

1. With reference to Currency swap agreements, consider the following statements:

1. Currency swaps are used to obtain foreign currency loans at a better interest rate than could be obtained by borrowing directly in a foreign market.
2. India has a Currency swap arrangement with the SAARC grouping.

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Currency swaps are used to obtain foreign currency loans at a better interest rate than could be obtained by borrowing directly in a foreign market.
- Recently, the Reserve Bank of India agreed to a \$400 million currency swap facility for Sri Lanka till November 2022.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The SAARC currency swap facility came into operation on November 15, 2012 with an intention to provide a backstop line of funding for short-term foreign exchange liquidity requirements or balance of payment crises till longer-term arrangements are made.

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/rbi-signs-currency-swap-facility-for-sri-lanka/article32186056.ece>

2. Consider the following statements.

1. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) is a statutory body set up to regulate the Indian insurance industry.
2. At present, 74% FDI is allowed in the insurance sector under the automatic route.

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** In 1999, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) was constituted as an autonomous body to regulate and develop the insurance industry. The IRDA was incorporated as a statutory body in April, 2000.
- The key objective of the IRDA is to regulate the Indian insurance industry to protect the interests of the policyholders and work for the orderly growth of the industry.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Currently, FDI up to **49 percent** is permissible in insurance under the automatic route with the condition that insurance company's ownership and control remains at all times in the hands of resident Indian entities.

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/irdai-nod-for-arogya-sanjeevani-group-variant/article32186397.ece>

3. Which of the following are the grounds of defection under the anti-defection law?

1. Members voluntarily give up party membership.
2. If he/she abstains from the direction given by the party's whip.
3. If an independent candidate joins a party after 6 months of being elected.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

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

Answer: **A**

Explanation:

What is anti-defection?

- It is disqualification when a member of parliament or legislature chooses to join another party after being elected as some party.
- Anti-Defection Law is contained in the **Tenth Schedule** of the Constitution, which was introduced by the 52nd Amendment in 1985.

Disqualification is done when:

- **Members voluntarily give up party membership.**
- **If he abstains from the direction given by the party's whip.**
- **If an independent candidate joins any political party.**
- **If a nominated member joins a party after 6 months of his/her nomination.**
- **Hence, option a is correct.**

Exception:

- If the speaker or any presiding officer after being elected, give up party for impartiality then he is not disqualified. He can rejoin the party after getting down from the post.
- The **speaker/presiding officer** will be the final authority to decide the disqualification on the ground of anti-defection. The decision can be challenged in court.
- The original act introduced in 1985 protected legislators from disqualification in cases where there was a **split** (with 1/3rd of members splitting) or **merger** (with 2/3rds of members merging) of a legislature party with another political party.

- The 2003 amendment to the law **deleted the one-third split provision** which offered protection to defectors.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/rajasthan-hc-sachin-pilot-anti-defection-law-6522270/>

4. Consider the following statements about Hagia Sophia.

1. It was constructed during the reign of Justinian I in Jerusalem.
2. It is recognised as a World Heritage site by UNESCO.

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

Answer: **B**

Explanation:



- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The construction of Hagia Sophia in **Istanbul** started in **532 AD** during the reign of **Justinian I**, the ruler of the **Byzantine Empire**, when the city was known as **Constantinople**.
- The structure was originally built to become the **seat of the Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church** and remained so for approximately 900 years.
- In **1453**, when Constantinople fell to **Sultan Mehmet II's Ottoman forces**, the Hagia Sophia was ransacked by the invading forces and **turned into a mosque** shortly after.
- The structure of the monument was then subjected to several changes where **Orthodox symbols were removed** and **minarets were added to the exterior of the structure**.
- For five centuries, it was a jewel in the Ottoman Sultan's crown.
- **Mustafa Kemal Atatürk**, the founding father of modern Turkey, converted the building into a **museum** in 1935 as part of his **secularisation drive**.
- Ever since, it has been one of Turkey's most visited monuments as well as a **symbol of Christian-Muslim co-existence**.
- It is also called **Church of the Holy Wisdom** or **Church of the Divine Wisdom** and **Ayasofya** in Turkish.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is also a component of a **UNESCO World Heritage site** called the **Historic Areas of Istanbul** (designated 1985).

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/erdogan-joins-thousands-to-pray-at-hagia-sophia/article32185769.ece>

5. With reference to Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), consider the following statements:

1. It is a regional & intergovernmental organisation of 10 countries of southeast Asia.
2. India became an official member of ASEAN 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

Answer: **A**

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional & intergovernmental organisation of 10 countries of southeast Asia.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Membership. 10 States – Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. **India is not a member of ASEAN.**
- They work towards progress of the southeast Asia region.

<http://ddnews.gov.in/national/india-asean-will-play-lead-role-post-covid-world-economic-recovery-dr-jitendra-singh>