

1. ILO Convention No. 193 is primarily associated with which one of the following domains?

- A. Establishing global safety protocols for deep-sea mining operations
- B. Creating binding universal rights standards for platform and gig workers
- C. Banning informal micro-finance lending models in developing nations
- D. Frameworks for cross-border intellectual property rights in pharmaceutical sectors

Answer: B

Explanation

The **ILO Convention No. 193** establishes the world's first legally binding international labour standards specifically designed to protect **platform and gig workers**, including ride-hailing drivers, food delivery personnel, freelance digital workers, and data annotators.

The Convention aims to ensure a universal minimum standard of labour rights irrespective of whether workers are classified as employees or independent contractors. It provides safeguards against unfair **algorithmic management**, mandates **human oversight** in automated employment decisions such as account suspensions and deactivations, promotes transparency in digital platforms, and strengthens workers' rights relating to fair remuneration, social security, occupational safety, and collective representation.

The remaining options relate to entirely different domains:

- **Option A** concerns deep-sea mining regulations, which fall under international maritime and environmental governance.
- **Option C** relates to micro-finance regulation and has no connection with ILO labour conventions.
- **Option D** pertains to pharmaceutical intellectual property governed under international trade agreements rather than labour standards.

2. Match Column-I (Tributaries of River Cauvery) with Column-II (Bank Classification)

Column-I (Tributary) Column-II (Bank Classification)

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| P. Hemavati | 1. Right Bank Tributary |
| Q. Shimsha | 2. Left Bank Tributary |
| R. Bhavani | |
| S. Amaravati | |

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- A. P-2, Q-2, R-1, S-1

B. P-1, Q-2, R-1, S-2

C. P-2, Q-1, R-2, S-1

D. P-1, Q-1, R-2, S-2

Answer: A

Explanation

The **Cauvery River** originates at **Talakaveri** in the Brahmagiri Hills of Karnataka and flows through Karnataka and Tamil Nadu before draining into the **Bay of Bengal**.

Its tributaries are classified according to the bank from which they join the main river.

Left Bank Tributaries

- Harangi
- Hemavati
- Shimsha
- Arkavati

Right Bank Tributaries

- Lakshmantirtha
- Kabini
- Suvarnavati
- Bhavani
- Noyil
- Amaravati

Therefore, the correct matching is:

- **P. Hemavati → Left Bank (2)**
- **Q. Shimsha → Left Bank (2)**
- **R. Bhavani → Right Bank (1)**
- **S. Amaravati → Right Bank (1)**

Hence, **Option A** is the correct answer.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER):

1. The Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) measures the inflation-adjusted value of a country's currency against a trade-weighted basket of currencies of its major trading partners.

2. A REER index value below the benchmark level of **100** generally indicates that the domestic currency is relatively undervalued compared to the base year.

Which of the following information supports the above statements?

1. Rising global crude oil prices increase domestic demand for foreign currency, exerting depreciation pressure on the exchange rate.
2. Higher interest rates in developed economies encourage capital outflows from emerging markets, weakening their currencies.
3. Strong foreign exchange reserves and moderating domestic inflation contribute to greater exchange-rate stability.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- A. 1 and 2 only
B. 3 only
C. 1 and 3 only
D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

Explanation

The **Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER)** is an important indicator of a country's international price competitiveness. It adjusts the **Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER)** for inflation differentials between the domestic economy and its trading partners.

A **REER value above 100** generally indicates that the domestic currency is relatively **overvalued**, making exports less competitive, while a **REER below 100** suggests the currency is relatively **undervalued**, thereby improving export competitiveness.

Each of the three given factors directly influences REER:

- **Statement 1:** Higher crude oil prices increase import bills and demand for foreign currency, putting downward pressure on the domestic currency.
- **Statement 2:** Higher interest rates in advanced economies often trigger foreign portfolio investment outflows from emerging markets, leading to currency depreciation.
- **Statement 3:** Adequate foreign exchange reserves enable central banks to manage excessive exchange-rate volatility, while lower domestic inflation improves the inflation-adjusted value of the currency.

Since all three factors affect exchange-rate movements and inflation—the two core determinants of REER—all the given information supports the statements.

Hence, **Option D** is the correct answer.

4. Consider the following statements regarding the DAANVEER Initiative:

1. The DAANVEER initiative has been launched by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** to strengthen digital infrastructure in Gram Panchayats.
2. Under the DAANVEER platform, donors are required to independently procure and physically deliver digital equipment to rural local bodies.
3. The platform integrates with digital governance portals such as **e-GramSwaraj** and **AuditOnline** to facilitate the utilization of donated equipment.

Which one of the following is correct?

- A. All three statements are correct.
- B. There is no correct statement.
- C. There are two correct statements, including Statement 3.
- D. There is only one correct statement.

Answer: C

Explanation

The **DAANVEER Initiative** is a digital platform introduced by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)** to bridge digital infrastructure gaps in **Gram Panchayats** by enabling voluntary donations of digital equipment.

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The initiative is implemented by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to strengthen digital governance in rural local bodies.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** Donors are not responsible for manual procurement or delivery. Instead, the platform is integrated with the **DigiHaat marketplace**, allowing donors to purchase standardized hardware packages while procurement, logistics, and installation are managed through the platform.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** DAANVEER is integrated with existing rural governance platforms such as **e-GramSwaraj**, **AuditOnline**, **Sabha Saar**, and **Gram Manchitra**, enabling immediate operational use of the donated infrastructure.

Therefore, only **Statements 1 and 3** are correct, making **Option C** the correct answer.

5. With reference to the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Coal Exchange Rules, 2026 have been notified under the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**.
2. The **Coal Controller Organisation (CCO)** is responsible for approving coal exchanges, regulating trading mechanisms, and prescribing transaction fee ceilings.
3. Participation in Coal Exchanges is restricted only to Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and captive mine owners.
4. Every Coal Exchange is required to establish a **Settlement Guarantee Fund (SGF)**, with at least 50% of the corpus invested in safe and liquid financial instruments.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

Answer: C

Explanation

The **Coal Exchange Rules, 2026** establish a statutory framework for transparent electronic spot trading of coal and lignite in India.

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The Rules have been framed under **Section 18B of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**, providing the legal basis for coal exchanges.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The **Coal Controller Organisation (CCO)** oversees the approval and regulation of coal exchanges, including registration, trading procedures, bye-laws, and transaction fee limits.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** Participation is not limited to PSUs and captive mine owners. The framework also allows **commercial miners, private participants, and non-regulated consumers**, including eligible industries, to trade through the exchanges.
- **Statement 4 is correct.** Coal Exchanges must maintain a **Settlement Guarantee Fund (SGF)** to mitigate settlement risks, with **at least 50% of the corpus invested in safe and liquid instruments**.

Accordingly, **Statements 1, 2, and 4 are correct**, while **Statement 3 is incorrect**. Therefore, the correct answer is **Option C**.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*):

1. The Houbara Bustard is classified as **Critically Endangered** on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
2. It is a ground-dwelling bird possessing cryptic camouflage that enables it to survive in hyper-arid desert ecosystems.
3. The northern breeding populations migrate seasonally to the **Western Hemisphere** and **Sub-Saharan Africa**.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. 3 only

D. None

Answer: B

Explanation

The **Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*)**, also known as **MacQueen's Bustard**, is a medium-sized desert bird adapted to arid and semi-arid ecosystems of Central Asia, the Middle East, and parts of South Asia.

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** The species is classified as **Vulnerable** on the **IUCN Red List**, not Critically Endangered. However, due to threats such as habitat degradation, illegal hunting, and falconry, it is included in **CITES Appendix I** and **CMS Appendix I**.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The bird is a **ground-dwelling species** with sandy-brown, mottled plumage that provides excellent **cryptic camouflage**, enabling it to blend with desert soils, gravel plains, and sparse vegetation.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** Northern breeding populations from countries such as **Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Mongolia** migrate southwards during winter to **Pakistan, India (including the Thar Desert and Rann of Kutch), Iran, and the Arabian Peninsula**. They do not migrate to the Western Hemisphere or Sub-Saharan Africa.

Therefore, **only Statement 2 is correct**.

7. With reference to the practical applications of AI palletising technology, consider the following statements:

1. AI palletising is used in e-commerce distribution centres to automate mixed stock-keeping unit (SKU) order fulfilment.
2. It is widely deployed in Food and Beverage industries for high-speed packaging of bottles, cans, and crates.
3. AI palletising eliminates the requirement for electricity and digital network connectivity in modern warehouses.

How many of the above statements are **incorrect**?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three

D. None

Answer: A

Explanation

AI palletising combines robotics, computer vision, machine learning, and sensor technologies to automate stacking, sorting, and packaging operations across industries.

- **Statement 1 is correct.** Modern e-commerce and logistics centres use AI palletising systems to efficiently organize and stack mixed **SKUs**, improving warehouse productivity and order fulfilment.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** Food & Beverage and **Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)** industries extensively employ AI palletising for end-of-line packaging of bottles, cartons, cans, crates, and similar products.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** AI palletising systems require **continuous electricity**, robotic hardware, sensors, digital control systems, and network connectivity for real-time monitoring and automation.

Hence, **only one statement (Statement 3) is incorrect**, making **Option A** the correct answer.

8. Which of the following behavioural or physiological adaptations is characteristic of the Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis macqueenii*) for survival in hyper-arid environments?

- A. Exclusive arboreal nesting on tall trees to escape extreme ground temperatures.
- B. Elaborate courtship displays by males involving black-and-white neck ruffs and inflation of throat sacs.
- C. Obligate carnivorous feeding restricted to large desert rodents and snakes.
- D. Complete loss of flight owing to fusion of wing bones.

Answer: B

Explanation

The **Houbara Bustard** exhibits several remarkable adaptations that enable it to survive in harsh desert environments.

A distinctive feature of the species is the elaborate **courtship display** performed by males during the breeding season. The display involves:

- Erecting prominent **black-and-white neck ruffs**,
- Inflating the **throat sac**,
- Performing circular runs and display movements to attract females.

The remaining options are incorrect:

- **Option A:** The species is **ground-nesting**, not arboreal.
- **Option C:** The Houbara Bustard is an **omnivore**, feeding on seeds, shoots, insects, beetles, locusts, and small reptiles rather than being exclusively carnivorous.
- **Option D:** The species is a **strong flier** capable of undertaking long-distance seasonal migrations across Asia.

Therefore, **Option B** is the correct answer.

9. Consider the following statements:

1. A Cabinet Minister who already holds office is not required to take a fresh oath when assigned the additional charge of another ministry.
2. The rules governing the allocation of government business among Union Ministers are framed by the President under **Article 77(3)** of the Constitution.
3. The resignation of an individual Union Minister automatically results in the dissolution of the entire Council of Ministers under **Article 75(3)**.

How many of the above statements are **incorrect**?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Answer: A

Explanation

The Constitution lays down the framework governing the appointment, functioning, and responsibilities of Union Ministers.

- **Statement 1 is correct.** A Minister who already holds constitutional office has already taken the **oath of office and secrecy under Article 75(4)**. Assignment of an additional portfolio merely redistributes responsibilities and does not require a fresh oath.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** **Article 77(3)** empowers the President to frame the **Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules** and the **Transaction of Business Rules**, under which ministries and departments are allocated among Union Ministers.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** **Article 75(3)** establishes the principle of **collective responsibility** of the Council of Ministers to the Lok Sabha. The resignation or removal of an individual Minister does not dissolve the Council of Ministers. The Council continues as long as it enjoys the confidence of the Lok Sabha and the Prime Minister remains in office.

Thus, **only Statement 3 is incorrect**, making **Option A** the correct answer.

10. Consider the following statements regarding the powers of the Presiding Officer under the Tenth Schedule:

1. A Speaker or Deputy Speaker may resign from their original political party upon election to the office without attracting disqualification under the anti-defection law.
2. Decisions of the Presiding Officer regarding disqualification under the Tenth Schedule are completely immune from judicial review by the High Courts.
3. A breakaway group must comprise **at least one-half** of the members of the original legislature party to qualify for recognition under the anti-defection law.

Which one of the following is correct?

- A. All three statements are correct.
- B. There is no correct statement.
- C. Two statements are correct, including Statement 1.
- D. Only one statement is correct.

Answer: D

Explanation

The **Tenth Schedule** of the Constitution contains provisions relating to disqualification on the grounds of defection.

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The Tenth Schedule provides a special exemption allowing the **Speaker or Deputy Speaker** to voluntarily relinquish membership of their political party upon election to office in order to maintain neutrality, without attracting disqualification.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** In *Kihoto Hollohan v. Zachillhu (1992)*, the Supreme Court held that decisions of the Speaker under the Tenth Schedule are **subject to judicial review** by the High Courts and the Supreme Court, although such review ordinarily occurs after the Speaker has rendered a decision.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** Following the **91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003**, the earlier provision relating to "split" (one-third members) was removed. At present, protection is available only in the case of a **merger supported by at least two-thirds** of the members of the legislature party. A simple majority or one-half of the members is insufficient.

Therefore, **only Statement 1 is correct**, making **Option D** the correct answer.