.

3. (c)

In News

- Indian Navy ships INS Tir, INS Shardul, and Indian Coast Guard ship ICGS Sarathi, comprising the First Training Squadron (1TS), arrived in Seychelles.

Seychelles

- Seychelles is an archipelago of 115 islands.
- It is located east of Kenya and northeast of Madagascar.
- The capital, Victoria, is situated on the island of Mahé.
- It holds strategic importance for India due to its location along key maritime routes.

4. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: TFR actually refers to the average number of children a woman would have during her reproductive years (ages 15-49), assuming current age-specific fertility rates persist.

Statement 2 is correct: Under-Five Mortality Rate (U5MR) measures the probability per 1,000 live births that a newborn will die before age five under current mortality conditions.

Statement 3 is not correct: Crude Birth Rate (CBR) is the number of live births per 1,000 population in a year.

Statement 4 is correct: Sex Ratio is defined as the number of females per 1,000 males.

5. (b)

In News : A new report by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), launched during the Asia-Pacific Clean Energy Week in Bangkok, highlights the vast but underutilized renewable energy potential in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region.

Statement 1 is not correct but statement 2 is correct : The Hindu Kush Himalaya is a region that extends 3500 km over Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.

- It is the source of ten large Asian river systems – the Amu Darya, Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra (Yarlungtsanpo), Irrawaddy, Salween (Nu), Mekong (Lancang), Yangtse (Jinsha), Yellow River (Huanghe), and Tarim (Dayan) .
- It provides water, ecosystem services, and the basis for livelihoods to a population of around 240 million people in the region.

6. (c)

Context

- Undersea cable damage in the **Red Sea** has slowed internet access across several countries in Asia and the Middle East, including India.

Red Sea

- A total of **6 countries** of Asia and Africa border the Red Sea, which includes:
  - **Yemen and Saudi Arabia** to the east,
  - **Egypt** to the north and west, and
  - **Sudan, Eritrea,** and
  - **Djibouti** to the west.

7. (d)

All Statements are correct: Katchatheevu Island is situated in the Palk Strait, between Tamil Nadu's Rameswaram and Sri Lanka's Jaffna. The island is uninhabited, with St. Anthony's Catholic Shrine as the only permanent structure.

The 1974 Indo–Sri Lankan Maritime Agreement formally ceded India's claim over Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka.

8. (b)

Context

- Recently, the Indian Navy's **indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette, INS Kadmatt,** led the **Fleet Review** during **Papua New Guinea's 50th Independence Day celebrations**.

About the Papua New Guinea

- It is the **largest Pacific Island nation** by land mass and population, located at the crossroads of **Southeast Asia and Oceania**.
  - The region falls under the seismic **'Ring of Fire'.**
- **Capital:** Port Moresby**Official Languages:** English, Tok Pisin (a creole), and Hiri Motu.
- **Government:** Parliamentary democracy, part of the Commonwealth.
  - It serves as a key partner in regional forums like the **Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC).**

9. (b)

In News: As Iran and India navigate the complexities of a multipolar world, their historical depth offers a compelling foundation for new horizons.

- Iran is strategically located in **Western Asia**, bordered by seven countries and flanked by two major bodies of water — the **Caspian Sea to the north** and the **Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman to the south**. Iran shares land borders with **Turkey, Iraq, Armenia, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan.**
- It does **not share its border with Syria and Uzbekistan.**

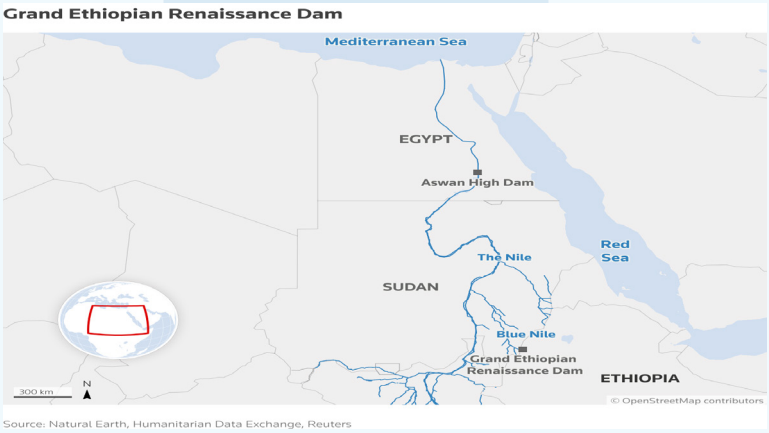
10. (b)

Context

- Ethiopia has inaugurated the **Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)**, Africa's largest hydro power project.

About the Blue Nile

- The **Blue Nile** originates in **Lake Tana**, located in the **Ethiopian Highlands** of eastern Africa.
- It joins the **White Nile** at **Al-Muqrin** in **Khartoum** (the capital of Sudan). From this confluence, the river flows north through Sudan and Egypt, eventually emptying into the **Mediterranean Sea** as the Nile.
- The **Nile River** is the **longest river in the world**, flowing through **11 countries**: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Rwanda, Tanzania, Sudan and Egypt.



11. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: It is the longest lake in India and the largest in Kerala. It is a Ramsar site and a wetland of international importance.

.

Statement 2 is correct: The Thanneermukkom barrage (salt water barrier) built across Vembanad is the largest mud regulator in India, crucial for preventing saltwater intrusion into the low-lying paddy fields of Kuttanad (below sea-level farming area).

12. (a)

In News

- Nepal President Ram Chandra Poudel appointed former **Chief Justice Sushila Karki as the country's first woman Prime Minister**.

Brief overview of India-Nepal Relations

- Nepal shares a border with **5 Indian states of Sikkim**, **West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.**
- The age-old civilizational and cultural ties that exist between India and Nepal are exemplified by the strong people to people link between both the countries.
  - Nepal is a priority partner of India under its **'Neighbourhood First' Policy**.

13. (c)

[SOL]The Indian Navy commissioned INS Aravali at the commissioning ceremony in Gurugram in the presence of Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi.

INS Aravali was named after the **Aravali Range** and would serve as a **hub of technology** and collaboration, linking platforms and partners across oceans.

- The Aravallis, is one the oldest folded mountains on Earth.
- It spans over 800km from Gujarat to **Delhi** (through **Rajasthan** and **Haryana**). The highest peak in the Aravalli Range is Guru Peak on Mount Abu
- Its motto is "**Maritime Security through Collaboration,**" and it aims to strengthen the Navy's operational readiness and maritime security.

14. (b)

Context

- China's newest aircraft carrier, the Fujian, has sailed through the Taiwan Strait.

About Taiwan Strait

- Also known as the **Formosa Strait** or Tai-hai (Tai Sea), it separates mainland China (Fujian Province) from the island of Taiwan.
- It is approximately **180 kilometers** wide at its narrowest point.
- The Taiwan Strait, which connects the **South China Sea to the East China Sea**, is a vital shipping lane through which goods worth around **$2.45 trillion**—over one-fifth of global maritime trade—passed in 2022.
- **Geopolitical Tensions:** China views Taiwan as a **renegade province** and asserts its claim over the **island and the strait**.

15. (a)

Context

- PM Modi visited Manipur on September 13, marking his first visit to the state since the ethnic violence of 2023.

About Manipur

- Manipur is a northeastern state of India that shares its borders with **Nagaland (north), Mizoram (south), and Assam (west).**
- On its eastern side, Manipur shares an **international boundary** with **Myanmar.**

16. (d)

In News: Recently, the Philippines has reacted strongly to China's announcement it would establish a nature reserve in the South China Sea at the disputed Scarborough Shoal.

Statement 1 is not correct

- The Scarborough Shoal, known as **Bajo de Masinloc in the Philippines** and **Huangyan Island in China**, lies within the **Philippines' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).**
- It is a small atoll with no permanent structures or settlements, though China maintains a maritime presence.
- The **Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)** ruled in favor of the Philippines regarding maritime rights**,** stating China's claims had no legal basis under UNCLOS.

Statement 2 is not correct

- Scarborough Shoal is a **triangle-shaped atoll** located about 200 kilometers off the **coast of Luzon**.
- It is a **separate feature,** located **northwest of the Spratlys.**

17. (c)

Option c is correct: Luzon Strait lies between Taiwan and the Philippines (Luzon island). It connects the South China Sea with the Pacific Ocean, making it strategically important for trade, naval movement, and regional security.

18. (c)

In News : India has secured its **first-ever global exploration contract from the International Seabed Authority (ISA)** to explore polymetallic sulphide nodules in the Carlsberg Ridge.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : The Carlsberg Ridge is a 300,000 sq km area in the **Arabian Sea and northwest Indian Ocean**, forming the boundary between the **Indian and Arabian tectonic plates**. It extends from near Rodrigues Island to the Owen fracture zone. India had applied in January 2024 for exploration rights in two Indian Ocean regions—**Carlsberg Ridge**, which has now been granted, and **the Afanasy-Nikitin Sea (ANS) mount, still pending approval**. The ANS region is also claimed by Sri Lanka.

19. (a)

In News: Recently, the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) launched its **first national policy on geothermal energy**, joining a growing list of countries betting on subterranean heat to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070.

Pair 1 is not correctly matched

- **Bhimband is located in Munger of Bihar.** However, Tapoban, Gari, Joshimath, Juma, Jamunotri, Ganganani, Beda, Joti, Nyu, Dar, and Bheti are located in **Uttarakhand.**

Pair 2 is not correctly matched

- **Sohna** is located in **Haryana**. However, **Surajkund** and Tantloi are **located in Jharkhand.**

Pair 3 is correctly matched

- **Anhoni** is located in Madhya Pradesh.

Pair 4 is not correctly matched

- **Bakreshwar is located in West Bengal**. However, Dholera, Tuwa, and Tulsishyam are located in Gujarat.

20. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct

- EACOP is a **crude oil pipeline** connecting **Uganda and Tanzania**, not Kenya or Ethiopia, and it does not transport natural gas.
- It aims to transport crude oil from **Kabaale in Uganda's Hoima District** to the **Chongoleani Peninsula near Tanga Port in Tanzania**, making it the longest heated crude oil pipeline in the world.

Statement 2 is correct

- The pipeline is **designed to transport** 216,000 barrels of **crude oil** per day from **Uganda's Lake Albert basin** to the **Indian Ocean for export.**
- It is designed to support Uganda's upstream oil developments — **Tilenga and Kingfisher,** and provides a critical export route for **Uganda's landlocked oil reserves,** enabling access to global markets **via Tanzania's coastline.**

21. (a)

Context

- Around 900 tourists have been left stranded near **Peru's ancient Inca citadel of Machu Picchu** after passenger train services were suspended due to protests.

About Machu Picchu

- Machu Picchu is a 15th-century Inca citadel located in the Eastern Cordillera of southern Peru, perched at **2,430 meters** above sea level.
- Often called the **"Lost City of the Incas"**, it is one of the most iconic symbols of the **Inca civilization.**
- **Constructed in classical Inca style** with finely crafted dry-stone walls, its notable structures include the **Temple of the Sun**, the **Temple of the Three Windows**, and the **Intihuatana stone.**

22. (b)

Context

- India and Venezuela have agreed to collaborate on pilot projects in priority sectors such as agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and digital public infrastructure.

About Venezuela

- Venezuela, is located at the northern end of **South America.**
- **Venezuela is bounded by** the **Caribbean Sea** and the **Atlantic Ocean to the north, Guyana** to the east, **Brazil** to the south, and **Colombia** to the southwest and west.
- **Orinoco Belt:** This is a vast region in Venezuela rich in heavy crude oil, making up a large part of the country's total reserves.
- **Lake Maracaibo** of Venezuela is the largest lake in Latin America and one of the oldest water bodies on the planet.
- **Angel Falls**, located in Venezuela's **Canaima National Park,** is the world's highest uninterrupted waterfall.

23. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: The Government of India has appointed MOIL as the STE for exports of manganese ore below 46% manganese grade, and MOIL has started exporting manganese ore under this mechanism.

Statement 2 is correct: Odisha holds around 44% of India's manganese ore reserves, making it the state with the largest reserves followed by Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.

Statement 3 is not correct: Manganese is silvery-gray but it is hard, brittle, and not malleable.

24. (a)

Context

- The United States has blocked a joint bid by Pakistan and China to proscribe the **Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)** and its suicide wing - Majeed Brigade - under the **UN 1267 terror sanctions regime**.
  - It marks a change from Washington's move last month, when it placed the BLA and Majeed Brigade on its own list of foreign terrorist organizations.

About Balochistan

- It is the **largest province** of Pakistan by area, covering nearly **44%** of the country's total landmass, yet it is the **least populated**.
- **Situated in the southwestern region** of Pakistan, it shares borders with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the northeast, Punjab to the east, Sindh to the southeast, **Iran** to the west, **Afghanistan** to the north, and the Arabian Sea to the south.
- Despite housing the world's largest deep-sea port, **Gwadar**, along with rich reserves of oil, gas, gold, and copper, the province has lagged behind other regions in economic growth.

25. (d)

Context

- Seven natural heritage sites from across India have been included in UNESCO's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites, increasing India's count on the Tentative List from 62 to 69 properties.

Newly Added Sites

- **Deccan Traps at Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra:** The sites form part of the massive Deccan Traps and are located within the **Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary**, already a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Geological Heritage of St. Mary's Island Cluster, Karnataka:** Known for its rare columnar basaltic rock formations, this island cluster dates back to the Late **Cretaceous period**, offering a geological snapshot from around 85 million years ago.
- **Meghalayan Age Caves, Meghalaya:** The stunning cave systems of Meghalaya, particularly the Mawmluh Cave, serve as the global reference point for the Meghalayan Age in the Holocene Epoch, reflecting significant climate and geological transitions.
- **Naga Hill Ophiolite, Nagaland:** A rare exposure of ophiolite rocks, these hills represent oceanic crust uplifted onto continental plates—offering deep insights into tectonic processes and mid-ocean ridge dynamics.
- **Erra Matti Dibbalu (Red Sand Hills), Andhra Pradesh:** These visually striking red sand formations near Visakhapatnam showcase unique paleo-climatic and coastal geomorphological features that reveal Earth's climatic history and dynamic evolution.
- **Natural Heritage of Tirumala Hills, Andhra Pradesh:** Featuring the Eparchaean Unconformity and the **Silathoranam (Natural Arch),** this site represents over 1.5 billion years of Earth's history.
- **Varkala Cliffs, Kerala:** The scenic cliffs along Kerala's coastline expose the Warkalli Formation of the Mio-Pliocene age, along with natural springs and striking erosional landforms.

26. (a)

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- **Varkala Cliffs, Kerala:** The scenic cliffs along Kerala's coastline expose the Warkalli Formation of the Mio-Pliocene age, along with natural springs and striking erosional landforms.

27. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The updated and officially recognized length of India's coastline, including islands, is approximately 11,099 km, not 7,500 km. The 7,500 km figure is outdated from older measurements.

Statement 2 is correct: India has 13 major ports governed by the central government, and more than 200 non-major ports managed by the respective state governments.

Statement 3 is correct: Among the island territories, the Andaman & Nicobar Islands have the longest coastline.

28. (a)

In News

- The stalled Sawalkote project which is part of the Indus system is back at the centre of India's strategy to tap the river's hydropower potential.

About

- The Sawalkote Project is a run-of-the-river hydroelectric power project **proposed on the Chenab River**, located in the Ramban and Udhampur districts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It is being **implemented by the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC)**, a Government of **India Mini Ratna Category-I Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Power.**
- The project aims to enhance power availability in the region, especially during winter when shortages are frequent, transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a power-surplus region with the potential to export surplus electricity to the national grid.

29. (d)

In News

- The US President wants the United States to reclaim **Bagram Air Base** in Afghanistan because of its **immense strategic, military, and geopolitical value.**

About

- Bagram Air Base is the **largest and most strategically significant military airfield** in Afghanistan, located in Parwan province around 40–60 km north of Kabul, near the ancient town of Bagram.
- **Built by the Soviet Union in the 1950s**, it played a pivotal role during the Cold War and the Soviet-Afghan War, and later, it became the nerve center for US and NATO operations after 2001.

- Bagram is positioned at the crossroads of **Iran, Pakistan, Central Asia, and close to China's Xinjiang province**, making it a unique vantage point for projecting military force or conducting surveillance in Eurasia.
- The base was vacated by **US forces in July 2021** as part of the broader withdrawal from Afghanistan, and it subsequently fell under Taliban control.

30. (c)

Option c is correct: Swell waves originate from distant disturbances (storms, cyclones, strong winds). They travel long distances (sometimes across ocean basins) independent of the local wind. Swell waves tend to have longer wavelengths (ranging from 100 to 700 meters) compared to locally generated wind waves, which are shorter and choppier. Swells have relatively smooth, regular waveforms and conserve their energy over long distances, even when local winds are calm, unlike wind waves which require continuous wind action to sustain.

31. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Morocco is a mountainous country of **western North Africa** that lies directly across the **Strait of Gibraltar from Spain.**

- **Morocco borders** Algeria to the east and southeast, Western Sahara to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, and the Mediterranean Sea to the north.
- It is the **only African country** with coastal exposure to both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

32. (d)

An expert panel of the Union Environment Ministry has recommended environmental clearance for the **2,220 MW Oju hydroelectric project.**

About

- **Proposed on:** The **Subansiri river** in Taksing near the China border in **Arunachal Pradesh.**
- This will be **India's third largest hydel project.**
- **The other hydro projects planned in the Subansiri basin** are Niare, Naba, Nalo, Dengser, upper Subansiri and Lower Subansiri.
- The main power plant will have a capacity of **2,100 MW while the dam-toe plant will have a capacity of 120MW.**

33. (d)

Context

- Pakistan's air force launched eight LS-6 precision-guided glide bombs on villages in the Tirah Valley of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

About Tirah Valley

- **Location:** The Tirah Valley is a mountainous and strategically important region in **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa,** Pakistan, located near the **Pakistan–Afghanistan border.**
  - It lies between the **Khyber Pass and the Khanki Valley** and stretches across the Khyber and Orakzai districts.
- **Tribal Inhabitants:** The valley is primarily inhabited by **Afridi and Orakzai** Pashtun tribes.
- **Terrain:** The landscape is rugged and mountainous, with several sub-valleys, including **Maidan, Rajgul, Waran, Bara, and Mastura.**
- **Militancy and displacement:** After the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the valley became a battleground between state forces and various militant groups, such as the **Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)** and **Lashkar-e-Islam.**

34. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: A Super Typhoon is a very intense tropical cyclone with sustained winds generally above 100 knots (185 kmph).

Statement 2 is correct: Tropical cyclones have a warm core with characteristic spiral inflow near the surface and outflow at upper levels.

Statement 3 is not correct: Tropical cyclones rarely form within 5° latitude from the equator because the Coriolis force is very weak near the equator and insufficient to initiate cyclone rotation. They usually form between 5° and 20° latitudes.

Statement 4 is correct: In Australia and the eastern Southern Indian Ocean, tropical cyclones are colloquially called "Willy-willy."

35. (a)

Statement 1 is correct

- **Ladakh** is a **high-altitude cold desert**, lying in the **rain shadow of the Himalayas.** It is dominated by three major mountain ranges like **Zanskar Range, Ladakh Range and Karakoram Range.**
- It falls under **Seismic Zone IV** (high earthquake risk)

Statement 2 is not correct

- It shares its **international borders** with **China** (North & East); **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir** (Northwest); and Afghanistan.
- Its strategic location places it adjacent to the Line of Control (LoC) and Line of Actual Control (LAC), making it geopolitically significant.

36. (a)

In News

- **Super Typhoon Ragasa** has caused widespread devastation **across East Asia.**

Terminology for Tropical Cyclones by Region

- **Hurricane:** Occurs in the North Atlantic, Eastern North Pacific, and South Pacific Oceans.
- **Cyclone:** Found in the Indian Ocean.
- **Typhoon:** Develops in the Western North Pacific Ocean.
- **Willy-willy:** Term used in the eastern part of the Southern Indian Ocean for tropical cyclones.

37. (c)

Context

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) pioneer **Geoffrey Hinton** recently warned that AI could enrich a few while leaving most behind, signaling the possibility of an Engels' pause in the modern AI economy.

What is an Engels' Pause?

- The term, coined by economist **Robert Allen after Friedrich Engels**, refers to early **19th-century** Britain where industrial output surged but wages stagnated, food consumed most of household budgets, and inequality widened.
  - Decades later, living standards improved as institutions, reforms, and complementary innovations evolved.
- In the current scenario the concern is whether AI could trigger a **modern Engels' pause** where productivity rises but welfare gains are delayed.
  - **AI as a General-Purpose Technology (GPT):** AI has transformative potential but requires complementary innovations, skills, and institutional adaptation to yield broad benefits.
  - **Falling Cost of Prediction:** AI reduces prediction costs but the gains may be captured by a few firms and entrepreneurs.

■■■■

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. With reference to the 'Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY)', consider the following statements:

1. It integrates lessons from Make in India, the National Manufacturing Mission, and Production-Linked Incentives (PLI).
2. It ensures transparency and accelerates formalisation, by linking benefits to Direct Benefit Transfer and social security enrolment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. With reference to the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)', consider the following statements:

1. It covers both rural and urban poor based on SECC 2011 data.
2. It is completely free for eligible families and no premium is required.
3. It is managed by the National Health Authority, under MoH&FW.

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

3. Consider the following statements about Samagra Shiksha Scheme:

1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
2. It aims to implement SDG 3, Right to Education, and New Education Policy.
3. It is an integrated scheme, announced in the Union Budget 2018-19.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

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

4. Which of the following technologies and product categories are a focus of the BHARATI initiative?

(a) Crop insurance and subsidy management systems
(b) Traditional farming tools and hybrid seeds

(c) Solar irrigation systems and livestock tracking
(d) GI-tagged items, organic foods, and AYUSH products

5. The SAMHiTA initiative recently seen in the news is related to:
(a) Preservation of rock art and cave paintings in India
(b) Creation of a relational database and digital archive of South Asian manuscripts
(c) Compilation of only oral traditions of South Asian communities
(d) Digitization of ancient inscriptions of India only

6. Angikaar 2025, recently seen in the news, is primarily:
(a) A nationwide campaign to promote organic farming practices.
(b) An outreach initiative under PMAY-Urban 2.0 to accelerate housing implementation.
(c) A programme for skill development of urban poor under DAY-NULM.
(d) A digital literacy programme under the Ministry of Electronics & IT.

7. With reference to the National Health Mission (NHM), consider the following statements:
1. It was launched by subsuming the National Rural Health Mission, 2005 and National Urban Health Mission, 2013.
2. It aims to provide accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare to the rural and urban population, especially the vulnerable groups.

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
1. The Amnesty Scheme 2025 allows unregistered employers and workers including contractual staff to enroll in the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) Act system without facing inspections.
2. SPREE 2025 is a one-time dispute resolution initiative aimed at reducing the backlog of court cases and promoting compliance under the ESI Act.

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 primary objective of the 'Never Alone' program launched by AIIMS is to;
(a) Promote telemedicine for routine physical health check-ups.
(b) Develop AI tools for medical education and training of doctors.
(c) Minimise stigma surrounding suicide and increase awareness among students.
(d) Develop AI applications for robotic surgery.

10. Which of the following is the primary objective of the Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) initiative?
(a) To provide scholarships to students from economically weaker sections.
(b) To consolidate all academic records of a student into a lifelong digital ID.

(c) To monitor school infrastructure at the district level.
(d) To conduct a nationwide academic ranking of schools and universities.

11. Which of the following is the primary objective of the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM)?
(a) Development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds.
(b) Providing subsidized loans to dairy farmers.
(c) Promoting genetic diversity in poultry.
(d) Enhancing fodder production for livestock.

12. With reference to the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS), consider the following statements:
1. The National Pension Scheme (NPS) was mandatory for all central government employees joining from January 1, 2004, the UPS is optional.
2. Under it, spouses of the employees are not eligible for the pension.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

13. With reference to the PM Vishwakarma Scheme, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is a Central Sector Scheme that provides end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople engaged in 18 trades.
2. It provides collateral-free Enterprise Development Loans of up to ₹10 lakh in two tranches at a concessional interest rate of 5%.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

14. With reference to the Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan, consider the following statements:
1. It is led by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) and the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD).
2. It will involve organising more than 10 lakh health camps at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, Community Health Centres (CHCs), District Hospitals and other government health facilities across the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

15. With reference to the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, consider the following statements:
1. It was launched in 2024 and aims to provide free electricity to households by facilitating the installation of rooftop solar panels.

2. Currently, Maharashtra is the state with the highest number of households benefiting under it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

16. Consider the following statements about Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment):

1. It was introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh in 2022.
2. It aims to nudge individual and community action for protecting and preserving the environment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. The SPARSH initiative, recently seen in the news, is related to:

(a) A digital platform for monitoring India's renewable energy capacity
(b) A pension administration system for defence personnel
(c) An online grievance redressal portal for farmers
(d) A centralized platform for healthcare insurance claims

18. Consider the following statements regarding Viksit Bharat Buildathon 2025:

1. It is a nationwide innovation contest open to college students across India.
2. The initiative aims to promote ideas focusing on self-reliance, indigenous knowledge, and sustainability.
3. It is organised by the Department of School Education & Literacy in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission (NITI Aayog) and AICTE.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

19. Which of the following agencies, along with the Tamil Nadu State Government, are associated with the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE)?

(a) World Bank
(b) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
(c) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
(d) International Monetary Fund (IMF)

20. With reference to the 'BharatGen', consider the following statements:

1. It is the world's first government-funded multimodal Large Language Model (LLM) initiative.
2. It is part of the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS).

3. It is designed to support all 22 scheduled Indian languages.

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

21. Recently, 'Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana' has been launched in which of the following states?

(a) Madhya Pradesh
(b) Rajasthan
(c) Uttarakhand
(d) Bihar

22. With reference to the Swachh Shehar Jodi (SSJ), consider the following statements:

1. It is a structured mentorship and collaborative action program under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
2. It is a mentorship model where top-performing cities (mentors) guide low-performing cities (mentees).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY) was launched in the **Union Budget 2024–25**. It aims to create **3.5 crore jobs over two years**, with an unprecedented **₹1 lakh crore outlay.**

Statement 1 is correct: The PMVBRY integrates lessons from **Make in India, the National Manufacturing Mission, and Production-Linked Incentives**, while adapting to the **changing global job landscape** shaped by automation and supply-chain shifts.

- It reflects a **shared responsibility of workers and employers** in nation-building.

Statement 2 is correct: It ensures transparency and accelerates formalisation, by linking benefits to **Direct Benefit Transfer** and **social security enrolment**.

- Special emphasis on the **manufacturing sector** aligns with national priorities of **Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliance)** and **global manufacturing leadership**.
- It **reduces entry barriers for workers** while **mitigating hiring risks for businesses**, fostering competitiveness alongside employability.

2. (d)

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) is a flagship initiative under the **Ayushman Bharat program**, designed to provide free health insurance to India's most vulnerable populations.

- It aims to cover over 12 crore families — approximately 55 crore beneficiaries — across the country.

Statement 1 is correct

- PM-JAY identifies beneficiaries using the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011 for both rural and urban areas.

Statement 2 is correct

- PM-JAY is a fully government-funded scheme, offering cashless and paperless treatment without any premium or enrollment fee.

Statement 3 is correct

- The National Health Authority (NHA), functioning under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW), is the implementing agency for PM-JAY.

3. (b)

Context

- The Supreme Court has issued notice to the Centre after Tamil Nadu alleged that Samagra Shiksha funds were delinked from reimbursements under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

About Samagra Shiksha Scheme

- It is an integrated scheme, announced in the **Union Budget 2018-19**, for school education covering complete **pre-primary to senior secondary** (up to class 12th).
- **Type: Centrally Sponsored Scheme** (partnership with States& UT).
- Subsumed erstwhile Centrally Sponsored Schemes:
  - **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**
  - **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and**
  - **Teacher Education (TE)**
- **Objectives:** To implement **SDG 4**, Right to Education and New Education Policy.
- **Coverage:** 1.16 million schools, over 156 million students and 5.7 million Teachers of Govt. and Aided schools.

4. (d)

In News : APEDA has launched BHARATI (Bharat's Hub for Agritech, Resilience, Advancement and Incubation for Export Enablement). BHARATI initiative is aimed at empowering 100 agri-food and agri-tech startups to boost innovation and create new export opportunities.

- It supports India's goal of achieving **$50 billion in agri-food exports by 2030**.
- It will run a nationwide campaign to attract startups for a three-month acceleration program, supported by partnerships with agricultural boards, premier institutions, and industry bodies.
- **It** will focus on high-value products like GI-tagged items, organic foods, and AYUSH products, while encouraging advanced technologies such as AI quality control, blockchain traceability, and IoT-enabled cold chains.

5. (b)

Context

- The Minister of External Affairs of India inaugurated the **SAMHiTA Conference** on South Asia's Manuscript Traditions and Mathematical Contributions in New Delhi.

About SAMHiTA (South Asian Manuscript Histories and Textual Archive)?

- SAMHiTA is an initiative to create a **relational database and digital archive** of Indian and broadly South Asian manuscripts housed in **libraries, archives and other repositories outside India**, through collaboration with institutional partners.

- **Focus areas:** Mathematics, astronomy, linguistics, philosophy, medicine, literature in manuscripts.
- **Significance:** Helps reclaim India's intellectual traditions, prevents cultural erasure, and strengthens research in history of science.

6. (b)

Context

- The Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, launched "Angikaar 2025", under **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban 2.0 (PMAY-U 2.0)**, in New Delhi.

What is Angikaar 2025?

- It is an **outreach campaign** to accelerate the implementation of **PMAY-U 2.0** by creating widespread awareness about the scheme across the country.
- **Duration & Coverage:** The campaign will run from **4th September 2025 to 31st October 2025** across **5,000+ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** in the country.
- It will also **fast-track verification of applications** under the scheme and expedite the completion of already sanctioned houses under PMAY-U.
- It includes promoting the Credit Risk Guarantee Fund Trust for Low Income Housing (CRGFTLIH), integrating benefits from schemes like **PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, and prioritizing housing for Special Focus Groups.**

7. (c)

Both the statements are correct:

- **Launched:** 2013 (by subsuming the **National Rural Health Mission, 2005** and **National Urban Health Mission, 2013).**
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW).
- **Aim:** To provide accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare to the rural and urban population, especially the vulnerable groups.
- **Implementation strategy:** The Ministry is to provide financial and technical support to States / Union Territories (UTs) enabling them to provide accessible, affordable, accountable, and effective healthcare up to District Hospitals (DHs).
  - It has also aimed to bridge the gap in rural healthcare services through improved health infrastructure, augmentation of human resource and improved service delivery in rural areas.
  - It has envisaged decentralization of programme to district level to facilitate need-based interventions, improve intra and inter-sectoral convergence and effective utilization of resources.

8. (d)

Context: The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) has launched two key initiatives — SPREE-2025 and the AMNESTY Scheme-2025 — to expand social security coverage and ease compliance for industries.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : SPREE-2025 (Scheme for Promoting Registration of Employers and Employees) will be active until 31st December 2025.

- It **allows unregistered industries and employees to enroll with ESIC via the ESI Portal, Shram Suvidha Portal, or Company Affairs Portal without paying past dues.**
- Registered employers will be covered from their chosen date, and employees will receive ESIC benefits from the registration date.
- The scheme promotes voluntary compliance over punishment, aiming to reduce litigation and build trust between employers and employees.

- **AMNESTY Scheme-2025** is a one-time dispute resolution initiative by ESIC, effective from 1st October 2025 to 30th September 2026.
- It aims to reduce the backlog of court cases and promote compliance under the ESI Act by allowing employers to settle legal disputes with ESIC through out-of-court settlements.

9. (c)

Context

- All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, today launched an AI-based mental health and wellness program called **"Never Alone"** to tackle student suicides and improve mental health awareness.

About 'Never Alone' program

- It was launched on **World Suicide Prevention Day (10 September).**
- It offers 24/7 virtual and offline consultations with mental health experts through a web-based app accessible via WhatsApp.
  - The program aims to **minimise stigma surrounding suicide** and increase awareness among students.

Objectives and Need

- The app provides personalised and secure mental health screening for just **70 paise per student per day** for institutions with 5 thousand students.
  - As per the data of the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB),** in 2022, over **1.7 lakh people** died by suicide in India, with young adults aged 18-30 years accounting for **35 percent** of all suicides.

10. (b)

Context

- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has provided partial relaxations to schools regarding the submission of APAAR IDs linked to the List of Candidates (LOC) data for Classes 10 and 12.

What is APAAR?

- **The Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR)** is an initiative under the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** and aligned with the **National Credit and Qualifications Framework (NCrF).**
- Its goal is to assign every student in India a unique, permanent **12-digit ID** which acts as their lifelong academic identity.
- **Purpose and Key Features:**
  - **To consolidate all academic achievements** (grades, marksheets, certificates, co-curricular achievements, etc.) in a single digital record linked to the student.
  - **To enable seamless credit transfers,** mobility between institutions, recognition of prior learning, and flexibility in education.

11. (a)

The primary objective of the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM) is the development and scientific conservation of indigenous bovine breeds such as Gir, Sahiwal, and Red Sindhi. The mission aims to enhance the productivity of these native breeds, increase milk production sustainably, and promote genetic upgradation. It supports farmers through advanced breeding techniques, artificial insemination, and setting up specialized breeding centers called Gokul Grams. The mission is implemented by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying and is part of the broader National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development.

12. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: It was announced in **2024**; effective from **April 1, 2025.**

- **Eligibility:** Central government employees who joined on or **after January 1, 2004** (covered under NPS).
  - New recruits joining central government services on or after April 1, 2025.
  - Former employees who were under NPS but retired or voluntarily retired on or before March 31, 2025.
- **Voluntary Option:** While the NPS was mandatory for all central government employees joining from January 1, 2004, the **UPS is optional.**

Statement 2 is not correct: Features of UPS:

- **Assured Pension:** 50% of average basic pay of last 12 months, after 25 years of service.
- **Family Pension: Spouses get up to 60% of pension after a pensioner's death.**

13. (a)

Context

- On 17 September 2025, the PM Vishwakarma Scheme completed two years.

About the scheme

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** that provides end-to-end **support to artisans and craftspeople** who work with their hands and tools.
  - The Scheme covers artisans and craftspeople engaged in **18 trades.**
- **Key Benefits:**
  - **Recognition** of artisans and craftspeople through PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card.
  - **Skill Upgradation:** Basic Training of 5-7 days and Advanced Training of 15 days or more, with a stipend of Rs. 500 per day.
  - **Credit Support:** Collateral free 'Enterprise Development Loans' of up to Rs. 3 lakh in two tranches of **Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 2 lakh** with tenures of 18 months and 30 months, respectively, at a concessional rate of interest fixed at **5%**, with Government of India subvention to the extent of **8%.**
  - **Marketing Support** in the form of quality certification, branding, onboarding on e-commerce platforms such as GeM, advertising, publicity and other marketing activities to improve linkage to value chain.

14. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the **Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan** and the **8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah Campaign in Madhya Pradesh.**

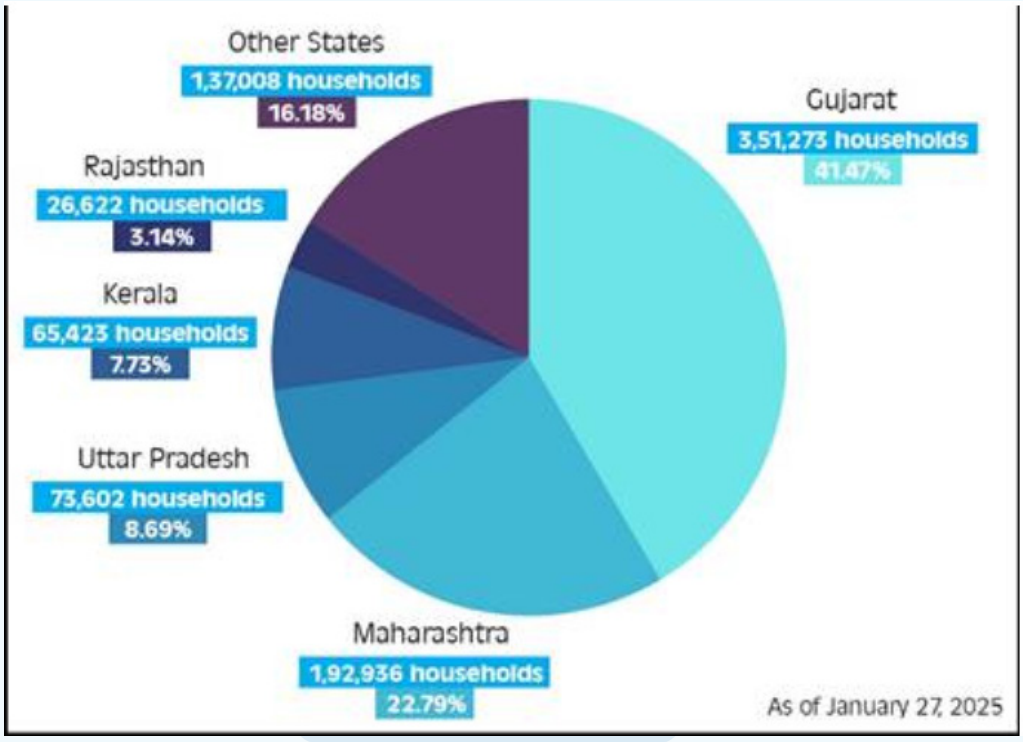
- It marks the **largest ever health outreach for women and children in India.**
- **Led By:** Jointly by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) and the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MoWCD).
- **Aim:** To provide women-centric preventive, promotive, and curative health services at the community level.
- **Implementation:** It will involve organising more than 10 lakh health camps at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, Community Health Centres (CHCs), District Hospitals and other government health facilities across the country.
- **Significance:** It will strengthen screening, early detection, and treatment linkages for non-communicable diseases, anaemia, tuberculosis, and sickle cell disease, while also promoting maternal, child, and adolescent health.

15. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: It was launched in **2024** and aims to provide free electricity to households by facilitating the installation of rooftop solar panels.

- **Installation Targets:**
  - **By October 2025:** Reaching 40 lakh,
  - **March 2027:** 1 crore households.
- The scheme offers a **subsidy of up to 40%** to households, making renewable energy more affordable and accessible.

Statement 2 is not correct: Top 5 states with the highest number of households benefiting under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.



16. (b)

Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)

- It is an India-led global mass movement to nudge individual and community action to protect and preserve the environment.
  - Introduced by PM Narendra Modi at **COP26 in Glasgow** on 1st November **2021**, it draws from India's rich cultural heritage, which promotes conservation of natural resources and harmony with nature.
  - It seeks to channel the efforts of **individuals and communities** into a global mass movement of positive behavioural change.

17. (b)

Context

- The System for Pension Administration – Raksha (SPARSH) has resolved **5.60 lakh** out of **6.43 lakh legacy discrepancy cases (87%),** safeguarding the entitlements of defence pensioners.

About

- SPARSH is the world's largest pension system for defence personnel.
- **The System for Pension Administration (Raksha) – SPARSH** is an initiative of the Ministry of Defence aimed at providing a comprehensive digital solution for the administration of defence pensions.

- The system seeks to **replace fragmented pension management with a centralized,** transparent, and interactive platform, thereby reducing grievances and ensuring dignity for defence pensioners.
- At present, 202 Defence Accounts Department (DAD) offices, 4.63 lakh Common Service Centers, 5200+ bank branches functioning as SPARSH Service Centers.

18. (b)

Context

- The Union Education Ministry has launched the **Viksit Bharat Buildathon 2025**, a nationwide virtual innovation contest for school students, with a prize pool of ₹1 crore.

About

- **Participants:** Open to students from **Classes 6 to 12** across six lakh government and private schools.
- **Objective:** Encourage students to develop innovative ideas and products focusing on **self-reliance, indigenous knowledge, and sustainability**, contributing to India's vision of **Viksit Bharat by 2047**.
- **Organisers:** Department of School Education & Literacy, in collaboration with Atal Innovation Mission (NITI Aayog) and AICTE.
- **Background:** Builds upon the success of **School Innovation Marathon 2024**, which led to programmes like the **Student Innovator Programme (SIP)** and **Student Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP)**, along with patents and startup ventures from the Atal Tinkering Labs.

19. (a)

Context

- As part of the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE), the **World Bank will directly fund village mangrove councils (VMCs)** in the State to facilitate bioshield enhancement through mangrove plantations.

About TN-SHORE

- Approved in **September 2025**, TN-SHORE is a ₹1,675-crore project, of which the **World Bank contributes ₹1,000 crore** and the **State government covers the rest**.
- The initiative is aimed at restoring **30,000 hectares of seascapes**, safeguarding the endangered species such as **turtles and dugongs**, and supporting sustainable practices, including eco-tourism and plastic waste management.
- An integral component of TN-SHORE is **mangrove restoration**, with plans to revive 1,000 hectares — including 300 hectares of new plantations and 700 hectares of degraded areas.

20. (d)

In News: The recent launch of **BharatGen** marks a transformative mission toward technological sovereignty and culturally rooted artificial intelligence systems, aiming to embed AI into the very fabric of **India's digital future.**

Statement 1 is correct

- It is the **world's first government-funded** multimodal **Large Language Model (LLM) initiative,** launched under the **IndiaAI Mission**, focused on developing foundational AI models in:
  - **Text** (LLMs for Indian languages);
  - **Speech** (Text-to-Speech and Automatic Speech Recognition);
  - **Vision-language systems** (for multimodal understanding);

Statement 2 is correct

- It is spearheaded by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** under the **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)**.

Statement 3 is correct

- Currently, BharatGen models **support 9 Indian languages**, and **aims to cover all 22 scheduled Indian languages** by **June 2026.**
- It has already launched **Param-1, a bilingual LLM** trained on 5 trillion tokens in **English and Hindi.**

21. (d)

Prime Minister Modi launched **Bihar's Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana.**

About

- **Aim:** Making women Aatmanirbhar and promoting women's empowerment through self-employment and livelihood opportunities.
- **Eligibility:** Every family will have at least one woman beneficiary under this scheme.
- **Benefit:** Each beneficiary will receive an initial grant of Rs. 10,000 via Direct Benefit Transfer, with the possibility of additional financial support of up to Rs. 2 lakh in subsequent phases.
- **The assistance can be utilized in areas of the choice of the beneficiary** including agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, tailoring, weaving, and other small-scale enterprises.

22. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Swachh Shehar Jodi (SSJ) is a structured mentorship and collaborative action program under the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).**

- **Involves 72 mentor cities** paired with around **200 mentee cities** based on their performance in **Swachh Survekshan rankings.**
- **Aim:** To promote knowledge sharing, peer learning, and replication of best practices in urban sanitation and waste management.

Key Features:

- **Mentorship Model:** Top-performing cities (mentors) guide low-performing cities (mentees). Focus on experience sharing, action planning, and handholding.
- **Time-bound Program:** 100-day program to demonstrate the impact of city-to-city mentorship. Each mentor–mentee pair develops action plans with defined milestones.
- **Nationwide Engagement: Nearly 300 MoUs** signed across participating cities in the presence of city officials and political leaders.
  - The initiative creates a dynamic platform for collaboration, which will be evaluated in **Swachh Survekshan 2026.**

■■■■

DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. Exercise Yudh Kaushal 3.0, recently in the news, was:

(a) A high-altitude military exercise conducted by the Indian Army

(b) A naval exercise conducted by the Indian Navy

(c) An anti-piracy operation conducted by the Indian Coast Guard

(d) An air combat exercise conducted by the Indian Air Force

2. MAITREE, is a Joint Military Exercise between India and which one of the following countries?

(a) Myanmar

(b) Thailand

(c) Indonesia

(d) Sri Lanka

3. Yudh Abhyas, is a Joint Military Exercise between India and which one of the following countries?

(a) Russia

(b) France

(c) Japan

(d) USA

4. With reference to the Y-plus security in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Y-plus security is the highest category of security provided in India.
2. The Vice-President of India is entitled to Y-plus security cover.

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

5. With reference to Exercise ZAPAD 2025, consider the following statements:

1. It is a multilateral military exercise hosted by Russia.
2. For the first time since Operation Sindoor, both the Indian and Pakistani armies will take part in the same drill.

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 Border Wing Home Guards (BWHG), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. They act as auxiliaries to the Army and border guarding forces during emergencies.
2. Their training and financial support is fully borne by the Union Governments.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

7. Samudra Pradakshina, recently flagged off, is significant because:

(a) It is India's first tri-service, all-women circumnavigation sailing expedition
(b) It is the first Indian naval mission to Antarctica
(c) It marks India's maiden trans-Arctic shipping route experiment
(d) It is a joint Indo-Pacific defence exercise with ASEAN nations

8. Consider the following statements about the Indian Coast Guard (ICG):

1. It was established in 1977 as an armed force of the Union.
2. It functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. One of its mandates is to enforce maritime laws on poaching, smuggling, and narcotics in Indian waters.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

9. With reference to Exercise Siyom Prahar, consider the following statements:

1. It was conducted by the Indian Army in Arunachal Pradesh.
2. The exercise primarily focused on validating naval warfare strategies.
3. It emphasized the integration of drone-derived intelligence with conventional firepower.

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

10. Which of the following statements about the Indian Coast Guard is/are correct?

1. It functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Its establishment was formalized by the Indian Coast Guard Act of 1948.
3. The Director General of the Indian Coast Guard is a civil servant.
4. The ICG is responsible for the protection of India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 2 and 4 only

(c) 4 only
(d) 1, 2, and 4 only

11. With reference to the Indian Navy's 'Androth', recently in news, consider the following statements:

1. It is an anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASW-SWC).
2. It is named after Androth island, the largest island of the Lakshadweep archipelago.

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. Exercise Pacific Reach 2025, in which India's INS Nistar is participating, is being hosted by which country?

(a) India
(b) Japan
(c) Singapore
(d) Australia

13. Exercise Cold Start, recently seen in the news, is:

(a) A tri-services exercise to test drones and counter-drone systems.
(b) A naval exercise between India and the United States in the Indo-Pacific.
(c) A counter-terrorism exercise conducted by the National Security Guard (NSG).
(d) A joint cyber warfare drill between India and Israel.

14. With reference to the Agni-Prime (Agni-P) missile, consider the following statements:

1. It is a two-stage, solid-fuel ballistic missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation.
2. It has an operational range of up to 2,000 km and can carry conventional as well as nuclear warheads.
3. It is the first Indian missile tested from a rail-based mobile launcher.

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

15. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the National Security Act (NSA) of 1980?

1. It allows preventive detention if a person's actions threaten national ,foreign relations and involve cases of smuggling.
2. Detention is only allowed for up to 12 months and it can not be extended.
3. Judicial review is available through habeas corpus petitions in High Courts.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two

(c) All the three
(d) None

16. It is India's first supersonic fighter jet. The aircraft also played a key role in the 1999 Kargil conflict as well as the 2019 Balakot airstrikes.

Which of the following aircraft fits the above description?

(a) HAL Tejas
(b) MiG-21
(c) HAL Marut
(d) Sukhoi Su-30MKI

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Context

- The Indian Army conducted **Exercise Yudh Kaushal 3.0** in the high-altitude Kameng region, Arunachal Pradesh.

About the exercise

- The exercise featured large-scale manoeuvres with drone surveillance, precision strikes, real-time target acquisition, air–littoral operations and synchronized battlefield tactics.
- A major highlight was the **operational debut** of the newly raised **ASHNI platoons**, designed to integrate advanced technology with traditional combat skills for decisive battlefield advantage.

2. (b)

Context

- The 14th edition of the India–Thailand joint military exercise, MAITREE-XIV, commenced in Meghalaya.

About the Exercise

- This year's focus is on company-level, counter-terrorist operations in semi-urban terrain under **Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter**.
- Training modules include tactical drills, joint planning, weapons skills, physical endurance and raiding operations.
- Instituted in **2006**, Exercise MAITREE remains a key component of bilateral defence cooperation, underscoring the shared commitment of India and Thailand to regional peace, security and stability.

3. (d)

Context

- The 21st edition of the India–US Joint Military Exercise Yudh Abhyas commenced in Alaska, USA.

About the exercise

- **Yudh Abhyas**, meaning "Preparing for War" in Hindi, began in **2004** as a counterinsurgency training exchange. Since then, it has been held annually, alternating between **India and the USA**.
- The exercise will culminate in jointly planned tactical manoeuvres, ranging from live-fire exercises to high-altitude warfare scenarios, with a focus on UN peacekeeping operations and enhancing readiness for multi-domain challenges.

4. (d)

Context

- The Union Government is considering transferring the Z-plus security cover of the Vice-President (V-P) from the Delhi Police to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

About

- As per the **"Blue Book"** guidelines issued by the **Union Home Ministry** under the **Special Protection Group (SPG) Act**, the **President, Vice-President, and Prime Minister** are entitled to specific security protocols.
- The Vice-President of India currently receives Z-plus security cover provided by the Delhi Police Security Division.
  - This category includes **around 50 personnel working in shifts,** with enhanced arrangements for the V-P's residence and cavalcade.
  - Traditionally, three officers of the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) serve as Personal Security Officers (PSOs).

Security Categories in India

- **X Security:** Provides the most basic security, typically with 2 security personnel.
- **Y Security:** Offers a slightly higher level of protection, usually with 11 personnel, including police officers and commandos.
- **Y+ Security:** An enhanced version of the Y category, providing a greater number of personnel and more comprehensive security.
  - It is for MPs, MLAs, or public figures with moderate threat levels.
- **Z Security:** Around 22 personnel (NSG/CRPF commandos + local police).
  - Union Ministers, Governors, Chief Ministers, and some high-profile leaders or individuals under credible threat are provided security.
- **Z+ Security Cover includes:** Personal Security Officers (PSOs), Residence security, Escort vehicles in cavalcade, Surveillance and access control measures.
  - Vice-President, Union Home Minister, Chief Justice of India, and individuals facing high security threats.
- **Special Protection Group (SPG):** It is Provided under the SPG Act, 1988.
  - Exclusively for the Prime Minister of India and immediate family members.
  - **Status:** After 2019 amendments, it is restricted only to the sitting PM and his/her immediate family residing with them.

5. (c)

Context

- An Indian Armed Forces contingent departed for Russia to take part in the **multilateral joint military exercise ZAPAD 2025.**

About the Exercise

- More than **20 countries**, including China, are participating in the exercise. Notably, for the first time since **Operation Sindoor**, the Indian and Pakistani armies will take part in the same military drill.
- The exercise aimed at enhancing military cooperation, improving interoperability, and providing a platform for participating armies to exchange tactics, techniques and procedures in the domains of conventional warfare and counter-terrorism operations.

6. (a)

Context

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is contemplating a plan to raise Border Wing Home Guards (BWHG) along the border with China, similar to the guards on the India-Pakistan border.

About

- BWHGs are **recruited from the civilian population** living in border areas. They act as ancillaries to the Army and border guarding forces during emergencies.
  - They are **voluntary** in nature, enlisted typically for **3–4 years.**
  - **25%** of training and financial support is borne by the Government of India.
- **Fifteen Border Wing Home Guards (BWHG) Battalions** have been raised in the border States viz. **Punjab** (6 Bns.), **Rajasthan** (4 Bns.), **Gujarat** (2 Bns.) and one each for **Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal.**

Need of BWHG along China border

- The China border has **difficult terrain, sparse population, and remote regions**. Local civilians could help supplement manpower.
- There are concerns about **incursions, transgressions, or infiltration,** especially in **less accessible border areas.** A civilian guard force can help augment surveillance and reduce response times.

7. (a)

Context

- Defence virtually flagged off **Samudra Pradakshina** - a historic **tri-service all-women** circumnavigation sailing expedition.

About

- **The initiative is a first of its kind,** a symbol of nari shakti (women power), the jointness of the armed forces, self-reliant India (Aatmanirbhar Bharat) and India's global vision.
- **Over the next nine months,** 10 women officers from the **Army, Navy and Air Force** will sail onboard the **indigenously-built Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni.**
  - They will follow an easterly route **covering nearly 26,000 nautical miles, crossing the Equator twice** and **rounding the three great Capes —** Leeuwin, Horn and Good Hope.
- During the expedition, the crew will also carry out **scientific research** in collaboration with the **National Institute of Oceanography,** which includes the study of micro-plastics, documentation of ocean life and raising awareness about marine health.
- They will return to Mumbai in May 2026.

8. (c)

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) was established on 1 February 1977 as an armed force of the Union, initially as an interim service, and was formally established by the Coast Guard Act, 1978. So, **statement 1 is correct**.

The ICG functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence, not the Ministry of Home Affairs. Therefore, **statement 2 is not correct.**

One of the main mandates of the ICG is to enforce maritime laws related to poaching, smuggling, and narcotics trafficking in Indian waters, along with search and rescue and environmental protection. So, **statement 3 is correct**.

9. (b)

Context

- The Indian Army successfully concluded **Exercise Siyom Prahar** in Arunachal Pradesh, validating **drone technology's role in modern warfare.**

About the Exercise

- The central focus of the exercise was the development and validation of new **Tactics, Techniques and Procedures** for future battlefields. These included methods of fusing **drone-derived intelligence** with conventional firepower, refining joint targeting processes and ensuring rapid decision-making in dynamic combat environments.
- The outcomes of the exercise are expected to provide lessons for operational integration, employment concepts and force multiplication.

10. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Indian Coast Guard functions under the Ministry of Defence.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Coast Guard Act was passed in 1978, not 1948. The ICG was formally established on February 1, 1977, as an interim armed force before the act was passed.

Statement 3 is not correct: The Director General of the Indian Coast Guard is a high-ranking officer of the ICG, not a civil servant. The current DG is Paramesh Sivamani.

Statement 4 is correct. The ICG is indeed responsible for enforcing maritime law and protecting India's EEZ.

11. (c)

Context

- The Indian Navy has received **'Androth'** an indigenously built **anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft (ASW-SWC).**

About the ASW-SWC

- Named after **Androth island** (the largest island of the Lakshadweep archipelago), the warship is the **second of eight ASW-SWCs** being built by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE).**
- Constructed in line with the **Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) classification rules**, the project—with over 80% indigenous content—embodies the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

12. (c)

Context

- Indian Navy's latest indigenously designed and constructed Diving Support Vessel (DSV) INS Nistar is participating in the multinational **Exercise Pacific Reach 2025** in Singapore.

About the Exercise

- Exercise Pacific Reach 2025, being hosted by **Singapore** will see participation of more than **40 nations** as active participants or as observers.
- The exercise will mainly be conducted in **two phases** viz. harbour and sea phase.
- Started in **1996**, the **biennial exercise** is hosted in rotation by participating nations.

13. (a)

Context

- The Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force will conduct a joint exercise in the first week of October to test drones and counter-drone systems.

About

- Named **'Cold Start'**, the exercise is likely to be held in Madhya Pradesh and is the **largest drill since Operation Sindoor**, aimed at testing the effectiveness and identifying gaps in current air defence capabilities.
- Industry partners, R&D agencies, academia, and other stakeholders will also participate, making it a comprehensive test of **India's modern defence readiness**.

14. (d)

Context

- India successfully tested the Intermediate Range Agni-Prime Missile from a **rail-based mobile launcher system.**

About Agni-Prime (Agni-P)

- **Developed by:** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- **Type:** Two-stage, solid-fuel propelled ballistic missile.
- **Range:** Up to **2000 km**.
- **Payload:** Can carry **high explosive, thermobaric, or nuclear warheads**.
- **Unique Feature:** First Indian missile tested from a **rail-based mobile launcher** – offers mobility, short reaction time, and reduced detectability.
- **Significance:** Only Russia, US, China, and possibly North Korea had such rail-based launch capability before; India has now joined this group.

15. (b)

In News : The Ladakh administration has justified the detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk under the National Security Act (NSA), stating he was moved to Jodhpur jail to prevent further unrest.

Statements 1 and 3 are correct: The National Security Act (NSA) of 1980 allows preventive detention to protect national security, public order, and essential services.

- The NSA allows for preventive detention if the government is satisfied that a person's activities are prejudicial to the **defense of India, the relations of India with foreign powers,** or the security of the state. It can also be invoked if a person is involved in **smuggling activities,** disrupting essential services, or promoting communal disharmony.
- The detention can be challenged in the **High Court through a habeas corpus petition.**

Statement 2 is not correct : Under the NSA, detention can be ordered by the state or central government based on subjective satisfaction, with specified grounds. The detained person must be informed of the reasons, and an Advisory Board must review the case within three weeks. The initial detention period is up to **12 months, extendable with government approval.**

16. (b)

Context

- **The Mikoyan-Gurevich (MiG-21) fighter jets** were **decommissioned** by the Indian Airforce.

About

- It is the country's **first supersonic fighter jet.**
- It is of **Soviet-origin** inducted into the **IAF in the early 1960s.**
- **Design:** Lightweight, delta-wing, highly maneuverable, capable of speeds over Mach 2.
- The supersonic jets were the **dominant platforms during 1965 and 1971 wars with Pakistan.**
  - The aircraft also played a key role in the **1999 Kargil conflict as well as the 2019 Balakot airstrikes.**
- It provided India with a **low-cost, reliable supersonic fighter during critical phases of modernization.**
- **Phase-out Plan:** India has gradually retired MiG-21 squadrons to be replaced by **LCA Tejas and other modern jets.**

■■■■

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Consider the following statements about the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO):

1. Afghanistan and Mongolia hold observer status in the SCO.
2. The SCO's official languages are English and Chinese.
3. India became a full member in 2017 and assumed the rotating chairmanship in 2023.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. With reference to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), consider the following statements:

1. Its Secretariat is located in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
2. India and Pakistan joined as full members in 2017.
3. SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

3. Consider the following statements regarding the International Seabed Authority (ISA):

1. It was established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 1994 Agreement on Part XI of UNCLOS.
2. All members of the United Nations are automatically members of ISA.
3. Its headquarters is located in Kingston, Jamaica.

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

4. Which one of the following statements best describes the concept of 'strategic autonomy'?

(a) It requires a country to always remain neutral in global conflicts.
(b) It encourages independent decision-making, total disengagement from international cooperation or alliances.
(c) It allows for partnerships based on global dynamics and external pressure.
(d) It is the ability to make sovereign decisions free from external pressures.

5. With reference to International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), consider the following statements:

1. INTERPOL is an intergovernmental organization founded in Vienna in 1923.
2. It has its own independent police force that can make arrests in member countries.
3. India has been a member of INTERPOL since 1949.

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

6. With reference to BRICS, consider the following statements:

1. The acronym BRIC was originally coined in 2001 by economist Jim O'Neill.
2. The BRICS countries account for nearly 50% of the global population and around 40% of the global GDP.
3. The New Development Bank supports projects only in BRICS member countries.

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

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

1. The OECD was founded in 1961, evolving from the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC).
2. Its headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland.
3. The official languages of the OECD are English and French.

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

8. With reference to the Universal Postal Union (UPU), consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1874 and is headquartered in Geneva.
2. It became a specialized agency of the United Nations in 1948.
3. India is one of its founding members.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

9. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), founded in 1911, aims primarily to:

(a) Promote trade and economic cooperation among Commonwealth nations

(b) Facilitate collaboration among Parliamentarians on issues of mutual interest and promote parliamentary democracy

(c) Serve as the legislative arm of the Commonwealth Secretariat

(d) Provide financial support to Commonwealth countries for governance reforms

10. Which of the following countries along with India held the trilateral dialogue on combating extremism and enhancing connectivity?

(a) Afghanistan and Iran

(b) Iran and Uzbekistan

(c) Afghanistan and Uzbekistan

(d) Armenia and Uzbekistan

11. With reference to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is an United Nations Agency established in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles.
2. India became a founding member of the ILO, even before gaining independence.

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. Consider the following statements about the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO):

1. It is a self-funding specialized agency of the United Nations.
2. It works to ensure innovators' ideas travel safely to the market.
3. Its headquarters are located in Vienna, Austria.

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

13. Recently Saudi Arabia has signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) with which of the following Asian Countries?

(a) Russia

(b) Pakistan

(c) China

(d) India

14. Consider the following statements regarding the International Criminal Court (ICC):

1. The seat of the Court is in New York City, USA.
2. It has no police force and relies on countries worldwide for arrests, transfers, and enforcing sentences.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

15. Consider the following statements regarding the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):

1. It is a specialized agency of the United Nations founded in 1945.
2. The headquarters of the FAO is located in Geneva, Switzerland.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

16. With reference to the Universal Postal Union (UPU), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a United Nations Agency established during World War 2, by the Treaty of Bern.
2. India became a member of the UPU in 1945, even before gaining independence.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

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

1. It was negotiated and adopted under the Paris Agreement.
2. It mandates environmental impact assessments (EIAs).

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:

1. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
2. International Criminal Court (ICC)
3. Trusteeship Council
4. International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)

Which of the above is / are part of the Principal Organs of the United Nations (UN)?

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

19. With reference to the Asian Development Bank, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a regional development bank with over 80 member states.
2. India is the third-largest shareholder in the bank after Japan and China.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

20. Consider the following statements regarding the International Criminal Court (ICC):

1. The ICC was established by the Rome Statute, adopted in 1998 and enforced in 2002.
2. It has jurisdiction to try States and organizations accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression.
3. India, the United States, Russia, China, and Israel are not parties to the Rome Statute.

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

21. The K Visa, recently seen in the news, has been launched by which country?

(a) United States
(b) Germany
(c) United Kingdom
(d) China

22. By introducing the K Visa, China is strategically attempting to:

(a) Promote inbound tourism while discouraging outbound talent
(b) Limit foreign academic collaborations
(c) Reduce domestic competition for STEM jobs
(d) Reposition itself as a global hub for innovation and reverse talent migration trends

23. Consider the following statements regarding the Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC):

1. It was established in 2014 as part of India's "Act East" policy.
2. All its member states are part of the African Union and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
3. FIPIC includes countries from Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia sub-regions of the Pacific.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

24. Consider the following statements regarding the term "Global South":

1. The term was coined by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014.
2. It generally refers to countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania.
3. Global South countries typically exhibit higher industrialisation and lower income inequality.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) All of the above

25. At which BRICS Summit was the proposal for establishing a BRICS Grain Exchange first made?

(a) Johannesburg Summit 2023
(b) Goa Summit 2016
(c) Fortaleza Summit 2014
(d) Kazan Summit 2024

26. Consider the following pairs:

	Group/Committee	**Distinctive Feature**
1.	L.69 Group	Developing countries from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Pacific advocating UNSC reforms
2.	C-10	African Union committee defending Africa's Ezulwini Consensus on UNSC reforms
3.	G4 Group	India, Brazil, Germany, Japan pressing for permanent membership of UNSC

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

27. 'Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) 2015' has been signed between which of the following countries?

1. China
2. Iran
3. Russia
4. USA

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

28. With reference to the 'South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)', consider the following statements:

1. Buenos Aires Plan of Action (1978) enshrined the principles for it.
2. Nairobi Outcome Document (2009) defined the principles for South-South cooperation.
3. Triangular Cooperation is supported by a developed country or multilateral organization.

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

29. Consider the following pairs:

	Regime	**Aim**
1.	Australia Group	To prevent nuclear proliferation.
2.	Missile Technology Control Regime	Limit the proliferation of missiles.
3.	Wassenaar Arrangement	Control on chemical weapons.

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met on the **sidelines of the SCO summit in Tianjin.**

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- **The Shanghai Five** emerged in **1996** from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks between **4 former USSR republics and China.**
  - **Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan** were members of the **Shanghai Five.**
  - With the accession of **Uzbekistan** to the group in **2001**, the Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO.
- **Objective:** To enhance regional cooperation for efforts to curb terrorism, separatism, and extremism in the Central Asian region.
- **Members (10):** China, Russia, India, Pakistan, Iran, Belarus, and the four Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
  - India became a full member in **2017** and assumed the rotating **chairmanship in 2023.**
  - Member countries contribute around **30 per cent of the global GDP** and about **40 percent of the world's population**.
- **Observer status:** Afghanistan and Mongolia.
- **Language:** The SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.

2. (b)

About Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

- **Formation:** 2001 (Shanghai Summit) by Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
- **Membership:** 10 member states, 2 observers, 15 dialogue partners (Laos latest entrant)
- **Official Languages:** Russian, Chinese
- **Structure:**
  - **Council of Heads of State** – apex decision-making body
  - **Council of Heads of Government** – second-highest body
- **Headquarters:** Beijing, China
- **Permanent Bodies:** Secretariat in Beijing, China & Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

3. (c)

The International Seabed Authority (ISA)

- The International Seabed Authority (ISA) is an autonomous international organization established under:
  - The **1982** United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and
  - The **1994** Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- All States Parties to UNCLOS are members of ISA.
  - ISA has **170 Members, including India.**
- **Headquarters:** Kingston, Jamaica

4. (d)

In News: The concept of strategic autonomy is shaping India's foreign policy decisions amid rising global turbulence, as the global order shifts from unipolar dominance to multipolar complexity.

- Strategic autonomy allows a country to take positions when necessary, but **based on its own strategic calculations — not alignment obligations.**
- Strategic autonomy encourages **independent decision-making**, not disengagement from international cooperation or alliances.
- Strategic autonomy allows for partnerships, but e**nsures they are formed based on national interest—not external pressure.**
- Strategic autonomy is not isolationism or neutrality. It is the ability to make **sovereign decisions in foreign policy and defence** free from external pressures.

5. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Full Form: International Criminal Police Organization.

- **Nature:** An intergovernmental organization.
- **Founded: In 1923** Vienna, Austria.

Statement 2 is not correct: Legal Status:

- INTERPOL does not have its own police force.
- It cannot make arrests; it only assists member countries.
- All actions depend on national laws and cooperation of member states.

Statement 3 is correct: Members: 196 countries. India has been a member since **1949**.

6. (a)

Context

- Recently, a **virtual BRICS Summit** was held against the backdrop of **increasing global concerns over U.S tariff tussle.**

About BRICS

- **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, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates** have joined BRICS as new full members**.**
- The **term BRIC** was originally coined by economist **Jim O'Neill in 2001.**
- **Origin:** As a formal grouping, BRIC started after the meeting of the Leaders of Russia, India and China in St. Petersburg on the margins of the **G8 Outreach Summit in 2006.**
  - The grouping was formalized during the 1st meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the margins of **UNGA in New York in 2006.**
  - Initially, the grouping was termed BRIC as **South Africa was inducted in 2010** and from there on it has been referred to as **BRICS**.
- **Summits:** The grouping have met annually at formal summits **since 2009.**
  - Each country takes a **one-year chairmanship** to set priorities and host a summit. The bloc relies on **consensus-based decision-making.**
- **BRICS** brings around **49.5 % of the global population**, around **40% of the global GDP** and **around 26% of global trade.**
- **New Development Bank:** Formerly known as the BRICS Development Bank, it is a multilateral financial institution established by the BRICS states, with the mandate to finance sustainable development and infrastructure projects **not only in BRICS member countries** but also in other emerging and developing economies.

7. (c)

Context

- **Israel has become the first OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) member state** to sign an investment pact under India's new model treaty framework.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

- It is an international organisation of **38 countries** committed to democracy and the market economy.
- **Founded:** In 1961 (evolved from the OEEC – Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, 1948, which was created to administer the Marshall Plan after WWII).
- **Headquarters:** Paris, France.
- **Motto:** "Better Policies for Better Lives".
- **Official Languages:** English and French.

8. (b)

About Universal Postal Union (UPU)

- **Established:** In 1874 and headquarters is in Berne (Switzerland)
- **UN Agency**: Became a specialized UN agency in 1948.
- **Purpose:**
  - Coordinates international postal policies and operations.
  - Created a "single postal territory" for uniform international mail rates and equal treatment for domestic and foreign mail.
  - Sets technical standards and rules for cross-border mail, parcels, and financial services.

- **Members:** 192 member countries, making it one of the oldest and largest global organizations.
  - India joined UPU in 1876.

9. (b)

CPA (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association) was founded in 1911 (as Empire Parliamentary Association).

Its primary aim: To promote parliamentary democracy, good governance, transparency, and human rights by fostering collaboration among parliamentarians across the Commonwealth.

It is not an economic/trade body **(so option a is wrong)**.

It is not a legislative arm of the Commonwealth Secretariat **(option c wrong)**.

It does not provide financial aid **(option d wrong)**.

10. (b)

In News: Recently, **India** held a trilateral dialogue **with Iran and Uzbekistan** focused on combating extremism and enhancing regional connectivity.

- It emphasized strategic cooperation, particularly around the Chabahar Port and broader security concerns in Central and South Asia.
- The three countries emphasized the need for coordinated intelligence sharing, border security cooperation, and deradicalization efforts, with Afghanistan's evolving security landscape and the resurgence of radical groups.

11. (c)

Context

- The Union government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** to advance the **International Reference Classification of Occupations (IRCO).**

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

- It is an United Nations Agency established in **1919** as part of the **Treaty of Versailles** that ended World War I, and it became the **first specialized agency of the UN in 1946.**
- India became a founding member of the ILO in **1919**, even before gaining independence.
- It has **187 Member states.**
- It **sets labour standards, develops policies** and devises programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.
- It is the **only tripartite U.N. agency** that brings together governments, employers and workers.
- It is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland.**

12. (a)

Context

- The **18th edition** of the **Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025,** was released by the **World Intellectual Property Organisation's (WIPO).**

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

- It is a **self-funding agency of the United Nations,** that serves the world's innovators and creators, ensuring that their ideas travel safely to the market and improve lives everywhere.
- **Members:** The organization has **194** member states including both developing and developed nations like India, Italy, Israel, Austria, Bhutan, Brazil, China, Cuba, Egypt, Pakistan, the U.S. and the U.K.
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.

13. (b)

Recently, **Pakistan signed a mutual defence agreement with Saudi Arabia,** India has said that it was aware of the development and reiterated its commitment to "comprehensive national security".

- **Background of Meeting:** The agreement was signed in the aftermath of an emergency summit of Arab and Muslim nations hosted by Qatar following Israel's military strikes against Hamas leaders.
  - The meeting brought together almost **60 countrie**s that are members of the **Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**.
- **The Pact:** Called the **"Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement"** states that **"any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both".**
  - It aims to develop aspects of defence cooperation between the two countries and strengthen joint deterrence against any aggression.

14. (b)

In News

- Qatar has met with the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** president to seek legal action against Israel following an Israeli strike on its territory targeting Hamas leaders.

The International Criminal Court (ICC)

- It is the **world's first permanent court** that investigates and tries individuals for serious crimes like **genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and aggression.**
  - The seat of the Court is in The Hague in the **Netherlands.**
- It has **no police force** and relies on countries worldwide for arrests, transfers, and enforcing sentences.
- It cooperates with the UN, which can refer cases to it.
- It aims to hold perpetrators accountable and help prevent future crimes, working alongside national courts rather than replacing them.
- It is governed by the Rome Statute and it acts as a court of last resort in the global fight against impunity.

15. (a)

Context

- The Department of Fisheries (DoF) has signed a **Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) agreement** with the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** of the United Nations to strengthen Blue Port infrastructure in India.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- FAO is a **specialized agency of the United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger and improve food security.
- **It was founded** on 16 October 1945.
- **Members:** The FAO comprises 195 members, including 194 countries and the European Union.
- **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy.

16. (d)

Context

- India has been re-elected to the Council of Administration (CA) and the Postal Operations Council (POC) of the **Universal Postal Union (UPU)** during the 28th UPU Congress held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

About

- **The Universal Postal Union** is a United Nations specialized agency and the postal sector's primary forum for international cooperation.
- **Origin:** On **9 October 1874**, 22 countries signed the **Treaty of Bern**, creating the General Postal Union.
  - Later it became known as the Universal Postal Union.
- **Member countries:** The UPU has **192 member** countries.
  - Any member country of the United Nations may become a member of the UPU.
  - India has been a member of the UPU since **1876.**
- **Headquarters:** The Swiss capital Berne
- **It consists of 4 bodies**;
  - **The Congress:** It is the supreme authority; meets every four years.
  - **The Council of Administration:** It supervises its activities and studies regulatory, administrative, legislative and legal issues.
  - **The Postal Operations Council:** It is the technical and operational mind of the UPU and consists of 48 member countries, elected during Congress.
  - **The International Bureau:** It provides logistical and technical support.

17. (b)

In News: Recently, the **BBNJ Treaty of the United Nations (UN)** crossed the **threshold of 60 ratifications,** with Morocco and Sierra Leone becoming the 60th and 61st signatories respectively, paving the way to enter into force in January 2026.

Statement 1 is not correct

- It builds on the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**, often referred to as the **'Constitution For The Oceans',** adopted in 1982 and effective since 1994.
- It is designed to safeguard biodiversity in the **high seas — areas that lie beyond national jurisdictions**, and **aligning with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** goal of **protecting 30% of the world's land and sea areas by 2030.**

Statement 2 is correct

- The BBNJ Treaty specifically governs areas beyond national jurisdiction, i.e., the high seas and the deep seabed.
- It **mandates environmental impact assessments (EIAs)** and to regulate activities like deep-sea mining to protect marine biodiversity.

18. (c)

In News: As the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** convenes for its **80th session,** the institution faces an **existential challenge**, compounded by the United States' accelerated efforts to diminish the UN's role in global governance.

- The **United Nations (UN)** is structured around **six principal organs,** each with distinct roles and responsibilities as established by the **UN Charter.** It includes:
  - General Assembly (UNGA), UN Secretariat, UN Security Council (UNSC), **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, International Court of Justice (ICJ), and **Trusteeship Council.**
  - Trusteeship Council has been **inactive since 1994, following the independence of Palau**—the last trust territory.
- However, the **International Criminal Court (ICC)** is not a principal organ of the UN. It is an **independent international tribunal** established by the **Rome Statute in 2002, and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)** is part of the **World Bank Group.**

19. (d)

Context

- The Government of India and the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** signed a 125 million dollar loan agreement to enhance urban livability and bolster climate resilience in six district headquarters and Guwahati, in the State of Assam.

About Asian Development Bank

- ADB is a regional development bank established in **1966** for Social and Economic Development. It has **69 members.** India is a **founding member of ADB.**
- Modeled on the World Bank, ADB uses a weighted voting system based on members' capital subscriptions.
  - India is the **fourth-largest shareholder** in the bank.
- 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.
- ADB supports India in robust, climate-resilient, and inclusive growth through alignment with ADB's Strategy 2030 and the India Country Partnership Strategy (2023–2027).
- **Headquarters:** Manila, Philippines.

20. (b)

The International Criminal Court (ICC) was established by the Rome Statute, which was adopted in 1998 and came into force in 2002.

- It has jurisdiction over individuals, not states or organizations, accused of the gravest crimes of international concern.
- Several key nations, including India, the United States, Russia, China, and Israel, are not parties to the Rome Statute.

21. (d)

Context: Amid rising H-1B visa fees in the US, China has launched the K visa.

About

- Beijing's K visa targets international talent in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, also known as STEM.
- It allows multiple entries, longer stays, and doesn't require an employer invitation, making it far more flexible than China's existing visa system.

22. (d)

Context

- From October 1, 2025, China is going to introduce the K Visa program to attract young science and technology professionals from across the globe.

Key Features of the K Visa

- **No Sponsor Required:** Applicants do not need a Chinese employer or sponsor.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** Open to young foreign professionals holding at least a bachelor's degree in STEM from recognised institutions in China or abroad.
- **Inclusive Scope:** Covers those engaged in professional education or research at accredited universities and research institutions.
- **Flexible Stay Options:** Greater convenience in entries, validity, and duration of stay.
- **Wide-Ranging Activities Permitted:** Holders may pursue education, scientific research, cultural exchanges, entrepreneurship, and business opportunities.

Significance of the K Visa

- The K visa is being seen as an extension of the **R visa** for high-level talent introduced by China in **2013.**
- The move comes at a time when the United States is tightening its H-1B visa regime, introducing steep filing fees of up to $100,000 for employers beginning with the 2026 application season.
- **It reflects China's broader ambition to;**
  - Reposition itself as a global hub for science and technology.
  - Shift the balance of talent flows, offering a credible alternative to traditional destinations like the US.

23. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The Forum for India–Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) was launched in 2014 during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Fiji as a key initiative under India's Act East policy to strengthen cooperation with Pacific Island countries.

Statement 2 is not correct: The member states are Pacific Island nations located in the Pacific Ocean, not part of Africa. While many are Small Island Developing States (SIDS), they are not associated with the African Union.

Statement 3 is correct: The 14 member countries come from all three Pacific sub-regions: Melanesia (e.g., Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea), Micronesia (e.g., Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau), and Polynesia (e.g., Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu).

24. (b)

Context

- At the sidelines of the **80th UN General Assembly session in New York**, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called for **stronger Global South solidarity** and a **collective push for UN reforms.**

Global South

- The term **"Global South"** was coined by **Carl Oglesby**, an American political activist, in **1969.**
  - He used the term to describe **countries suffering from political and economic exploitation** by developed nations of the Global North.
- In the simplest sense, Global South refers to the countries of **Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania.**
  - Most of these countries, where **about 85% of the world population lives**, **experienced colonial rule** and historically lagged in achieving substantial levels of industrialisation.

- According to the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**, Global South countries typically exhibit lower levels of development, higher income inequality, rapid

population growth, agrarian-dominant economies, lower quality of life, shorter life expectancy, and significant external dependence.

25. (d)

Context

- India-Russia discussed plans of creating a common agricultural food exchange that will help in boosting agriculture trade among the BRICS member-countries.

About

- At the **BRICS Summit in Kazan in 2024,** the President of Russia proposed the creation of a **BRICS Grain Exchange as a strategic initiative.**
- The proposal was subsequently endorsed in the **Kazan Declaration**, which called for establishing a fair and transparent agricultural trading system.

Objectives

- **Create a new pricing index:** Establish **independent benchmarks for grain pricing** to counter the market influence of Western exchanges like the **Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME)**, where prices are often set in U.S. dollars.
- **Facilitate trade in national currencies:** Reduce the bloc's dependence on the U.S. dollar by allowing member countries to settle grain trade in their own currencies.
- **Enhance food security:** Create a more resilient and reliable supply chain for BRICS members and other countries in the Global South.

26. (c)

L.69 Group

- Consists of developing countries from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific.
- Advocates UNSC reforms including expansion of permanent and non-permanent membership.
- Supports equitable geographical representation reflecting current global realities.

C-10 (Committee of Ten)

- Comprises 10 African Union nations.
- Defends Africa's Ezulwini Consensus on UNSC reforms.
- Advocates for at least two permanent seats for Africa with veto powers, plus five non-permanent seats, aiming for improved African representation.

G4 Group

- It comprises India, Brazil, Germany, and Japan.
- Pressing for permanent membership of UNSC for its members.
- Supports each other's bids for permanent seats and calls for wider UNSC reforms.

27. (d)

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) 2015

- **Participants:**
  - **Iran**
  - **P5+1:** Five permanent members of the UN Security Council (China, France, Russia, UK, U.S.) plus Germany.
  - **EU:** Participated in negotiations.

Iran's Commitments:

- **Nuclear Restrictions:** Iran agreed **not to produce highly enriched uranium** or plutonium for nuclear weapons and to ensure its nuclear facilities (Fordow, Natanz, Arak) focus on **civilian purposes.**

- **Centrifuge Limits:** Iran limited the number, type, and level of its centrifuges, and reduced its stockpile of enriched uranium.
  - Uranium enriched to 5% is for nuclear power; 20% for research or medical use; 90% for weapons.
- **Monitoring and Verification:** Iran agreed to allow the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** unfettered access to nuclear facilities, including undeclared sites.
  - A Joint Commission monitors the deal's implementation and resolves disputes, including granting IAEA access to suspicious sites.
- **Violation of the Deal:** If any signatory suspects Iran is violating the deal, the UN Security Council can vote on whether to continue sanctions relief.
  - This "snapback" mechanism remains in effect for ten years, after which the UN sanctions are set to be permanently removed.

28. (d)

In News: The **South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)** has emerged as a transformative force in global development in shifting geopolitical landscapes, widening inequalities, and dwindling development aid.

Statement 1 is correct: Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), 1978 enshrined principles of mutual respect, shared learning, and solidarity, far from being a transactional model among developing nations.

Statement 2 is correct: Nairobi Outcome Document (2009): It was negotiated in the **UN High-Level Conference on South-South Cooperation** in Nairobi, Kenya and adopted by the UNGA.

- It **defined the principles** guiding how cooperation **among developing countries (South-South cooperation)** operates, expanding beyond technical assistance to **encompass political, institutional, and infrastructural cooperation**.

Statement 3 is correct: Triangular Cooperation is defined as 'Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries, **supported by a developed country or multilateral organization'**.

- It provides financial, technical, and experiential support to strengthen Southern partnerships and promote regional integration.

29. (a)

Pair 1 is not correct: Australia Group: It was established in **1985** prompted by Iraq's use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988).

- Australia, concerned with Iraq's development of chemical weapons, recommended harmonization of international export controls on chemical weapons precursor chemicals.
- **Pair 2 is correct: Missile Technology Control Regime:** Founded in **1987**, this regime aims to limit the proliferation of missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction.
  - India joined the **MTCR in 2016.**
- **Pair 3 is not correct:** The WA, formally established in **1996**, aims to promote **"transparency and greater responsibility** in **transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies.**
  - **Nature:** Multilateral voluntary export control regime for conventional arms and dual-use technologies.
  - **Mechanism:** Participating states commit to control lists and information exchange, while retaining national discretion.
  - India joined Wassenaar Arrangement in **2017**.

■■■■

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1. Which of the following best describes Android Package Kit (APK) fraud?

(a) A hacking method where fraudsters gain access to ATMs by cloning debit cards.

(b) A type of ransomware that locks mobile phones until payment is made.

(c) A phishing scam where criminals send malicious Android Application Package files to steal financial data.

(d) A fraud where users are lured into investing in fake cryptocurrency through mobile apps.

2. With reference to the Jarosite, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Jarosite was first detected on Mars by India's Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan) in 2013.
2. The recent discovery of Jarosite in Kutch marks the first time this mineral has ever been found on Earth.

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

3. With reference to the PRATUSH Mission, recently in news, consider the following statements:

1. It is an Indian space payload concept to be placed on the far side of the Moon to study radio signals in an environment free from Earth's interference.
2. The mission primarily aims to explore gravitational waves in the lunar atmosphere.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. With reference to the 'India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)', consider the following statements:

1. It was launched as part of the Digital India Programme.
2. It supports only domestic companies, including Indian startups and institutions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. How does the Solow Paradox relate to the current state of Artificial Intelligence (AI) adoption?

(a) AI technology is already generating unprecedented productivity gains globally.

(b) Organizations are yet to see expected productivity benefits from AI, similar to the early computer age paradox

(c) AI is completely replacing all human tasks in organizations

(d) There is no connection between the Solow Paradox and AI adoption

6. Consider the following statements about the Vikram 32-bit chip:

1. It is India's first fully indigenous 32-bit microprocessor, qualified for use in harsh launch vehicle conditions.
2. It is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Which of the statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

7. With reference to the Majorana Particle, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Majorana Particles are hypothesized to be their own antiparticles.
2. Majorana-based qubits are naturally resistant to decoherence because information is stored nonlocally.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a)1 only

(b)2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

8. Envafolimab, recently in the news, is a drug developed for the treatment of which of the following?

(a) Chronic myeloid leukemia

(b) Advanced breast cancer

(c) Non-small cell lung cancer

(d) Pancreatic cancer

9. With reference to the global political economy of critical minerals, which of the following statements is correct?

(a) The US dominates global rare earth refining, while China leads in raw material extraction.

(b) China accounts for nearly 70% of global rare earth production and over 80% of refining capacity.

(c) India has the world's second-largest rare earth refining capacity after Australia.

(d) The International Energy Agency (IEA) has declared critical minerals as exhaustible but not recyclable.

10. With reference to the phenomenon of a "Blood Moon", consider the following statements:

1. A Blood Moon occurs during a total lunar eclipse.
2. It appears red because red/orange light bends towards the Moon while blue light scatters away in Earth's atmosphere.
3. The Moon's exact hue depends on atmospheric conditions such as dust and pollution levels.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. Which of the following best describes Ribonucleic Acid (RNA)?

(a) A double-stranded molecule storing genetic information permanently.
(b) A molecule that only serves as a storage form of energy.
(c) A molecule that carries genetic information, aids in protein synthesis, and performs catalytic and regulatory roles.
(d) A lipid-based molecule essential for membrane formation.

12. With reference to the EnteroMix Vaccine, consider the following statements:

1. It is an mRNA-based oncolytic vaccine that uses a combination of harmless viruses to target cancer cells.
2. It is an mRNA-based vaccine that cannot be personalized to individual patients because the RNA sequence is universal for all cancers.

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. Which of the following statements is correct regarding Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

(a) It constitutes a diverse group of conditions related to development of the brain.
(b) It is an illness caused by a bacterial infection which commonly affects lungs.
(c) It is a group of conditions that cause inflammation in both kidneys.
(d) It is a disorder characterized by excessive iron accumulation in body tissues.

14. 'AdFalciVax vaccine' recently seen in the news, prevent against which of the following diseases?

(a) Tuberculosis
(b) Malaria
(c) Dengue
(d) Japanese Encephalitis

15. With reference to Melioidosis, consider the following statements:

1. It is a bacterial infection caused by Burkholderia pseudomallei.
2. The disease is primarily transmitted from animals and insects to humans.
3. It is endemic to Southeast Asia and Northern Australia.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

16. With reference to the India's Space Sector, consider the following statements:

1. India's space economy contributes 2-3% of the global space economy, and this is expected to rise to 8% by 2030.
2. IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center) is an autonomous single-window agency responsible for facilitating technology transfer from ISRO to private players.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. With reference to the Critical Minerals, consider the following statements:

1. These are elements that are the building blocks of essential modern-day technologies.
2. Currently, India has listed 20 minerals in the list of the most critical minerals for 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

18. Which of the following diseases are transmitted by the Aedes aegypti mosquito?

1. Dengue
2. Chikungunya
3. Zika
4. Malaria

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

19. With reference to the 'Analog Experiments' recently conducted by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), consider the following statements:

1. These are conducted in the International Space Station (ISS) to simulate Earth conditions.
2. ISRO's analog missions involve zero-gravity chambers to replicate space.

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. Consider the following statements:

1. A virus is an infectious microbe consisting of a segment of nucleic acid (either DNA or RNA) surrounded by a protein coat called capsid.

2. Viruses are not considered living organisms because they cannot carry out metabolic processes on their own.
3. A virus cannot replicate alone; instead, it must infect cells and use components of the host cell to make copies of itself.

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

21. Which of the following are the main types of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)?

1. Light Water Reactor
2. High Temperature Gas Reactor
3. Liquid Metal Reactor
4. Molten Salt Reactor

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

22. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is best described as;

(a) A condition that only affects childhood
(b) A lifelong neurodevelopmental condition
(c) A personality disorder
(d) A short-term illness

23. Consider the following statements:

1. Cancer is not infectious and cannot be transmitted from one person to another.
2. All types of tumors are cancerous and capable of spreading to other organs.

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. Consider the following statements regarding the H3N2 flu virus:

1. H3N2 is a subtype of the Influenza B virus, affecting mainly people over 50 and under 15.
2. It spreads through respiratory droplets and contaminated surfaces, with higher risk in crowded places like schools and nursing homes.

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 generic drugs, consider the following statements:

1. They have the same active pharmaceutical ingredient (API), dosage form, strength, and route of administration as their branded counterparts.
2. The International Nonproprietary Names (INN) System ensures that generic drugs are clearly identified and safely prescribed worldwide.

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. Consider the following statements with reference to AstroSat:

1. It is India's first multi wavelength space observatory dedicated to astronomy.
2. It is capable of observing the universe simultaneously in a broad energy range from ultraviolet (UV), visible, and high energy X-rays.

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. Neutrinos are important in multi-messenger astronomy because;

(a) They are easily absorbed by interstellar dust and gas
(b) They pass almost unhindered through matter, carrying information from deep stellar interiors
(c) They only travel short distances in space
(d) They are emitted exclusively by black holes

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Context

- Banks have issued a new warning for customers to **stay vigilant against Android Package Kit (APK) frauds.**

Android Application Package (APK) fraud

- APK fraud is a **phishing scam** where criminals send malicious Android Application Package (APK) files to **trick users into downloading and installing them**, often by impersonating trusted entities like banks or government officials.
- Once installed, these fraudulent apps **gain control of the user's device,** stealing financial information (including OTPs and PINs), and conducting unauthorized transactions without consent.
- Once in circulation, the same **APK file is reused with minor modifications** in the interface, allowing it to bypass detection even after earlier versions are blacklisted.

2. (d)

Context

- Researchers confirm the presence of jarosite, in **Matanomadh village** of Kutch, Gujarat, similar to what was discovered on Mars a couple of decades ago.
  - It is believed that this site could serve as a potential field analogue for the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) upcoming **Mangalyaan-2 mission.**

About Jarosite

- **On Earth:** Jarosite is a **yellow mineral**, formed when **oxygen, iron, sulphur,** and potassium-rich minerals react with water, often under volcanic conditions.
- **On Mars:** First detected by **NASA's Opportunity rover in 2004** at Meridiani Planum, jarosite provided one of the strongest pieces of evidence for the presence of water in the planet's past.
- **In Matanomadh:** The mineral, dated to about **55 million years ago (Paleocene period),** closely resembling Martian geology.
  - In India earlier it was found in **Kerala's Varkala cliffs.**
  - Globally deposits have been found in **Mexico, Canada, Japan, Spain, and in Utah and California in the US.**

3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: PRATUSH is a space payload concept to orbit the Moon's far side for radio astronomy studies, where the environment is free from Earth's radio interference.

Statement 2 is not correct: Its focus is not on detecting gravitational waves in the lunar atmosphere, but rather on studying low-frequency radio signals of the early Universe.

4. (d)

In News: At the **2025 Edition of SEMICON India**, Prime Minister of India unveiled an ambitious roadmap to position India as a global leader in semiconductor manufacturing.

Statement 1 is not correct

- India Semiconductor Mission It is implemented by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**.
- It was launched in December 2021 under the **Semicon India Programme**, not Digital India.
- It offers up to 50% fiscal support depending on the type of project (e.g., fabs, ATMP units, design initiatives).

Statement 2 is not correct

- ISM aims to **build domestic capabilities** in chip design, manufacturing, and packaging, and **supports both domestic and international companies**, including Indian startups and institutions.
- ISM includes support for display fabs as part of its broader semiconductor ecosystem strategy.

5. (b)

The current state of AI adoption reflects a modern version of the Solow Paradox, where despite significant investments in AI technology, many organizations have not yet realized the anticipated productivity gains. Similar to the computer age in the 1980s, AI implementation faces challenges such as integration lags, skill mismatches, and organizational changes required to fully leverage the technology. The measurable productivity improvements are slower to emerge, mirroring Solow's original observation about computers and productivity.

6. (a)

In News

- Union IT minister presented the Vikram 32-bit processor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Semicon India 2025 in Delhi

Vikram 32-bit chip

- It is India's first fully indigenous 32-bit microprocessor, qualified for use in harsh launch vehicle conditions.
- It is developed by ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre and the Semiconductor Laboratory in Chandigarh.
- It is an advanced microprocessor is an upgraded version of the 16-bit **VIKRAM1601 chip used since 2009** in ISRO's launch vehicle avionics, designed specifically for **space flight applications.**

7. (c)

Context

- Majorana particles are seen as a potential solution to the problem of decoherence in quantum computers, offering inherently stable and noise-resistant qubits.

Majorana Particle

- **Majorana particles**, or Majorana fermions, are hypothesized particles that are their own antiparticles.
  - Due to their self-antiparticle nature, they cannot carry an electric charge.
- **In 1937**, physicist **Ettore Majorana** proposed the existence of the Majorana Particle.
- No fundamental Majorana particle has been directly found yet, but scientists have created **quasiparticles** in special superconducting materials that behave like Majoranas.

Significance

- **Noise Resistance:** Majorana modes allow quantum information to be stored nonlocally, with each qubit's state split between two distant halves.
  - Local disturbances cannot easily destroy the encoded information, making them naturally resistant to decoherence.
- **Scalability:** If experimentally realised, Majorana qubits could pave the way for simpler, more scalable quantum computers capable of solving problems beyond today's reach.

8. (c)

Glenmark has started a multi-country Phase 3 clinical trial for Envafolimab, targeting Stage III **non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC).**

- **Envafolimab** is a **novel drug** for **third-stage non-small cell lung cancer.**
- It has received approval from the Drugs Controller General of India to begin patient enrolment and dosing in the country.
- **Lung cancer** is a type of cancer that starts when abnormal cells grow in an uncontrolled way in the lungs.
- It is a **serious health issue** that can cause **severe harm and death.**
- **Symptoms** of lung cancer include a cough that does not go away, chest pain and shortness of breath.
- The **most common** types of **lung cancer** are **non-small cell carcinoma (NSCLC)** and **small cell carcinoma (SCLC).**
  - NSCLC is more common and grows slowly, while SCLC is less common but often grows quickly.

9. (b)

Context

- The Union Cabinet chaired by PM Modi approved a **Rs.1,500 crore** Incentive Scheme to develop recycling capacity in the country for the separation and production of critical minerals from secondary sources.

What are Critical Minerals?

- These are minerals that are **essential for economic development and national security.**
- The lack of availability of these minerals or the concentration of extraction or processing in a few geographical locations could potentially lead to "**supply chain vulnerabilities and even disruption of supplies".**

About the Scheme to Develop Recycling Capacity

- This scheme is part of the **National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM).**
- The Scheme will have a **tenure of six years from FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31**.
- **The eligible feedstock is** e-waste, Lithium Ion Battery (LIB) scrap, and scrap other than e-waste & LIB scrap e.g. catalytic converters in end-of-life vehicles.
- **Expected beneficiaries** will be both large, established recyclers, as well as small, new recyclers (including start-ups), for whom one-third of the scheme outlay has been earmarked.
- **The Scheme will be applicable** to investments in new units as well as expansion of capacity / modernization and diversification of existing units.
- **The incentives** under the Scheme will comprise;
  - **20% Capex subsidy** on plant & machinery, equipment and associated utilities for starting production within specified timeframe, beyond which reduced subsidy applicable; and
  - **Opex subsidy:** Linked to incremental sales beyond FY 2025–26 base year, with 40% disbursed in year 2 and 60% in year 5.
  - **Ceilings:** ₹50 crore per entity for large players (₹10 crore cap on Opex); ₹25 crore for small entities (₹5 crore cap on Opex).

Need for the Critical Mineral Recycling

- **Waste generation:** India's **e-waste generation** is poised to surge, driven by rapid growth in solar and wind energy infrastructure and **EV adoption.**
  - The PV module waste will increase from **100 kilotons in FY23 to 340 kilotons by 2030.** Additionally, **500 kt of EV batteries** are expected to reach recycling units in the coming years.
- **Scarce reserves:** Manufacturing renewable energy technologies and transition to electric vehicles would require increasing quantities of minerals, including copper, manganese, zinc, and indium.
  - **India possesses rare earth deposits**, particularly in **Rajasthan and coastal regions**, but mining, processing, and refining technologies remain underdeveloped.
- **Chinese Dominance in the Supply Chain:** China controls **60–70%** of global rare earth production and **85–90%** of refining, giving it near-monopoly from extraction to high-performance magnets.
  - The recent **export curbs** on key rare earths highlighted India's vulnerability and the need to build domestic recycling capacity.
- **Environmental concerns**, regulatory hurdles, and lack of advanced separation and refining capacity further restrict exploitation of primary sources.

10. (c)

Context

- A total lunar eclipse, popularly called a **"Blood Moon"**, was recently witnessed across the globe.

What is a Lunar Eclipse?

- A lunar eclipse occurs when the Earth comes between **the Sun and the Moon**, blocking sunlight from directly reaching the lunar surface.
- Depending on the alignment, it can be **total** (Moon passes fully through Earth's umbra) or **partial**.
- Unlike a solar eclipse, it is safe to watch with the naked eye.

Why does the Moon appear Red (Blood Moon)?

- During a total lunar eclipse, sunlight passing through Earth's atmosphere gets scattered.
- **Rayleigh Scattering**: Blue light (shorter wavelength) scatters away, while red/orange light (longer wavelength) bends towards the Moon, making it glow red.
- The exact hue depends on atmospheric conditions: more dust or pollution makes the Moon appear a deeper red.

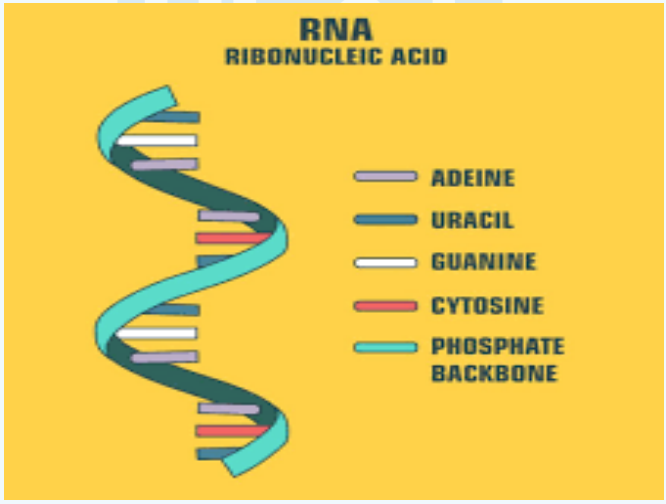
11. (c)

Context

- A new study by researchers has revealed how two fundamental building blocks of life, **RNA (ribonucleic acid) and amino acids**, could have joined together under conditions resembling those of early Earth about four billion years ago.
  - This discovery advances the understanding of how the interaction between genes and proteins may have first emerged.

What is Ribonucleic acid (RNA)?

- **Ribonucleic acid (RNA)** is a fundamental biomolecule essential for life. It carries genetic information, helps in the synthesis of proteins, and performs catalytic and regulatory roles.
  - While similar to DNA, it is chemically less stable and functionally more versatile.
- **Nucleotides:** RNA is made of nucleotides, each containing a phosphate group, a ribose sugar, and one of four nitrogenous bases.
- **Single-stranded:** Unlike DNA's double helix, RNA usually exists as a single strand. However, it can fold into complex three-dimensional structures with loops and helices.
- **RNA is built from four nitrogenous bases:** Adenine, Guanine, Cytosine and Uracil.
  - **Base Pairing:** Uracil pairs with Adenine and Guanine pairs with Cytosine.



12. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: As per the Russian Federal Medical and Biological Agency (FMBA), **the Russian EnteroMix cancer vaccine** is now **ready for clinical use.**

- The **oncolytic vaccine** was developed by the **Ministry of Health's National Medical Research Radiology Centre (NMRRC)** in collaboration with the Engelhardt Institute of Molecular Biology under the Russian Academy of Sciences.
- **The mRNA-based vaccine** had successfully passed preclinical trials, demonstrating both safety and high effectiveness.
  - It is to **shrink aggressive tumours, slow their growth,** and do so without the **harsh side effects** of chemotherapy or radiation.

Statement 2 is not correct: The vaccine will be **tailored to each patient's RNA,** making it a **fully personalised therapy.**

- **How Vaccine Works:** EnteroMix uses a combination of four harmless viruses to target and destroy cancer cells while simultaneously activating the body's immune defences.

13. (a)

In News: The US Health Secretary is planning to announce a possible link between **autism and prenatal exposure to Tylenol (acetaminophen/paracetamol),** a widely used over-the-counter pain and fever medication.

Autism is also referred to as autism spectrum disorder–constitutes a diverse group of conditions related to development of the brain.

- It is a range of conditions marked by difficulties in social interaction, communication, and atypical behaviors such as sensitivity to sensations and resistance to change.

14. (b)

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has granted non-exclusive rights for its **multi-stage malaria vaccine**, **AdFalciVax**, to five pharmaceutical companies.

- AdFalciVax is India's **first indigenous multi-stage malaria recombinant vaccin**e developed by the **Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC),** under the ICMR.
- The vaccine is designed to prevent **Plasmodium falciparum infection** in individuals and reduce community transmission.
  - **Plasmodium falciparum** is the **deadliest malaria parasite**, difficult to control and responsible for widespread devastation.
- **How does it work?** AdFalciVax targets the **parasite before it enters the bloodstream,** stopping the infection at the transmission stage.
  - The vaccine uses **Lactococcus lactis,** a genetically engineered food-grade bacterial host, as its core technology.

15. (c)

Context

- Andhra Pradesh has reported its **first confirmed case of melioidosis** in Turakapalem village, linked to 23 unexplained deaths since July.

About Melioidosis

- **Cause:** Bacterial infection caused by Burkholderia pseudomallei.
- **Transmission & Reservoir:**
  - The bacteria live in soil and water, and can persist for years in contaminated environments.
  - Person-to-person transmission is very rare; animal-to-human or insect-to-human are not documented.
- **Geographic prevalence:**
  - Endemic in **Southeast Asia and Northern Australia**.
  - Prevalent but under-diagnosed and underreported in India. First indigenous Indian case detected in Mumbai (1991).

16. (c)

Both the statements are correct: India's space economy contributes **2-3%** of the global space economy, and this is expected to rise to **8% by 2030** and further to **15% by the year 2047.**

- With over **400** private space companies, India ranks **fifth globally** in the number of space companies.

- **IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center):** It is an **autonomous single-window agency** responsible for:
  - Authorizing all government and private space activities.
  - Promoting industry clusters, incubation centers, and accelerators.
  - Facilitating technology transfer from ISRO to private players.
  - Approving remote sensing data dissemination and launch manifests.

17. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Critical minerals are elements that are the **building blocks of essential modern-day technologies,** and are at risk of supply chain disruptions.

- The lack of availability of these minerals or the concentration of extraction or processing in a few geographical locations could potentially lead to "**supply chain vulnerabilities and even disruption of supplies".**

Statement 2 is not correct: Different countries have their own unique lists of critical minerals based on their specific circumstances and priorities.

- **A total of 30 minerals were found to be most critical for India**: Antimony, Beryllium, Bismuth, Cobalt, Copper, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Hafnium, Indium, Lithium, Molybdenum, Niobium, Nickel, PGE, Phosphorous, Potash, REE, Rhenium, Silicon, Strontium, Tantalum, Tellurium, Tin, Titanium, Tungsten, Vanadium, Zirconium, Selenium and Cadmium.

18. (a)

Context

- **Aedes-borne viral diseases (ABVD)** have emerged as major public health concerns in India, not only causing severe illness but also reducing national productivity.

Aedes aegypti

- Aedes aegypti is a known **vector of** several viruses including **yellow fever virus, dengue virus, chikungunya virus and Zika virus.**
- The mosquito is **native to north Africa**, but is now a common invasive species that has spread to tropical, subtropical, and temperate regions throughout the world.

19. (d)

In News: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is conducting a series of **analog experiments (Gyanex)** to test human endurance, refine mission protocols, and validate technologies, as India prepares for **its first human spaceflight mission** under the **Gaganyaan Programme.**

Statement 1 is not correct

- Analog experiments are Earth-based simulations designed to mimic space conditions, not the other way around.
- ISRO has conducted multiple analog missions, including **Gaganyaan simulations** and the **HOPE mission in Ladakh**.

Statement 2 is not correct

- While analog missions simulate many aspects of space, **they do not replicate zero gravity,** which is extremely difficult to achieve on Earth.

20. (d)

All the statements are correct: A virus is an infectious microbe consisting of a segment of nucleic acid (either DNA or RNA) surrounded by a **protein coat called capsid.**

- Viruses are **not considered living organisms** because they cannot carry out metabolic processes on their own.

- A virus cannot replicate alone; instead, it must infect cells and use components of the host cell to make copies of itself.
- Often, a **virus ends up killing the host cell** in the process, causing damage to the host organism.
- Well-known examples of viruses causing human disease include AIDS, COVID-19, measles and smallpox.

21. (d)

Context

- The Government of India, is considering the use of nuclear energy, particularly Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), to meet the rapidly growing power demand from AI-driven data centres.

What are Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)?

- Small modular reactors (SMRs) are advanced nuclear reactors with a power capacity of up to **300 MW(e) per unit,** roughly one-third the generating capacity of traditional nuclear power plants.
  - **Small** – physically a fraction of the size of a conventional nuclear power reactor.
  - **Modular** – making it possible for systems and components to be factory-assembled and transported as a unit to a location for installation.
  - **Reactors** – harnessing nuclear fission to generate heat to produce energy.
- **There are four four main types** of SMR i.e., light water, high temperature gas, liquid metal, and molten salt.
- At present, only two Small Modular Reactor projects have become operational worldwide;
  - **Russia's Akademik Lomonosov floating power unit**, equipped with two 35 MWe modules and in commercial use since 2020, and
  - **China's HTR-PM demonstration project,** which was grid-connected in 2021 and achieved full commercial operations in 2023.

22. (b)

Context

- US President Donald Trump recently claimed that **Tylenol (paracetamol/ acetaminophen)** use during pregnancy may cause autism and suggested limiting its use.

What is Tylenol?

- It is a brand name for **acetaminophen, or paracetamol,** which is used as a pain reliever and a fever reducer.
- An over-the-counter medication, it is used to **alleviate headaches, muscle aches, arthritis** and used to manage symptoms of colds and flu.
  - Over-the-counter medicines refers to medicines that can be bought directly from a pharmacy **without a doctor's prescription.**

What is Autism?

- **Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD),** is a lifelong **neurodevelopmental** condition affecting how a person communicates, interacts socially, and behaves.
- **The term "spectrum"** reflects the wide variation in symptoms and their severity, with individuals experiencing autism differently and requiring varying levels of support.
- **Key Characteristics:** Persistent difficulties in social-communication and interaction, and restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior or interests.
  - Many autistic people experience **differences in how they process sensory information,** finding certain sounds, lights, or textures overwhelming or uncomfortable.

23. (a)

In News: An analysis of the 'Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study 2023', published in **The Lancet**, presents updated estimates of the c**ancer burden across 47 cancer types in 204 countries** and territories from **1990 to 2023**, along with **projections up to 2050.**

Statement 1 is correct

- **Cancer** is a group of diseases characterized by the **uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells.**
- These cells can invade nearby tissues and, through the **bloodstream or lymphatic system**, spread to other parts of the body (a process called **metastasis**).
- It is **not infectious** and **cannot be transmitted from one person to another.**
- It is a **non-communicable disease,** often caused by genetic mutations, environmental exposures, or lifestyle factors.

Statement 2 is not correct

- Not all types of tumors are cancerous and capable of spreading to other organs.
- **Benign** tumors are **n**on-cancerous and generally do not spread;
- **Malignant** tumors are cancerous, aggressive, and capable of spreading to other organs.

24. (b)

In News

- The H3N2 flu virus has triggered a major epidemic throughout the entire Delhi-NCR region.

About H3N2

- It is a subtype of the **Influenza A virus**, affecting mainly those over 50 and under 15.
- It spreads through **respiratory droplets** and contaminated surfaces, with higher risk in crowded spaces like schools and nursing homes.
  - Frequent mutations in its surface proteins make vaccines less effective.
- H3N2 infection symptoms typically begin with sudden high fever, chills, sore throat, headaches, muscle, body aches, fatigue, abdominal pain and sometimes gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea and diarrhoea.
- H3N2 flu is usually treated at **home with rest, hydration**, and symptomatic care like steam inhalation and warm saline gargles.
  - Antiviral drug **oseltamivir** may be prescribed within 48 hours of symptom onset, especially for high-risk individuals, to reduce illness duration and complications.

25. (c)

In News: The recent announcement of **100% tariffs on imports of patented medicines** by the United States (US) has effectively weaponised access to healthcare **in the US.**

Statement 1 is correct

- **Generic Drugs** are **copies of patented drugs** made **after the patent expires**. They contain the **same active ingredients** and are **therapeutically equivalent.**
- These drugs are significantly cheaper due to competition and absence of R&D costs.

Statement 2 is correct

- They need to meet rigorous standards for safety, efficacy, and bioequivalence.
- The **International Nonproprietary Names (INN) System of WHO** ensures that generic drugs are clearly identified and safely prescribed worldwide.

26. (c)

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : India's first dedicated multi-wavelength Space Astronomy Observatory, AstroSat completed a decade of operations .

AstroSat was launched by PSLV-C30 from Sriharikota in 2015 .

- It was designed to observe the universe in the Visible, Ultraviolet, low and high energy X-ray regions of the electromagnetic spectrum simultaneously with the help of its five payloads
  - The payloads including Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope (UVIT),Large Area X-ray Proportional Counter (LAXPC),Cadmium-Zinc-Telluride Imager (CZTI),Soft X-ray Telescope (SXT) and Scanning Sky Monitor (SSM).
- It is a collaborative effort between **ISRO** and leading Indian scientific institutions like Inter University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) of Pune, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) at Mumbai, Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIAP) and Raman Research Institute (RRI) of Bengaluru as well as some of the universities in India and two institutions from Canada and the UK.
- It has made significant discoveries across the electromagnetic spectrum, including studies on black holes, neutron stars, Proxima Centauri, and the first-time detection of far-ultraviolet photons from galaxies 9.3 billion light years away.

27. (b)

Context

- Multi-messenger astronomy has emerged as a bridge extending traditional light-based observations to uncover hidden cosmic processes.

About

- **Multi-messenger astronomy** is the study of cosmic events by observing them with multiple types of signals or "messengers," including photons (light), gravitational waves, neutrinos, and cosmic rays, to gain a more complete understanding than any single signal could provide.
- **What are the "Messengers"?**
  - **Light (Electromagnetic radiation):** Reveals the structure and surface details of celestial bodies.
  - **Gravitational waves:** Ripples in spacetime generated by cataclysmic events such as neutron star collisions or black hole mergers, as detected by instruments such as the **LIGO** and **Virgo observatories.**
  - **Neutrinos:** Subatomic particles that pass **almost unhindered through matter,** carrying information from deep inside stellar interiors and supernovae.
  - **Cosmic rays:** High-energy charged particles, such as protons and atomic nuclei, that trace extreme astrophysical environments.

■■■■

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. With reference to the Orcas, consider the following statements:

1. Orcas are the largest species of whales and are often called killer whales.
2. They use sound waves to navigate and hunt, known as echolocation.

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. Blue dragons (Glaucus atlanticus), recently seen in news, are:

(a) A species of fish found in cold Arctic waters
(b) Small venomous sea slugs found in tropical oceans
(c) A type of bioluminescent jellyfish
(d) A marine reptile native to the Atlantic coast

3. Consider the following statements with reference to Rosewood (Dalbergia latifolia)

1. It is native to India, Nepal & Indonesia and grows in various soil types.
2. It improves soil fertility through nitrogen fixation and acts as long-term carbon sinks.
3. It has been classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN Red list of threatened species.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

4. With reference to the Agreement on Marina Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), consider the following statements:

1. It is the first treaty to address the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the high seas.
2. It will be an international, legally binding treaty after it enters force 120 days after the 60th ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession.
3. India has not signed the Agreement yet.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

5. The invasive plant species Senna spectabilis, recently eradicated from parts of Wayanad, is native to which of the following regions?

(a) Africa
(b) Tropical South America
(c) South-East Asia
(d) Australia

6. With reference to the 'Vulture Network', India's first dedicated vulture conservation portal, consider the following statements:

1. It was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) with help of World Wildlife Fund (WWF).
2. It aims to support conservation efforts for all vulture species found 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. With reference to the Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), consider the following statements:

1. It is an alternative fuel made from non-petroleum feedstocks that reduces emissions from air transportation.
2. The international aviation industry has set an aspirational goal to reach net zero carbon by 2040.

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 Acanthamoeba, consider the following statements:

1. Acanthamoeba are free-living protozoan amoebae found rarely in the environment.
2. They are not true parasites, because they can complete their life cycle without infecting humans or animals.

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. Match the following vultures found in India with their IUCN Red List status:

List I (Species)		**List II (IUCN Status)**
a.	Oriental White-backed Vulture	1. Critically Endangered
b.	Egyptian Vulture	2. Endangered
c.	Indian Griffon Vulture	3. Least Concern
d.	Bearded Vulture (Lammergeier)	4. Near Threatened

(a) a–1, b–2, c–3, d–4
(b) a–2, b–1, c–4, d–3
(c) a–1, b–3, c–2, d–4
(d) a–4, b–2, c–1, d–3

10. With reference to Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), consider the following statements:

1. CCS involves capturing carbon dioxide emissions from industrial processes and power plants and storing them underground in geological formations.
2. The Earth's underground formations can safely store an unlimited amount of CO2.
3. The high cost of infrastructure, including pipelines for transporting CO2, is a major barrier to large-scale deployment of CCS.
4. Leakage, corrosion, and degradation risks are associated with CCS storage sites.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

11. Why is the Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps) considered an indicator species?

(a) Its population trend reflects the ecological health of arid and semi-arid grassland ecosystems.
(b) Its survival depends on mangrove ecosystems, indicating coastal biodiversity status.
(c) It migrates across different climatic zones, signalling climate change impacts.
(d) It survives only in high-altitude alpine meadows, making it a marker of mountain biodiversity.

12. With reference to the Hilsa fish (Tenualosa ilisha), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a migratory fish found only in the rivers of Bangladesh and India.
2. It is the national fish of Bangladesh.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

13. With reference to Pallas's cat, consider the following statements:

1. The species has been recorded in parts of the eastern Himalaya, including Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh.
2. It is a diurnal predator that actively chases its prey across open grasslands.
3. According to the IUCN Red List of threatened species, it is currently classified as Vulnerable.

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

14. Consider the following statements:

1. Black aspergillus species include widely distributed fungi with significant medical and ecological roles.
2. Black Aspergilli species are widely used in industries for citric acid production, fermentation, and agriculture.

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 'Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA)', consider the following statements:

1. It is the first global market-based mechanism to address international aviation emissions.
2. India currently lacks an Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) benchmark within the CORSIA framework.

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. This protected area located in Rajasthan was once the hunting ground of the princely state of Alwar. It was notified as a Wildlife Reserve in 1955, declared the 11th Tiger Reserve in 1978, and redesignated as a National Park in 1982. The description best refers to which of the following?

(a) Ranthambore Tiger Reserve
(b) Sariska Tiger Reserve
(c) Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve
(d) Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve

17. With reference to the Ethanol Blending, consider the following statements:

1. Ethanol blending refers to the practice of mixing ethanol with gasoline to create a fuel mixture that can be used in internal combustion engines.
2. Diesel in India will soon be blended with 10% ethanol.

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 about Cicadas:

1. They are insects found mainly in warm and temperate regions of the world.
2. They are considered bioindicators, reflecting the health of ecosystems.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

19. India's first bamboo-based Bio-refinery has been inaugurated in which of the following states?

(a) Madhya Pradesh
(b) West Bengal
(c) Mizoram
(d) Assam

20. With reference to the the Koalas, consider the following statements:

1. The Koala is a bear species native to Australia.
2. In Koalas, chlamydia is a threat to survival and a key conservation issue.
3. They are listed as endangered on the IUCN red list of threatened species.

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

21. With reference to Eustoma grandiflorum, recently in news, consider the following statements:

1. It belongs to the Gentianaceae family and is native to India.
2. It grows in rich, well-drained soil with full sunlight.

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. Consider the following statements with reference to the Yellow-crested cockatoos:

1. They are Native to Indonesia and East Timor and live in various forests.
2. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species classifies them 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

23. Consider the following statements with reference to Hangul:

1. It is a flagship stag species endemic to the Dachigam National Park of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. It is classified as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

24. The Kadamb tree (Neolamarckia cadamba) holds historical significance due to its association with the Kadamba dynasty. According to inscriptions, the dynasty ruled from which location?

(a) Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu
(b) Banavasi in present-day Karnataka
(c) Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh
(d) Pataliputra in Bihar

25. Consider the following statements with reference to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB):

1. It is a statutory organisation, was constituted under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.
2. It advises the Central Government on water and air pollution control plans and provides technical assistance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

26. With reference to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), consider the following statements:

1. The NDCs are renewable-energy adoption goals set by a country as part of being a signatory to the Paris Agreement.
2. Countries are required to update their NDCs every five years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

27. With reference to Rhinoceroses , consider the following pairs:

	Species	**IUCN Red List status**
1.	White Rhino	Near Threatened
2.	Javan Rhino	Critically Endangered
3.	Indian rhinoceros	Vulnerable

How many of the pairs are correctly matched?

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

28. Consider the following statements with respect to Dugong:

1. Dugong is the only strictly herbivorous marine mammal.
2. In India, Dugongs are found only in the Gulf of Mannar region.
3. Dugong is listed in Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

29. Consider the following statements:

1. Recently, the Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve (CDBR) located in Uttarakhand has been included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) by UNESCO.
2. The UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) was formed in 1971.

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. India has added two new Ramsar Sites — Gokul Jalashaya and Udaipur Jheel. In which state are they located?

(a) Uttar Pradesh
(b) Bihar
(c) West Bengal
(d) Odisha

31. Red Sanders, a tree species in high demand for furniture, cosmetics, and musical instruments, are primarily native to which region of India?

(a) Western Ghats
(b) Eastern Himalayas
(c) Southern Eastern Ghats
(d) Aravalli Hills

32. Consider the following statements about the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism in India:

1. The concept of ABS arises from the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 2000.
2. The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 provides the legal framework for ABS in India.
3. The National Biodiversity Authority is headquartered in New Delhi.
4. Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) are constituted at the local body level to manage ABS at the grassroots.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Orcas are the **largest species of dolphins** and are often **called killer whales.**

- While orcas are known to be prosocial animals, they **rarely interact with humans**.
- The recent interactions could pique human curiosity about killer whales and potentially improve conservation efforts.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- **Behavior:**
  - **Echolocation:** Use sound waves to navigate and hunt.
  - **Cooperative Hunting:** Pods work together like wolf packs. Hunting strategies vary by pod and region.

2. (b)

In News

- Several Spanish beaches closed after **venomous blue dragon sea slugs** washed ashore.

What are Blue Dragons?

- **Blue dragons (Glaucus atlanticus)** are small sea slugs that float upside down on the ocean surface, using an air bubble for buoyancy.
- Their blue and white coloring helps them camouflage from predators.
- They feed on **venomous jellyfish like the Portuguese man o' war** and store their stinging cells in finger-like appendages, making their sting stronger than their prey's.
  - While their sting can cause severe pain and symptoms in humans, it is not deadly.
- Blue dragons occur in the warm tropical waters of the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans.

3. (c)

In News: According to recent habitat modelling by the Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST), Bengaluru,**Only 17.2% of India's suitable habitat** for Indian rosewood lies within protected areas.

All the Statements are correct : Indian Rosewood(Dalbergia latifolia)

- It is native to India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Java, and Indonesia.
- In India, it is found from eastern Uttar Pradesh to Sikkim in the sub-Himalayan region, as well as in central, western, and southern parts of the country.
- It grows in various soil types but **thrives best in well-drained, deep, moist soils.**
- It is a premium timber used in furniture and handicrafts and plays a key ecological role by **improving soil fertilit**y through **nitrogen fixation**, supporting bird and insect diversity, and acting as a long-term carbon sink.
- It is listed under Appendix II of CITES and has been classified as **Vulnerable** by the IUCN since 2018.

4. (a)

Statements 1 and 2 are correct: The **BBNJ Agreement** is the **first treaty** to address the conservation and sustainable use of **biodiversity in the high seas.**

- It is meant to ensure that resources in international waters are treated as the **"common heritage of humankind"** and that benefits are shared fairly, **especially with developing countries.**

- **Background:** The process for the development of an **international legally-binding instrument** under the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** on the conservation and sustainable use of **BBNJ** has been running for **over ten years.**
  - The treaty was agreed upon in **2023** after years of negotiations and opened for **countries to sign in 2024.**
  - It will be an **international, legally binding treaty** after it enters force 120 days after the **60th ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession.**

Statement 3 is not correct: India signed the BBNJ Agreement in 2024.

5. (b)

Context

- **Kerala** has carried out **India's first science-based,** community-led eradication of **Senna spectabilis** in Wayanad, clearing 383 acres of infested forest.

About

- **Senna spectabilis** was introduced in the 1980s in Kerala.
  - It has spread across the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, choking native plants and food sources for wildlife.
- **Native range:** Tropical Areas of South America (Brazil, Peru, etc.)
- **Ornamental use:** Commonly planted for its striking yellow flowers (avenue and garden tree).

- **Invasive species in India:** Introduced as an ornamental, but has become highly invasive in the Western Ghats, Kerala, and other regions.
- **Concerns:** Senna forms dense, sterile thickets, choking out native plants, altering soil chemistry, and depriving herbivores of food.
  - Reports of Senna proliferation are emerging from Andhra Pradesh, Goa, and parts of Maharashtra.
  - Conservationists warn that unless tackled early, these regions may repeat South India's mistakes.

6. (b)

In News: Recently, the **'Vulture Network', India's first dedicated vulture conservation portal,** was launched in Assam ahead of International Vulture Awareness Day.

Statement 1 is not correct

- The **'Vulture Network'** is developed by **We Foundation India** in collaboration with **Gauhati University's Department of Zoology,** with the aim to build a nationwide network of researchers, conservationists, and citizens committed to saving India's critically endangered vultures.

Statement 2 is correct

- It aims to support conservation efforts for **all nine vulture species found in India,** including **critically endangered** ones like the **slender-billed and white-rumped vultures.**

7. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: SAF is an **alternative fuel** made from **non-petroleum feedstocks** that reduces emissions from air transportation.

- SAF can be blended **at different levels** with limits between **10% and 50%,** depending on the feedstock and how the fuel is produced.

Statement 2 is not correct: Need for SAF:

- Worldwide, aviation accounts for **2%** of **all carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions** and **12% of all CO2 emissions** from transportation.
- **ICAO's Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA)** caps net CO2 aviation emissions at 2020 levels through 2035.
- **The international aviation industry has set an aspirational goal to reach net zero carbon by 2050.**
- SAF presents the **best near-term opportunity to meet these goals.**

8. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Acanthamoeba are **free-living protozoan amoebae** (single-celled organisms) **found widely in the environment** (soil, air, dust, freshwater, seawater, contact lens cases, swimming pools, hospital equipment).

Statement 2 is correct: They are **not true parasites,** because they **can complete their life cycle without infecting humans or animals.**

9. (a)

In News

- We Foundation India, in collaboration with Gauhati University's Department of Zoology, has launched India's first vulture conservation portal to build a network for protecting these vital scavenger birds.

Vultures

- They are large, social raptors that live on every continent except Antarctica and Australia.
- The 23 species are divided into New World vultures from the Americas and Old World vultures from Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Status in india

- India has **nine species of vultures** in the wild and their IUCN Red list status are mentioned below :
  - The **Oriental White-backed Vulture** (Gyps bengalensis) : **Critically Endangered**
  - Slender billed Vulture (Gyps tenuirostris) : **Critically Endangered**
  - Indian Vulture or Long billed Vulture (Gyps indicus) : **Critically Endangered**
  - **Egyptian Vulture** (Neophron percnopterus) : **Endangered**
  - Red Headed Vulture (Sarcogyps calvus) : **Critically Endangered**
  - **Indian Griffon Vulture** (Gyps fulvus): **Least Concern.**
  - Himalayan Griffon (Gyps himalayensis): **Near Threatened**
  - Cinereous Vulture (Aegypius monachus) : **Near Threatened**
  - **Bearded Vulture** or Lammergeier (Gypaetus barbatus): **Near Threatened**

10. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: CCS involves capturing carbon dioxide emissions from sources like power plants and industrial processes and storing them underground in geological formations such as depleted oil/gas reservoirs and saline aquifers, preventing CO2 release into the atmosphere.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Earth's underground formations are finite and cannot store an unlimited amount of CO2. While storage capacity is large, it is not infinite, and safe long-term storage requires careful site selection and monitoring.

Statement 3 is correct: High costs of infrastructure, especially pipelines for transporting compressed CO2 from capture sites to storage locations, remain a major barrier to large-scale CCS deployment because of capital intensity and energy requirements.

Statement 4 is correct: Leakage risks (release of CO2 back to atmosphere), corrosion of pipelines or storage wells, and degradation of storage sites are recognized challenges requiring robust monitoring, regulation, and technology development to mitigate risks.

11. (a)

Context

- The Union Environment Ministry's Expert Appraisal Committee has approved an Environmental Impact Assessment study for the proposed **400-hectare Birmania Rock Phosphate mine in Jaisalmer**, Rajasthan, which falls within the potential habitat of **Great Indian Bustard (GIB).**

Great Indian Bustard

- The GIB is one of the **heaviest flying birds** in the world.
- **Diet:** The great Indian bustard is an omnivore and feeds on insects, grass seeds, berries, rodents, and reptiles.
- **Habitat and distribution:** The Great Indian Bustard, once widespread across the Indian subcontinent and Pakistan, is now largely confined to **Rajasthan** with small populations in **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.**
  - Rajasthan's Thar Desert, particularly the **Desert National Park**, is the last stronghold for the species in India, holding over 90% of the remaining wild population.
- **Significance:** It is a **key indicator of the health** of its native arid and semi-arid grassland ecosystems.
- **IUCN Status:** Critically Endangered

12. (b)

Context

- Bangladesh has decided to allow the export of 1,200 tonnes of hilsa fish, to India ahead of the Durga Puja festive season as a mark of "enduring Bangladesh-India friendship".

About

- **Hilsa fish**, also known as **Ilish,** is a popular and culturally significant fish in South Asia, particularly in **Bangladesh** and the Indian state of **West Bengal.**
- **Habitat:** It is found in rivers and estuaries in **Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Myanmar** and the **Persian Gulf area.**
  - **It is the national fish** of Bangladesh.
- **Appearance:** The fish has a **silvery-golden color** and a compressed, streamlined body.
  - It is also called the **"queen of fish".**
- **Flavor and texture:** It has an oily, rich flavor and a uniquely soft, flaky texture. Hilsa is also a rich source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are beneficial for heart health.
- **Conservation status:** Least Concern

13. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: Name: Pallas's cat (Otocolobus manul).

- It is one of the **most elusive and rarely photographed wild cats,** and remains one of the least studied feline species.

- **Distribution:** Its documentation in **Arunachal Pradesh** extends the known distribution of the species in the eastern Himalaya, adding to earlier confirmed records from **Sikkim**, Bhutan, and eastern Nepal.
  - They are found in Turkmenistan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Mongolia, and Russia.

Statement 2 and 3 is not correct: It is nocturnal, and an ambush predator, meaning it waits at the exits of rodent burrows until its prey appears.

- **IUCN Status: Least Concern.**

14. (c)

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : Researchers from the MACS-Agharkar Research Institute in Pune, an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology have identified two novel species of **Aspergillus section Nigri** (commonly known as black aspergillus), **Aspergillus dhakephalkarii and Aspergillus patriciawiltshireae**

The genus Aspergillus includes diverse fungi with significant medical, industrial, and ecological roles.

- studies on Aspergillus section Nigri are limited, requiring further exploration.
- **Black Aspergilli** are industrially important fungi, especially in citric acid production and agriculture.

15. (c)

In News: India is **formulating a national policy on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)** alongside a long-term roadmap through 2050, as part of its efforts to achieve **Net Zero emissions by 2070.**

Statement 1 is correct

- **The Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA)** was launched by the **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** in 2016, to achieve carbon-neutral growth in international aviation from 2020 onwards.
- It is the first global market-based mechanism to address international aviation emissions.

Statement 2 is correct

- ICAO' CORSIA becomes **mandatory for participating states from 2027**. Airlines **operating international flights** between ICAO member states **need to be required to offset their carbon emissions** above a set baseline, ensuring compliance with global emissions reduction goals.
  - **India currently lacks** an **Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)** benchmark within the CORSIA framework, unlike **Brazil (sugarcane) and the US (corn).**

16. (b)

Context

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has decided to invite public objections before finalising Rajasthan's proposal to alter the boundaries of the Critical Tiger Habitat (CTH) in Sariska Tiger Reserve.

About the Sariska Tiger Reserve (Sariska National Park)

- Located in Alwar district, Rajasthan.
- One of the largest and most renowned tiger reserves in Northern India.
- **Historical timeline:**
  - **Pre-Independence:** Hunting ground of the princely state of Alwar.
  - **1955:** Notified as a Wildlife Reserve.
  - **1978:** Declared the **11th Tiger Reserve** in India.
  - **1982:** Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary redesignated as **Sariska National Park**.

17. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Ethanol blending refers to the **practice of mixing ethanol with gasoline** to create a fuel mixture that can be used in internal combustion engines.

- **Ethanol feedstocks comprise** sugary raw materials (sugarcane, molasses, sweet sorghum, sugar beet, amongst others) or starchy (broken rice, corn, and cassava).
- The **'National Policy on Biofuels'** notified by the government in 2018 envisaged an indicative target of **20% ethanol blending in petrol by 2030.**

Statement 2 is not correct: The trials of blending **one-tenth ethanol** with diesel was not successful, **other than the isobutanol blend** so, Diesel in India will soon be blended with isobutanol instead of ethanol.

- **Trials with isobutanol are in progress and blending levels will be increased in the coming months.**
- **Isobutanol** is an **alcoholic compound** with flammable properties, and is commonly used as a **solvent** in varied industries including paints and coating.

18. (d)

In News: Kerala's Silent Valley National Park, a biodiversity hotspot in the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO World Heritage Site)**, has recently reported the return of cicadas.

About Cicadas

- It is a conspicuous group of insects, mainly found in **warm and temperate** biomes across the world.
- They are known for their unique sound production (tymbals), often used to attract mates.
- They act as **bioindicators**, reflecting the health of ecosystems.
- Cicadas had reportedly declined due to deforestation, climate stress, and human interference.

19. (d)

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated **India's first bamboo-based bio-refinery at Golaghat district in Assam.**

About

- Five lakh tonnes of green bamboo would be sourced annually from f**our northeastern States,** including Arunachal Pradesh and Assam to produce ethanol, acetic acid, furfural, and food-grade liquid carbon dioxide.
- The bioethanol plant is expected to give a **₹200-crore boost to Assam's rural economy.**

20. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: Australia has approved the **first vaccine** to protect its **shrinking koala population against chlamydia.**

- The koala (Phascolarctos cinereus) is a **tree-dwelling marsupial native** to **Australia**.
  - Often mistakenly called the **"koala bear,"** it is **not a bear** but a **marsupial** (a mammal that carries its young in a pouch).

Statement 2 is correct: Threats: Along with habitat loss, climate change and bushfires, a major reason for koalas' vulnerability is chlamydia.

- **Chlamydia:** It is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the **bacterium Chlamydia pecorum** that can cause infertility and blindness. In koalas, **chlamydia is a threat to survival and a key conservation issue.**
  - It is also found in humans caused by **Chlamydia trachomatis,** in humans, chlamydia is a major sexually transmitted infection (STI) but treatable.

Statement 3 is not correct: Since 2022, they have been **listed as endangered in Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory under Australia's national environmental law.**

- **IUCN Status - Vulnerable.**

21. (b)

Context

- Eustoma, a flower earlier available in Odisha only through imports, has bloomed locally for the first time.
  - This breakthrough was achieved by the **National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI)**, a research arm of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

About the Eustoma (Eustoma grandiflorum)

- **Common Name:** Lisianthus
- **Family:** Gentianaceae
- **Native Region:** Mexico and North America
- **Cultivation requirements:**
  - Grows in **rich, well-drained soil** with full sunlight.
  - Needs regular moisture but sensitive to overwatering.
- **Key Characteristics:**
  - Because of its **enormous rose-like blossoms**, long stems, and extended vase life, its sales have increased dramatically in recent years, earning it the title of the "next rose".

22. (a)

In News: Recently, **yellow-crested cockatoos** have found an unexpected refuge in Hong Kong's urban parks, where they represent about 10% of the global wild population of around 2,000 mature birds.

Statement 1 is correct : Yellow-crested cockatoos(Cacatua sulphurea) live in various forest types, scrub, and agricultural areas .

- It prefers open habitats like forest savanna rather than primary forests.
  - **Native to Indonesia and East Timor.**

Statement 2 is not correct : Yellow-crested cockatoos nests in tree cavities, often in dead or decaying trees, using existing holes or cracks.

- **Its diet** includes fruits, flowers, and leaves from multiple plant species
- **IUCN Red Status :** Critically Endangered

23. (c)

In News: A Youngster from Srinagar, is continuing his family's multi-generational legacy of conserving the hangul deer.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct: Hangul is also known as Kashmir stag and is a subspecies of Central Asian red deer that is endemic to Kashmir and surrounding areas.

- It was once found across the Himalaya, Chenab Valley, and parts of Himachal Pradesh, but now survives within **Dachigam National Park (Kashmir).**

- IUCN Red List of Threatened species classified hangul as Critically Endangered species.

24. (b)

Context

- King Charles III of the United Kingdom sent a **Burflower tree, commonly referred to as Kadamb tree**, to the Indian Prime Minister as a gift on his 75th birthday.

About Kadamb tree (Neolamarckia cadamba)

- The Kadamb tree is an **evergreen, tropical tree** native to South and Southeast Asia. It can grow up to **45 m tall.**
- **Distinct Features:** Known for its **fragrant orange flowers** that bloom in dense, globe-shaped clusters.
- **Historical Connections:**
  - **Kadamba Dynasty:** The tree lent its name to the **Kadamba dynasty** which ruled from **Banavasi in present-day Karnataka** from 345 CE to 525 CE, as per **Talagunda inscription.** The tree was considered a holy tree by the Kadamba dynasty.
  - **Athmallik State Emblem:** The kadamba flower served as the emblem of Athmallik, a princely state during the British Raj.

25. (c)

In News : The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) celebrated its **51st Foundation Day** .

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is a statutory organization established in September 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and later empowered under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

- It also supports the **Ministry of Environment under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.**
- CPCB's primary functions include promoting the **cleanliness** of **water bodies** and **improving air quality** by preventing and controlling pollution.
- To manage air quality, CPCB runs the National Air Monitoring Programme (NAMP) to track pollution trends and support planning and industrial regulation.
- It also operates an **automated air quality monitoring station** at ITO, New Delhi, regularly measuring pollutants .Advise the Central Government on any matter concerning prevention and control of water and air pollution and improvement of the quality of air.

26. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The NDCs are **renewable-energy adoption goals** set by a country as part of **being a signatory to the Paris Agreement.**

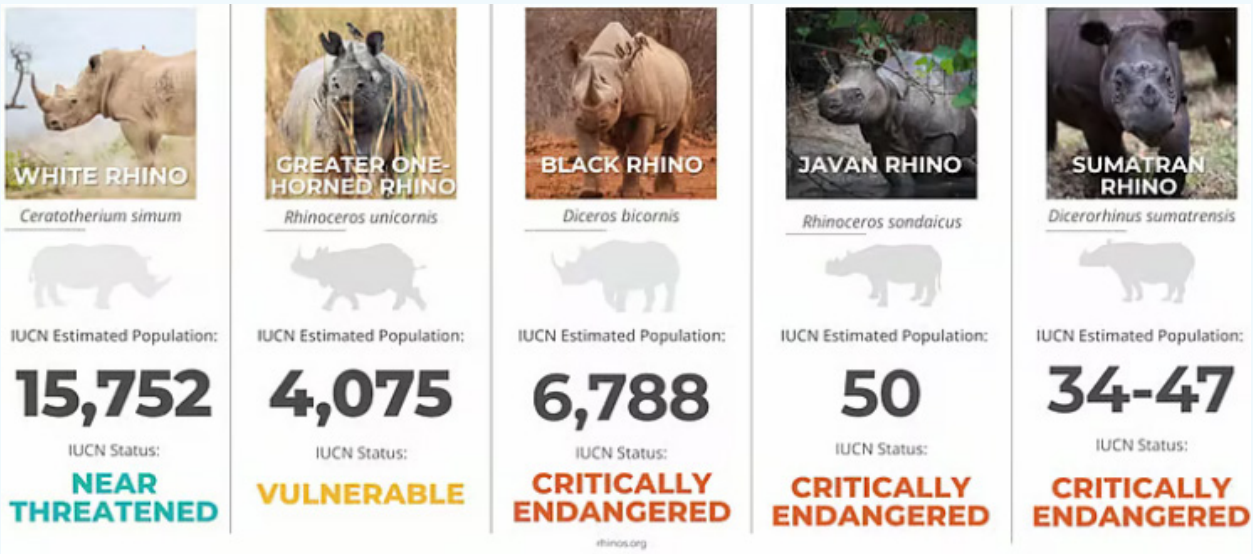
- Countries **must regulate their fossil fuel consumption** to keep the globe from heating **2°C,** and as far as possible, **1.5°C** above that in pre-industrial times.

- Countries are required to update their NDCs **every five years.**
- **India last updated its NDCs in 2022:**
  - It committed to reduce the emissions **intensity of its GDP by 45% of 2005** levels;
  - source **half of its electric power** capacity from **non-fossil fuel sources;**
  - and create a **carbon sink** of at least two billion tonnes — all three by 2030.

27. (c)

In News: Rhino populations have stabilised at around 27,000 globally, down from 500,000 a century ago, according to the latest State of the Rhino report by the International Rhino Foundation. They are large, herbivorous mammals that can be identified by their characteristic horned snouts.

- There are five rhino species spread throughout Asia and Africa.



28. (b)

About Dugong

- The **dugong is a large, herbivorous marine mammal** found throughout the Indo-Pacific region, including the warm coastal waters of the Indian and Pacific Oceans.
- In India, **dugongs inhabit the Gulf of Mannar, Palk Bay, Gulf of Kachchh, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.**
- They are highly **dependent on seagrass meadows**, both as habitat and for food, and prefer warm, shallow bays or mangrove channels.
- They are listed as **Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List and in Schedule I of India's Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.**
- Major threats include habitat degradation, destructive fishing practices, hunting, and climate change.

29. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve (CDBR) in Himachal Pradesh has been included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) by UNESCO.

- **India has a total 18 biosphere reserves,** of which **13 are now in the Unesco's world network** with the latest addition.
- **The global designation** helps these sites adopt comprehensive measures to foster harmony between people and nature for sustainable development.

Statement 2 is correct: The UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) was formed in **1971.**

- It covers internationally designated protected areas, known as biosphere reserves, which are meant to demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature.
- They are created under the **Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB).**

30. (b)

Context

- Two new wetlands in Bihar—Gokul Jalashaya in Buxar and Udaipur Jheel in West Champaran—have officially joined the Ramsar list, bringing India's total to 93 sites.

About

- Ramsar Sites are **wetlands of global importance**, protected under the **UNESCO-backed Ramsar Convention**, also called the **Convention on Wetlands**. This treaty was signed in the **Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971** and has **been in force since 1975**.
- These wetlands play a crucial role in **conserving biodiversity**, especially **migratory waterbirds**. Across the world, there are over **2,500 Ramsar Sites**.

31. (c)

Context

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has sanctioned an amount of ₹82 lakh to the Andhra Pradesh Biodiversity Board for the **conservation of Red Sanders (Pterocarpus santalinus).**

About

- Red sanders are native to **Southern Eastern Ghats,** primarily found in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- They are high in demand across Asia, particularly in **China and Japan**, for use in **cosmetics and medicinal products** as well as for making furniture, woodcraft and musical instruments.
- It is a slow-growing tree species, taking **25-40 years** to mature, which makes recovery from over-harvesting difficult.
- **Conservation Status:**
  - It is under **'endangered list'** in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.
  - It is listed in **Appendix-II** of the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wildlife Fauna and Flora (CITES).**
  - Listed under **Schedule IV** of The **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.**

32. (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (adopted 2000) primarily focuses on the safe handling and transport of living modified organisms to protect biodiversity. The ABS concept generally comes from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Nagoya Protocol (2010) rather than Cartagena Protocol.

Statement 2 is correct: The Biological Diversity Act, 2002, is the foundational legislation in India regulating ABS, governing access to biological resources and sharing benefits arising from their use.

Statement 3 is not correct: The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) is headquartered in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Statement 4 is correct: BMCs are statutory bodies constituted at local levels (villages, municipalities) for managing biodiversity, including implementation of ABS, preparation of People's Biodiversity Registers, and benefit sharing.

■■■■

MISCELLANEOUS

1. With reference to the Ramon Magsaysay Award, consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1958 in memory of the 7th President of the Philippines.
2. It is administered by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF), Manila.
3. It is regarded as Asia's highest honour and is often considered equivalent to the Nobel Prize in Asia.

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

2. The Budapest Convention, sometimes seen in the news, is primarily related to:

(a) Regulation of hazardous chemicals and pollutants across borders
(b) International treaty on combating cybercrime
(c) A UN agreement on climate change and sustainable development
(d) Convention on the protection of cultural heritage

3. With reference to the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA), consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 2016, and it is entrusted with the responsibility of administering the Investor Education Protection Fund (IEPF).
2. It is established under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. With reference to the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), consider the following statements:

1. NIRF was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Education, to rank the institutions of higher education in India.
2. In 2025, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, claimed the top overall position in the rankings.

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 World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a UN specialized agency established by the General Assembly.
2. It was created as a result of a joint initiative by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and various governments.

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 Health AI Global Regulatory Network (GRN), consider the following statements:

1. It is an initiative of the World Health Organization (WHO).
2. It promotes international cooperation for secure and efficient AI solutions in healthcare.
3. IndiaAI and ICMR-NIRDHDS are the nodal institutions representing India in GRN.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

7. With reference to the National Teachers' Awards, consider the following statements:

1. They were instituted in 1958 and are organized by the Ministry of Culture.
2. Awards are conferred every year on Teachers' Day (5th September), which marks the birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

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

8. The R Rangachari Committee, recently seen in the news, is related to:

(a) Banking sector reforms in India
(b) National Highway development
(c) Defence procurement and modernization
(d) Review of flood management measures in India

9. With reference to the International Earth Sciences Olympiad, consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 2003 by the International Geoscience Education Organization (IGEO).
2. It is an annual competition for graduate students worldwide.

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 India's literacy progress, consider the following statements:

1. Himachal Pradesh recently became the fourth Indian state to achieve full functional literacy, after Tripura, Mizoram, and Goa.
2. Ladakh is the first Union Territory to be declared fully literate.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

11. Which one of the following Indian states recently established the urban planning commission to guide its urban development strategy for the next 25 years?

(a) Kerala
(b) Goa
(c) Bihar
(d) Haryana

12. With reference to Adi Sanskriti, consider the following statements:

1. It was launched by the Ministry of Education as a digital learning platform.
2. It is the world's first Digital University for promoting tribal culture and knowledge.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

13. Consider the following with reference to the Disaster Risk Index (DRI):

1. It was developed by the Ministry of Home Affairs to monitor disaster preparedness of states.
2. It covers hazards, vulnerabilities, and exposures, with population and GDP being the two main exposure parameters.

Which of the above is/are correct?

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

14. The term SAMBHAV, recently seen in the news, refers to:

(a) A digital grievance redressal platform of the Ministry of Education
(b) An indigenous secure mobile communication platform of the Indian Army
(c) A rural skill development initiative under the Ministry of Rural Development
(d) A satellite-based navigation system developed by ISRO

15. The minerals vivianite and greigite, recently in news, are significant because:

(a) They are rare earth minerals critical for nuclear energy.
(b) They are commonly used in producing semiconductors.

(c) On Earth, they are usually formed through microbial activity.
(d) They are superconductors at room temperature.

16. Which among the following countries has become the first in the world to appoint an AI-generated minister?
(a) U.S.A
(b) South Korea
(c) Saudi Arabia
(d) Albania

17. "Gyan Bharatam" Portal, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
(a) Digital platform for higher education and research collaboration in India.
(b) One-stop knowledge portal for disaster risk reduction and climate resilience.
(c) Digital platform to accelerate manuscript digitisation, preservation, and public access.
(d) Online portal launched to strengthen cooperative education, training, and capacity building in India.

18. Consider the following statements:
1. Hindi Diwas is observed on 14th September every year to commemorate the adoption of Hindi as one of India's official languages.
2. Hindi is the second most spoken language in the world.
3. Hindi is one of the nine working languages of UNESCO.

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

19. With reference to the World Boxing Championships 2025, recently in news, consider the following statements:
1. The 2025 edition was held in Liverpool, United Kingdom.
2. India topped the medal tally with the highest number of gold medals.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

20. With reference to the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025, consider the following statements:
1. The GII is published annually by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
2. India is ranked first among the lower-middle-income group of economies in the GII 2025.
3. India's performance in "innovation inputs" is better than its performance in "innovation outputs" in the GII 2025.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 only

(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, and 3

21. India's first PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) park has been established in which of the following states?
(a) Uttar Pradesh
(b) Gujarat
(c) Madhya Pradesh
(d) Tamil Nadu

22. With reference to the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025, consider the following statements:
1. Switzerland has been ranked first followed by Sweden and the USA.
2. India's rank has declined in the Index from the previous 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

23. Phrases like '16 Days of Activism' and 'Every 11 Minutes' appeared in news, are primarily related to:
(a) Climate Change and Carbon Emissions
(b) Space Debris
(c) Gender Based Violence
(d) Child Abuse

24. With reference to the H-1B visa, consider the following statements:
1. An H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa in the United States that allows US companies to temporarily employ foreign workers in specialty occupations.
2. It is designed to fill specialised skill gaps in the US labor market where qualified Americans are unavailable.
3. China is the biggest beneficiary of the H-1B program followed by India.

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

25. With reference to the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, consider the following statements:
1. It was instituted in 1969 and is India's highest award in the field of cinema, presented annually.
2. The first recipient of the award was actress Devika Rani, who was honored in 1969.

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. Which of the following is the main objective of Project Vijayak?

(a) It aims to promote cross-border trade between India and China

(b) It aims to boost road infrastructure along the Line of Control for military readiness.

(c) It aims to maintain traditional ties among ethnic communities along the India-Myanmar border.

(d) It aims to carry out rescue missions in flood-affected areas in the Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.

27. With reference to the Industrial Park Rating System (IPRS) 3.0, consider the following statements:

1. It has been developed by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
2. Parameters such as sustainability, green infrastructure, logistics connectivity, digitalization, and skill linkages have been newly included in the framework.

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 Montevideo Convention (1933)' recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

(a) International trade regulations and tariff negotiations.

(b) Definition and recognition of statehood in International Law.

(c) Establishment of global refugee protection mechanisms.

(d) Framework for the governance of outer space activities.

29. Consider the following statements regarding the International Day of Sign Languages:

1. The theme for International Day of Sign Languages 2025 is "Sign Up for Sign Language Rights".
2. The date, 23rd September, also commemorates the establishment of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) in 1951.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

30. 'The Kalaimamani Awards' are the State Award of which of the following states?

(a) Karnataka

(b) Kerala

(c) Manipur

(d) Tamil Nadu

31. 'The Nelson Mandela Rules' sometimes seen in the news, are related to which of the following?

(a) International protection of refugees and asylum seekers.

(b) United Nations standards on the treatment of prisoners.

(c) Global action plan to eliminate racial discrimination.
(d) Guidelines for conflict resolution in post-apartheid societies.

32. D.K. Basu guidelines (1997), recently seen in the news, are related to:
(a) Environmental safeguards during industrial projects
(b) Arrest and detention procedures to prevent custodial torture
(c) Regulation of foreign contributions to NGOs
(d) Rehabilitation of displaced tribal communities

33. Consider the following statements regarding the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW):
1. The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution in 2019 proclaiming the IDAFLW.
2. It is linked to SDG 3, which aims to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

34. Consider the following statements regarding the National Geoscience Awards:
1. They were instituted in 1966 to recognize excellence in geoscience and mining.
2. They are presented under three categories and were formerly known as the National Mineral Awards until 2009.

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. 'Tondon Committee' is related to which of the following?
(a) Banking sector reforms related to priority sector lending.
(b) Credit management and working capital finance for industries.
(c) Public sector disinvestment and restructuring.
(d) Establishment of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

Established: 1958, in memory of Ramon Magsaysay, the 7th President of the Philippines, known for his integrity, courage, and democratic leadership.

- **Instituted by:** The Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), in partnership with the Philippine government.
- **Administered by:** The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF), Manila.
- **Nature:** Recognizes individuals or organizations in Asia who show selfless service and transformative leadership.
- **Prestige:** Considered Asia's highest honour, equivalent in stature to the Nobel Prize in Asia.

2. (b)

Context

- Banks have issued a new warning for customers to **stay vigilant against Android Package Kit (APK) frauds.**

International Measures

- **Budapest Convention:** It is the 1st international treaty to address cybercrime. India is not a signatory to the treaty.
- **Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN):** It is a US-based not-for-profit organization for coordinating & maintenance of several databases.
- **Internet Governance Forum:** It is the **United Nations forum** for multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on Internet governance issues.

3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA), was established in **2016**, and it is entrusted with the responsibility of administering the I**nvestor Education Protection Fund (IEPF).**

- It is dedicated to **safeguarding investor interests** by facilitating the return of unclaimed shares and dividends and advancing financial literacy nationwide.

Statement 2 is not correct: Ministry: Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

4. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: NIRF was launched in **2015** by the **Ministry of Education,** to rank institutions of higher education in India.

- **Five broad categories** of parameters identified in the NIRF;
  - Teaching, Learning & Resources.
  - Research and Professional Practice.
  - Graduation Outcome.
  - Outreach and Inclusivity.
  - Perception.

Statement 2 is correct: The **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025** rankings were announced by the **Ministry of Education**.

- For the seventh straight year, the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras,** claimed the **top overall position.**

5. (b)

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

- WADA is a **Swiss private law, not-for-profit Foundation**. WADA was established in **1999** as an international independent agency to lead a collaborative worldwide movement for doping-free sport.
- It was created as a result of a joint initiative by the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** and various governments.
- **Headquarters:** Montreal, Canada
- **Seat:** Lausanne, Switzerland

6. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Health AI Global Regulatory Network (GRN) is an initiative led by HealthAI – The Global Agency for Responsible AI in Health, an independent global platform based in Geneva, and **not by the World Health Organization (WHO).**

Statement 2 is correct: The GRN promotes international cooperation for safe, secure, and efficient AI-driven healthcare solutions through knowledge sharing, harmonizing best practices, and collaborative regulation among member countries.

Statement 3 is correct: IndiaAI and ICMR-NIRDHDS are the designated nodal institutions representing India in GRN and are responsible for domestic coordination of regulatory oversight and collaboration with global partners.

7. (b)

Context

- The President of India conferred **National Awards** on 81 teachers from across the country at a function held in New Delhi on **Teachers' Day (5th September)**.

About National Teachers Awards

- **Selection Process:** Teachers are chosen through a **three-stage transparent, online process** at the District, State, and National levels, coordinated by the **Department of School Education & Literacy**.
- **Organiser:** Ministry of Education and it was Instituted in 1958.
- **Purpose:**
  - To celebrate the unique contribution of outstanding teachers.
  - To recognize those who, through **commitment and innovation**, have improved school education and enriched the lives of their students.
- **Occasion:** Awards are conferred every year on **Teachers' Day**, observed on the **birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan**, former President of India and a great philosopher-educationist.
- **Exclusion** : Retired teachers who have not served at least a part of the calendar year - at least for four months i.e. up to 30th April in the year to which the National Award relates. Teacher/ Headmasters who have indulged in tuitions.
  - Contractual Teachers and Shiksha Mitras are also not eligible.

8. (d)

Context

- Punjab is under the impact of its worst floods in decades, with **1,902 villages submerged**, **3.8 lakh people affected**, and **11.7 lakh hectares of farmland destroyed**.

About the Floods in India

- According to the **National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)**, floods are a recurrent phenomenon in India, caused by heavy rainfall, inadequate drainage, and overflowing rivers. They result in loss of lives, damage to property, infrastructure, and public utilities.

Related Initiatives & Efforts

- **Environmental and Water Laws:**
  - **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986:** Enables regulation of activities affecting floodplains.
  - **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974:** Addresses drainage and water quality during floods.

9. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: International Earth Sciences Olympiad: It was established in **2003** by the **International Geoscience Education Organization (IGEO).**

- It is one of the **twelve International Science Olympiads.**

Statement 2 is not correct: It is an **annual competition** for **secondary school students (Class IX–XII) worldwide.**

- **India** has been participating since **2007** and hosted the **10th edition at Mysore in 2013.**
- **Aim:** To enhance the level of **geoscience education worldwide and increase public awareness of Earth Sciences.**

10. (c)

In News

- On **International Literacy Day**, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister declared the state fully literate, achieving a **99.30% literacy rate which is higher than the national benchmark of 95%.**

India's progress in literacy

- India has made **significant progress** in literacy, with Himachal Pradesh becoming the fourth state—after Tripura, Mizoram, and Goa—to achieve full functional literacy. **Ladakh** is the first fully literate Union Territory.
- The national literacy rate rose from **74% in 2011 to 80.9% in 2023–24.**
- The **ULLAS Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram** enrolled over 3 crore learners with a 90% success rate.
- **India's digital public infrastructure** has played a key role, setting an example for the Global South in advancing education and inclusion.

11. (a)

In News: Recently, **Kerala Cabinet** decided to tackle the rapid urbanisation with the **Kerala Urban Policy Commission (KUPC)**, in response to projections indicating that **over 80% of Kerala** will be **urbanised by 2050,** outpacing the country's average.

About the Kerala Urban Policy Commission (KUPC)

- It is **India's first State-level urban commission,** was set up in December 2023, with a **25-year roadmap** for reimagining cities as **climate-aware, people-centred ecosystems**.
- It aims to build resilient, inclusive, and climate-ready cities tailored to Kerala's unique realities, reflecting a **shift from reactive governance to strategic planning.**
- KUPC submitted its **report in March 2025**, which laid out a blueprint for:
  - A digital data revolution;
  - Governance reforms;
  - Financial empowerment for municipalities;
  - Reviving cultural and ecological identity.

12. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct but statement 2 is correct : The Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched the **Beta version of Adi Sanskriti** at the National Conference on Adi Karmayogi Abhiyan in New Delhi.

Adi Sanskriti is a digital learning platform aimed at preserving tribal art forms, promoting heritage, enabling livelihoods, and connecting tribal communities globally.

- It is envisioned as the **world's first Digital University for preserving and promoting tribal culture and traditional knowledge.**

13. (b)

The Disaster Risk Index (DRI) was developed by the 15th Finance Commission to bring objectivity in fiscal federalism by taking note of disaster risk faced by states for resource allocation. The DRI covers 14 hazards (such as earthquake, cyclone, flood, drought), 14 vulnerabilities (like rural/ urban poor, vulnerable children and women), and 2 exposure parameters—population and GDP.

14. (b)

Context

- Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi recently highlighted the importance of **SAMBHAV (Secure Army Mobile Bharat Version).**

What is SAMBHAV?

- Launched in 2023, SAMBHAV is India's **first fully indigenous secure** mobile communication platform, built to function independently of network infrastructure vulnerabilities.
- Designed to support real-time connectivity on the move, SAMBHAV runs on **5G-enabled devices** and is layered with advanced multi-tier encryption.
- The system includes proprietary military apps like **M-Sigma**—an encrypted alternative to WhatsApp—allowing secure transmission of files, images, and videos among personnel without fear of data breaches.
- As of early 2024, roughly **30,000 SAMBHAV-enabled devices** have been distributed to Indian Army officers.

15. (c)

Context

- NASA's Perseverance rover, exploring **Mars' Jezero Crater** since 2021, has discovered 3.5-billion-year-old mudstones with unusual markings nicknamed "leopard spots" and "poppy seeds."

About

- The rover studied a rock named **Cheyava Falls**, which contains minerals like **vivianite and greigite**, usually formed on Earth by microbial activity.
- Scientists describe this as a **potential biosignature** — not proof of life, but the strongest clue yet that microbes may once have thrived on Mars. The only way to confirm this is through laboratory analysis of samples on Earth.
- However, NASA's **Mars Sample Return mission** faces uncertainty due to **budget cuts under the Trump administration**, putting the project at risk of cancellation.

16. (d)

Albania has become the **first nation** to appoint an **AI-generated "minister"** tasked with tackling **corruption.**

- **Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama** announced the **digital minister to his cabinet.**
- The digital assistant is named '**Diella' meaning 'Sun'** and has been given responsibility of **taking all decisions related to the public tenders, making them 100% corruption-free.**
  - The AI minister will also have the right to assess tenders and hire talents from across the world.
- **Corruption challenges in Albania:** Public tenders in Albania have historically been at the centre of corruption scandals.
  - The country has become a hub for international criminal networks laundering profits from drug and arms trafficking, with corruption reportedly reaching into senior levels of government.

17. (c)

Prime Minister Modi launched the **Gyan Bharatam portal** at the International Conference on Gyan Bharatam.

- The International Conference on Gyan Bharatam is being held under the theme **"Reclaiming India's Knowledge Legacy through Manuscript Heritage"**.

- **Bharatam Portal** is a dedicated digital platform to **accelerate manuscript digitisation, preservation, and public access,** and address the gathering on the occasion.
- **India's manuscripts exist in nearly 80 languages**, including Sanskrit, Prakrit, Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, and Marathi.

18. (c)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended greetings to the nation on Hindi Diwas.

About

- Observed annually on 14th September, Hindi Diwas commemorates the adoption of Hindi as one of **India's official languages**. On this day in **1949**, the **Constituent Assembly** finalized the official language framework during the drafting of the Constitution.
- Hindi figures among the **22 languages** listed in the **Eighth Schedule of the Constitution**, and serves as the primary official language of **11 states and 3 Union Territories**.
- Hindi is also the **third most spoken language in the world** and serves as a bridge between India's traditional knowledge, ancient civilization, and modern progress.

Do you know?

- Hindi is one of the **nine working languages** of UNESCO.
- **World Hindi Day** is celebrated on **10th January** every year, first announced in 2006, to promote Hindi globally.

19. (a)

In News

- **Jaismine Lamboria and Minakshi Hooda** have won gold at the **World Boxing Championships 2025** held in Liverpool, UK.

About

- The event was hosted at M&S Bank Arena, Liverpool, UK, and brought over 550 boxers from more than 65 countries across all continents.
- The 2025 edition was historic, as it combined both men's and women's events under World Boxing, the new global boxing federation, for the first time at the elite level.
- **Kazakhstan topped the medal table** with 7 gold, ahead of Uzbekistan and India.

20. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025 is an annual report released by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) that ranks the innovation performance of nearly 140 economies. The World Intellectual Property Organisation or WIPO is a UN specialized agency created in 1967 to promote intellectual property (IP) protection and encourage creative activity all over the world.

Statement 2 is correct: India holds the 1 rank in the lower-middle-income group and also leads in Central and Southern Asia for GII 2025.

Statement 3 is not correct: India's innovation output performance is better than its innovation input performance in GII 2025.

21. (c)

The Prime Minister laid the foundation for the **country's first PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) park** in **Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district.**

- The PM MITRA park in Dhar is **one of seven such establishments approved by the Union Ministry of Textiles.**

- The other sites are Tamil Nadu's Virudhnagar, Telangana's Warangal, Gujarat's Navasari, Karnataka's Kalaburagi, Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow, and Maharashtra's Amravati.

- **Based on the 5F theme:** Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign - the initiative aims to boost India's textile manufacturing and exports.

22. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The **18th edition** of the **Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025,** was released by the **World Intellectual Property Organisation's (WIPO).**

- **Top Nations: Switzerland** remains the world's top innovation leader for the 15th consecutive year, followed by **Sweden, the United States**, South Korea, and Singapore in the top five ranks.
  - China, for the first time, enters the top 10, ranked 10th globally, leading among middle-income economies.

Statement 2 is not correct: India: India has made a steady climb **from #48 in 2020 to #38 in 2025,** and importantly, holds the **#1 spot among lower-middle-income economies** and in the **Central and Southern Asia region.**

- India performs best in **Knowledge & Technology Outputs (#22) and Market Sophistication (#38)**, while its weakest rankings are in **Business Sophistication (#64), Infrastructure (#61), and Institutions (#58).**
- **India stands out for its ICT services exports,** a vibrant VC landscape, late-stage VC and startup financing, unicorns and intangible assets - reflecting tech-driven growth.

23. (c)

16 Days of Activism: It is an **annual international campaign** (Nov 25–Dec 10) coordinated by **UN Women** and civil society organizations, focusing on ending **gender-based violence.**

- **Every 11 Minutes:** It refers to **UNFPA's 2021 report** highlighting that **every 11 minutes, a woman or girl is killed by an intimate partner or family member,** again pointing to **gender-based violence.**

24. (a)

Statement 1 and 2 are correct: An H-1B visa is **a non-immigrant visa** in the **United States** that allows US companies to **temporarily employ foreign workers** in specialty occupations.

- These are jobs that **typically require** technical expertise, a bachelor's degree or higher, or its equivalent in fields like IT, engineering, science, medicine, and finance.
- **Purpose:** It is designed to fill specialised skill gaps in the US labor market where qualified Americans are unavailable.

Statement 3 is not correct: Majority Holders: Indians have been the biggest beneficiaries of the H-1B program, accounting for more than 70% of successful H-1B petitions followed by China, who account for 12-13%.

25. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Instituted in 1969, it is India's **highest award** in the field of cinema, presented **annually** at the **National Film Awards ceremony** by the Directorate of Film Festivals, an **organisation set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.**

- It is presented on the recommendation of the **Dadasaheb Phalke Award Selection Committee.**
- The award is named after Dadasaheb Phalke (1870–1944), who is regarded as **"the father of Indian cinema"**. He **directed India's first feature film, Raja Harishchandra (1913).**
- The **award comprises** a Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus), a shawl and a cash prize of Rs. 10 Lakhs.
- **The first recipient** of the award was actress **Devika Rani**, who was honored in 1969.

26. (b)

Project Vijayak of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) celebrated its 15th Raising Day in Kargil, marking a legacy of engineering excellence and resilience in Ladakh's harsh terrain.

Project Vijayak

- It was established in **September 2010 in Kargil** as a strategic response to the lessons of **Operation Vijay (Kargil War, 1999)**, emphasizing the need for robust road infrastructure along the Line of Control (LC) to enhance military preparedness.
- **Areas Covered :** Initially covered **Kargil and Zanskar—**areas formerly under **Project Himank**.
  - It manages two key communication axes in the Western Indus Corridor: the Zojila–Kargil–Leh and Nimmu–Padam–Darcha routes.
  - Following a boundary realignment in 2019, it also oversees roads and airfields in the Western Shyok and Nubra Corridors, including the Siachen Glacier region.

27. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The Industrial Park Rating System (IPRS) 3.0 is a new upgraded framework introduced by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to benchmark and improve the quality of industrial parks and estates across India.

Statement 2 is correct: IPRS 3.0 expands on previous versions by including new, forward-looking parameters that reflect the evolving needs of industries and sustainability goals:

- **Sustainability and Green Infrastructure:** This includes criteria related to environmental management, energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, and pollution control, ensuring industrial parks adopt eco-friendly practices.
- **Logistics Connectivity:** Measures the connectivity of the park in terms of road, rail, air, and port access, providing industries situated there with efficient supply chain and distribution options.
- **Digitalization:** Emphasizes adoption of digital technologies for park management, services, and operations, enhancing efficiency and transparency.
- **Skill Linkages:** Focuses on the availability and development of skilled labor within and around the park, ensuring industries have access to the talent pool they need.

28. (b)

Under the Montevideo Convention of 1933, officially the **Convention on the Rights and Duties of States,** there are several criteria before a State can be recognised as a sovereign state under international law. **The process requires the state to have:**

- A permanent population.
- A defined territory.
- An effective government and international relations.
- Formal diplomatic processes including embassies, ambassadors and treaties.

29. (b)

Context

- **23rd September** marks the **International Day of Sign Languages** for promoting Deaf rights.

About International Day of Sign Languages

- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), **adopted in 2006**, recognizes sign languages as equal to spoken languages and requires states to promote the linguistic identity of the **Deaf community.**
- **India ratified this Convention in 2007**, showing its commitment to upholding Deaf people's rights and promoting Indian Sign Language.

- The day was first celebrated in **2018** as part of the **International Week of the Deaf**. The date also commemorates the establishment of the **World Federation of the Deaf (WFD)** in 1951.
- This year's theme, **"No Human Rights Without Sign Language Rights,"** emphasizes that the recognition and use of sign languages are essential for ensuring human rights for Deaf people.

30. (d)

The Kalaimamani awards are considered to be the **highest civilian honor in the state of Tamil Nadu.**

- These awards are handed out by the Tamil Nadu **'Iyal Isai Nataka Mandram'(literature, music, and theatre),** a unit of the Directorate of Art and Culture, Government of Tamil Nadu.
- **The various categories of Kalaimamani awards include:** music (vocal), Thevaram recital, performing mrithangam, harmonium, nathaswaram, thavil, religious discourse, Bharathanatyam teaching, drama artist, folk singer, Valli Oyil Kummi, small screen actor, painter, etc.
- **Eligibility:** Top-most performing talent from the state who have made invaluable contributions to the betterment of their respective fields.
- **The Kalaimamani awardees** will be honoured with a **gold medal and a shield.**

31. (b)

The "Nelson Mandela Rules" are the revised **United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, adopted in 2015.**

- They lay down the **minimum conditions** for the humane treatment of prisoners, including prohibition of torture, solitary confinement restrictions, healthcare standards, and dignity in detention.

32. (b)

Context

- The Supreme Court castigated the Madhya Pradesh government and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for failing to arrest two police officers **allegedly responsible for the custodial death of a 25-year-old.**

Why Custodial Deaths are Rampant in India?

- **Colonial Legacy of Policing:** The Indian police system is still heavily influenced by the Police Act of 1861, designed for control rather than service.
  - This creates an authoritarian mindset where force is often prioritized over lawful procedures.
- **Weak Accountability Mechanisms:** Investigations into custodial deaths are often carried out by the same police department, leading to bias.
- **Torture as a Tool of Investigation:** Due to poor training and lack of forensic infrastructure, police often resort to third-degree methods to extract confessions.
- **Marginalisation and Vulnerable Groups:** Most victims come from weaker socio-economic backgrounds.
  - Lack of legal literacy and resources prevents families from seeking justice.
- **Poor Implementation of Safeguards:** Safeguards under Article 21 & 22 of the Constitution, **D.K. Basu guidelines (1997)**, NHRC directives, and Supreme Court judgments are often ignored.
  - Mandatory requirements like medical examinations, arrest memos, and informing relatives are routinely violated.

33. (a)

Context

- On September 29, the world observes **the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW).**

About

- **In 2019,** the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming an **International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW).**
- **SDG 12** seeks to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
  - **Target 12.3** aims to "halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains" by 2030.

34. (c)

In News

- President Droupadi Murmu presented the **National Geoscience Awards-2024** at a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre, recognizing **outstanding contributions in the field of geoscience.**

National Geoscience Awards

- They were instituted in 1966 by the **Ministry of Mines**, to **recognize excellence and innovation in the field of geoscience and mining.**
  - formerly known as the **National Mineral Awards** until 2009 .
- They are among the **country's oldest and most prestigious honors in the field of geosciences.**
- The Ministry of Mines presents the National Geoscience Awards annually under the following **three categories**: National Geoscience Award for Lifetime Achievement, National Geoscience Award and National Young Geoscientist Award.

35. (d)

Recently, the Crime in India 2023 report was published by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).**

About NCRB

- **Establishment: 1986 on recommendations of the Tandon Committee,** National Police Commission (1977-81), and MHA Task Force (1985).
- **Parent Ministry:** Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- **Functions:** Acts as the national repository of crime and criminal data.
  - Manages the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS).
- **Publishes three major reports:** Crime in India, Accidental Deaths & Suicides, and Prison Statistics.

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