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1. Which of the following countries are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council?

1. Saudi Arabia
2. Bahrain
3. Kuwait
4. Iran
5. Oman

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- A. 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
- B. 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
- C. 1, 2, 3 and 5 only
- D. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Answer: C

Explanation:

- The Gulf Cooperation Council is a political and economic alliance of six countries in the Arabian Peninsula: **Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.**
- Established in 1981, the GCC promotes economic, security, cultural and social cooperation between the six states and holds a summit every year to discuss cooperation and regional affairs.



<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/formalising-a-known-reality/article32396796.ece>

2. With reference to river Teesta, consider the following statements:

1. The source of river Teesta is the same as that of Brahmaputra but it flows through Sikkim.
2. River Rangeet originates in Sikkim and it is a tributary of river Teesta.
3. River Teesta flows into Bay of Bengal on the border of India and Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While Teesta originates from Tso Lhamo lake of **North Sikkim Himalayas**, the Brahmaputra originates on the Angsi Glacier in **Tibet**.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The river winds its way down, from the mountains gathering along its course streams, large and small; and its most significant tributary — the **Rangeet river** — at a sacred confluence in Darjeeling's Teesta Bazaar, before crossing an

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international border in Mekhligunj in north Bengal's Cooch Behar district, where it enters **Bangladesh**, meets the **Brahmaputra**, and flows into the Bay of Bengal.

- Around 83% of the river's catchment lies in India and the remaining 17% lies in Bangladesh.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Rangeet river originates in the Himalayan mountains in West Sikkim district.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-to-offer-covid-19-vaccine-to-bangladesh-on-priority-basis/article32395700.ece>

3. The "The Power of Siberia" project, sometimes seen in the news, is related to

- A. Project involving \$1 billion worth line of credit from India for the development of Far East Russia.
- B. First cross-border gas pipeline between Russia and China.
- C. Project involving reconstruction of the Trans-Siberian Railway and connecting the Trans-Korean Mainline to the Russian railway network.
- D. None of the above

Answer: **B**

Explanation:

- The Power of Siberia is the **first cross-border gas pipeline between Russia and China**.
- From Siberia to China's Yangtze River delta in Shanghai, the massive pipeline will cover 8,000 km, with 5,111 km inside China, passing through nine provinces and municipalities.
- The "Power of Siberia" pipeline was officially launched by Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/china-russia-ties-as-a-major-determinant/article32397585.ece>

4. Consider the following statements about the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.

1. The Act declares that the religious character of a place of worship shall continue to be the same as it was on September 21, 1991, when the act came into force.
2. The act would not apply to ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains that are covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.

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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:

- The aim of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 was to freeze the status of any place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947. It was also to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of such a place of worship as on that day.
- It was intended to pre-empt new claims by any group about the past status of any place of worship and attempts to reclaim the structures or the land on which they stood. It was hoped that the legislation would help the preservation of communal harmony in the long run.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Act declares that the religious character of a place of worship shall continue to be the same as it was on **August 15, 1947**. It says no person shall convert any place of worship of any religious denomination into one of a different denomination or section. No further legal proceedings can be instituted.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** However, the act would not apply to ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains that are covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.
- The disputed site at Ayodhya was also exempted from the Act.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/pushing-bigotry-to-the-margins/article32396791.ece>

5. Which of the following acts as the nodal agency for strategic disinvestments?

- A. Department of Economic Affairs
- B. Department of Investment and Public Asset Management
- C. Department of Revenue
- D. NITI Aayog

Answer: B

Explanation:

- Strategic disinvestment implies the sale of a substantial portion of the Government shareholding of a central public sector enterprises (CPSE) of **up to 50%, or such higher percentage** as the competent authority may determine, along with **transfer of management control**.

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- The **Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)** under the Ministry of Finance is the nodal department for the strategic disinvestment.
- **DIPAM and NITI Aayog** jointly identify PSUs for strategic disinvestment.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/no-divestment-yet-against-target-of-rs-2-1-lakh-crore-for-2020-21-officials-blame-covid/articleshow/77647720.cms>

