

1. '90-90-90 target' indicates which of the following?

- a) Eradication of 90 percent of AIDS by 2020
- b) Reducing desertification by 90 percent
- c) 90 percent of Indian states acquiring open defecation free (ODF) status
- d) Achieving 90 percent enrollment ratio in higher education.

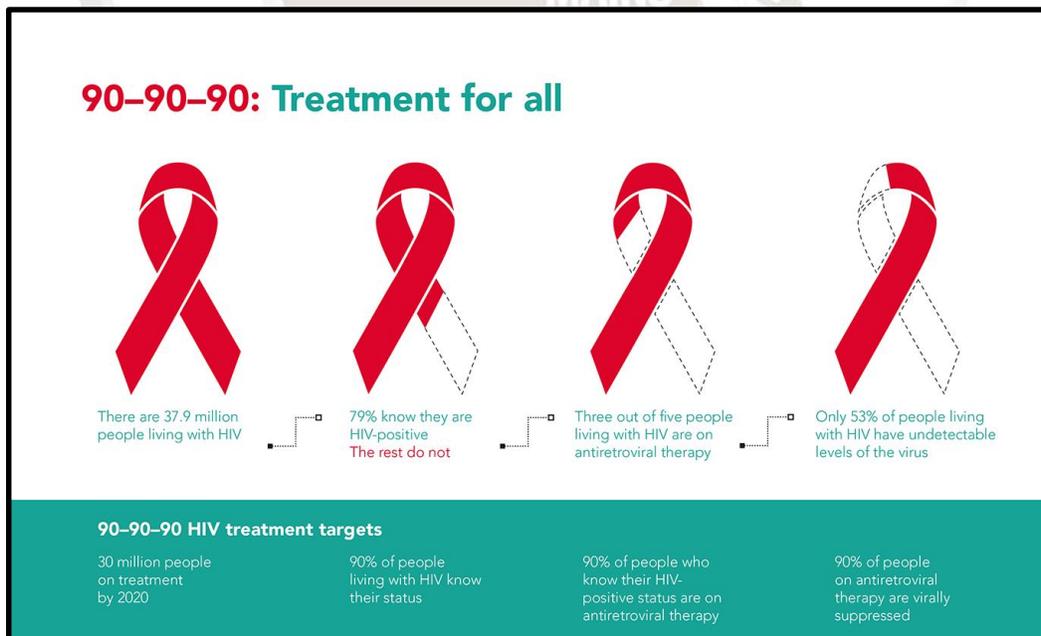
Answer: A

Explanation:

'90-90-90 target' is an ambitious treatment target of UNAIDS to help end the AIDS Epidemic.

The target is as follows,

- By 2020, 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status.
- By 2020, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy.
- By 2020, 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.



<https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/909090>

**Why in the news?**

- The theme of World AIDS Day this year, observed on December 1, is 'Ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic: resilience and impact'.
- The method to achieve this by 2030 is to ensure life saving anti-retroviral therapy (ART) reaches all those who are infected and that all persons living with HIV know their status. Also, the aim is to ensure that those on ART are viral suppressed so that infection is negligible.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/world-aids-day-india-must-gear-up-to-end-hiv-aids-by-2030-experts/article33214273.ece>

2. **Which of the following would be the benefits of implementing the National Agricultural Market (e-NAM)?**

1. Increases farmers's access to a wide market
2. Promotion of Monopsony market structure
3. Removes information asymmetry between buyers and sellers
4. Single window services for all APMC related information and services

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

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

Answer: **B**

**Explanation:**

- The National Agricultural Market (e-NAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which targets to connect almost 7,000 existing mandis run by Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) to create a **unified national market for agricultural commodities**.

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- e-NAM is completely funded by the Central Government and implemented by **Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC)**.

#### **Benefits of the portal**

- e-NAM platform promotes better marketing opportunities for the farmers to sell their produce through an online competitive and transparent **price discovery system** and **online payment facility**.
- e-NAM **removes information asymmetry** between buyers and sellers. It uses estimations based on actual demand and supply, and promotes transparency in the auction process. It allows farmers to access a nationwide market with prices commensurate with the quality of his produce.
- It also promotes prices commensurate with quality of produce.
- The e-NAM portal provides **single window services** for all APMC related information and services. This includes commodity arrivals, quality & prices, buy & sell offers & e-payment settlement directly into farmers' account, among other services.
- Farmers can access the information on e-NAM easily through their **mobile phones from anywhere**. This online trading platform aims at reducing transaction costs, bridging information asymmetry and helps in expanding the market access for farmers.
- **Monopsony**: Monopsony refers to a market structure where one buyer interacts with many sellers. This market structure gives the buyer an advantage over the sellers as they all try to sell to the same buyer. It is one of the criticisms of the present APMC structures in many states.
- Implementation of e-NAM will increase the choice to farmers to sell their produce to a wide range of buyers and undermine the Monopsony market structure.

### **3. Consider the following statements regarding the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**

1. It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony

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2. It is the second largest intergovernmental organization after the United Nations

**Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?**

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

**Ans: D**

#### Explanation

- The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the **second largest intergovernmental organization** after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states.
- It is the **collective voice of the Muslim world**. It endeavors to **safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace** and harmony among various people of the world.
- It was established upon a decision of the historical summit which took place in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco on the 25th of September 1969
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- **India is not a member of the OIC**

#### Why in the news?

The 47th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers held recently at Niamey, Niger, had made a reference to India over its policies on J&K.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-kashmir-india-and-the-oic-7074514/>

**4. Consider the following statements with respect to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**

- 1. All the members share their borders with China.
- 2. India is a founding member of SCO

**Which among the above statements are correct?**

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- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

**Statement 1 is incorrect:**

Uzbekistan, a member of the SCO does not share its border with China.

**Statement 2 is incorrect:**

India is merely a member of the SCO (Since 9th June 2017) and not a founding member. China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are SCO's founding members.

**Why in the news?**

India hosted the Heads of Government (HoG) council meeting of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organisation recently.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/six-pms-to-attend-sco-heads-of-government-summit-hosted-by-india/article33201037.ece>

**5. Arrange the following cities of BRICS countries from south to north:**

1. Rio-de Janeiro
2. Johannesburg
3. Hong Kong
4. New Delhi
5. Vladivostok
6. Thiruvananthapuram

Select the correct options

- a. 1,2,6,3,4,5
- b. 2,1,3,6,4,5

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c. 2,1,6,3,4,5

d. 1,2,6,4,3,5

**Answer: C**

**Refer Atlas:**

1.Johannesburg latitude: 26.195246 S

2.Rio-de janeiro latitude: 22.752754 S

3.Thiruvananthapuram Latitude: 8.524139 N

4.Hong Kong: 22.286394 N

5.New Delhi latitude :28.644800 N

6.Vladivostok Latitude: 43.10562 N

**6. Consider the following statements about the Purchasing Managers' Index.**

1. It is an indicator of economic health for both manufacturing and service sectors.
2. It is published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO).
3. PMI >50 implies an expansion of business and economic activity, PMI <50 means contraction.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Purchasing Managers' Index is an economic indicator which indicates the business activity & economic health of both the **manufacturing and service sectors**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** PMI of India is published by Japanese firm Nikkei.
- The PMI is an investor sentiment tracking index and is dynamic in nature.
- They are derived from monthly surveys of about 400 private companies.

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- Variables used for calculating the PMI are: Output, New Orders, Employment, Input Costs, Output Prices, Backlogs of Work, Export Orders, Quantity of Purchases, Suppliers' Delivery Times, Stocks of Purchases and Stocks of Finished Goods.

#### How to read PMI?

- **Statement 3 is correct:** While PMI >50 implies an expansion of business and economic activity, PMI <50 means contraction.

#### Why in the news?

- November's manufacturing PMI marked a three- month low indicating that manufacturing is losing its steam.

#### 7. Rule of Law Index is released by

- a) World Justice Project.
- b) Stockholm Peace International.
- c) Amnesty International.
- d) Transparency International.

**Answer: A.**

#### Explanation:

- The Rule of Law Index is designed and compiled by the **World Justice Project**. The index is a quantitative assessment tool which offers a detailed and comprehensive picture of the extent to which countries adhere to the rule of law in practice.
- The Rule of Law Index 2020 presents a portrait of the rule of law in 128 countries and jurisdictions by providing scores and rankings based on eight factors:
- Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice.
- Scores range from 0 to 1, with 1 indicating the strongest adherence to the rule of law.
- With a score of 0.90, Denmark is placed at the top of the list.
- With a score of 0.51, India secured 69th position.

8. The “Accessible India campaign” recently in news is related to which of the following?

- a. Right based framework for transgenders to improve their quality of life
- b. Enhanced food security measures for senior citizens
- c. Skill development initiatives for tribal youth
- d. Making public spaces friendly for persons with disabilities

Ans : D

**Explanation**

The **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)**, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has conceptualised the “Accessible India Campaign (**Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan**)” as a nation-wide flagship campaign for achieving **universal accessibility that will enable persons with disabilities to gain access for equal opportunity and live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life in an inclusive society**. The campaign targets at enhancing the accessibility of built environment, transport system and Information & communication eco-System.

**Components of Accessible India Campaign**

Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) has the following three important components

- Built Environment Accessibility
- Transportation System Accessibility
- Information and Communication Eco-System Accessibility

**Few of its Objectives involve:**

- Conducting accessibility audit of at least 50 most important government buildings and converting them into fully accessible buildings.
- Enhancing proportion of accessible airports.
- Enhancing the proportion of accessible railway stations
- Enhancing the proportion of accessible Public Transport.
- Enhancing the pool of sign language interpreters

- Enhancing the proportion of daily captioning and sign-language interpretation of public television news programmes.

<https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/accessible-india-campaign#tab=tab-1>

<http://accessibleindia.gov.in/content/innerpage/about-accessible-india-campaign.php>

**9. Consider the following statements about the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016**

- 1) The Act replaces the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 .
- 2) It fulfills the obligations to the United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which India is a signatory.

**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**

**About Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016**

- The Act replaces the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 which came into force during December 2016.
- It fulfills the obligations to the United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which India is a signatory.

**Salient features of the Act**

**Disabilities covered**

- Disability has been defined based on an evolving and dynamic concept.
- The types of disabilities have been increased from existing 7 to 21 and the Central

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Government will have the power to add more types of disabilities.

- Persons with "benchmark disabilities" are defined as those certified to have at least 40 per cent of the 21 disabilities.

#### **Rights and entitlements**

- Responsibility has been cast upon the appropriate governments to take effective measures to ensure that the persons with disabilities enjoy their rights equally with others.
- Reservation in higher education (not less than 5%),
- Government jobs (not less than 4 %),
- Reservation in allocation of land, poverty alleviation schemes (5% allotment) etc.
- have been provided for persons with benchmark disabilities and those with high support needs.
- Government funded educational institutions as well as the government recognized institutions will have to provide inclusive education to the children with disabilities.

#### **Guardianship**

- The Act provides for grant of guardianship by District Court under which there will be joint decision – making between the guardian and the persons with disabilities.

#### **Establishment of Authorities**

- Broad based Central & State Advisory Boards on Disability are to be set up to serve as apex policy making bodies at the Central and State level.
- The Office of Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities and the office of State Commissioners of Disabilities has been strengthened.
- The Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities and the State Commissioners will act as regulatory bodies and Grievance Redressal agencies and also monitor implementation of the Act.
- The National and State Fund will be created to provide financial support to the persons with disabilities.

#### **Penalties for offences**

- The Act provides for penalties for offences committed against persons with disabilities and

also violation of the provisions of the new law.

**United National Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**

- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was **adopted on 13 December 2006** at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and entered into force on 3 May 2008.
- The Convention is intended as a **human rights instrument** with an explicit, social development dimension.
- It adopts a **broad categorization of persons with disabilities** and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must **enjoy all human rights** and fundamental freedoms.
- It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

**10. With respect to BrahMos Missile, consider the following statements.**

1. The name BrahMos is formed from names of two rivers i.e. Indian river Brahmaputra and the Moskva River of Myanmar.
2. The medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile has a strike range of about 9000 km.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- The BrahMos is a ramjet supersonic cruise missile of a short range developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and the Russian Federation's NPO Mashinostroyenia. The missile can be launched from land, aircraft, ships and submarines.

- The medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile has a strike range of about 290 km.

**Why in the news?**

Indian Navy successfully test-fires naval version of BrahMos missile.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indian-navy-successfully-test-fires-naval-version-of-brahmos-missile/article33220805.ece>

**11. Consider the following statements about hurricanes**

- 1) Hurricanes are a type of tropical cyclone that occurs in the northwestern Pacific Ocean.
- 2) They are formed over the warm ocean waters near the equator.

**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**

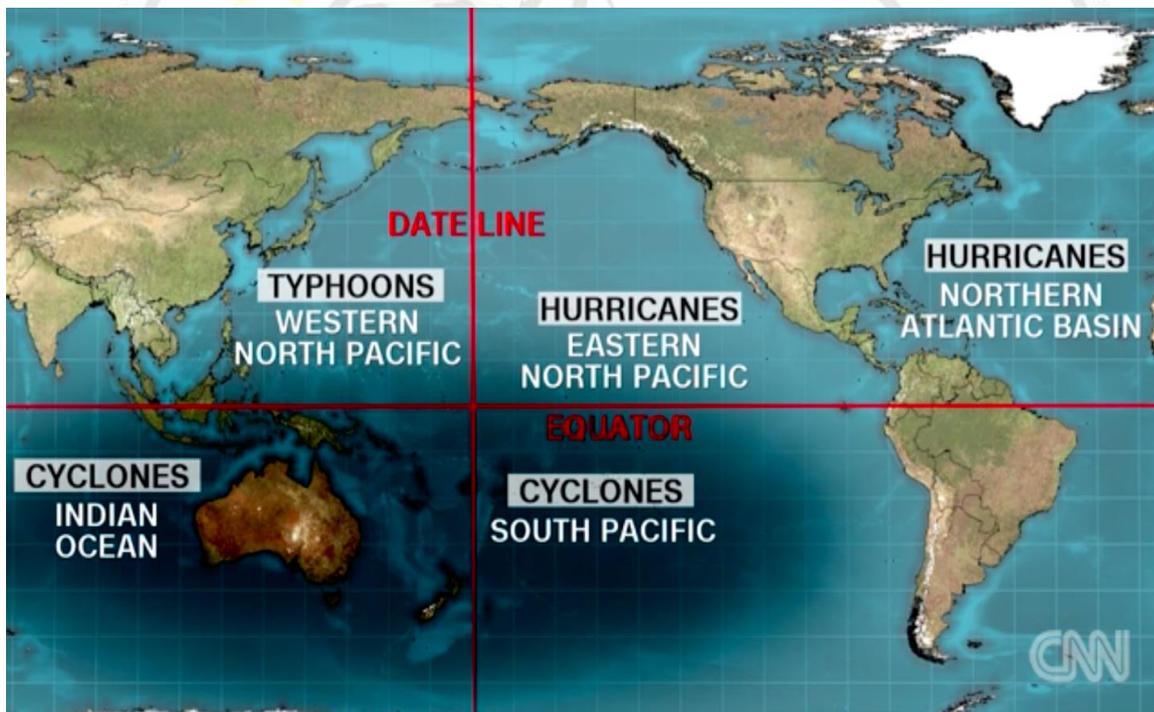
- Hurricanes are the **most violent storms on Earth**. They form **near the equator over warm ocean waters**. Actually, the term hurricane is used only for the large storms that form over the Atlantic Ocean or eastern Pacific Ocean.
- The **generic, scientific term** for these storms, wherever they occur is **tropical cyclone**. **Tropical cyclones**, also called **typhoon** or **hurricane**, an intense circular storm that originates over warm tropical oceans and is characterized by low atmospheric pressure, high winds, and heavy rain.
- Depending on the locations they occur, they are given various names such as **typhoons, cyclones** and **hurricanes**.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** In the **North Atlantic Ocean and Northeast Pacific**, they are called **hurricanes**. But if the same type of disturbance takes place in the **Northwest Pacific**

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Ocean, it is known as a **typhoon (not hurricanes)** and in the South Pacific and Indian Ocean they are known as cyclone

- **Statement 2 is correct:** Tropical cyclones are like engines that **require warm, moist air as fuel**. So the first **ingredient** needed for a tropical cyclone is **warm ocean water**. That is why **they form over warm ocean waters near the equator**. The warm, moist air over the ocean rises upward from near the surface. Because this air moves up and away from the surface, an area of lower air pressure is created below.
- The second ingredient for a tropical cyclone is **wind**. As the wind passes over the ocean's surface, **water evaporates (turns into water vapor)** and rises. As it rises, the water vapor cools, and condenses back into large water droplets, **forming large cumulonimbus clouds**.



Meteorologists have divided the **development of a tropical cyclone into four stages:** Tropical disturbance, tropical depression, tropical storm, and full-fledged tropical cyclone.

- **Tropical disturbance:** When the water vapor from the warm ocean condenses to form clouds, it releases its heat to the air. The **warmed air rises** and is pulled into the column of clouds. **Evaporation and condensation** continue, building the cloud columns higher and

larger. A pattern develops, with the wind circulating around a center. As the moving column of air encounters more clouds, it becomes a **cluster of thunderstorm clouds**, called a tropical disturbance.

- **Tropical depression:** As the thunderstorm grows higher and larger, the air at the top of the cloud column is cooling and becoming unstable. As the heat energy is released from the cooling water vapor, the **air at the top of the clouds becomes warmer**, making the air pressure higher and causing **winds to move outward away from the high pressure area**. This movement and warming causes pressures at the surface to drop. Then air at the surface moves toward the lower pressure area, rises, and creates more thunderstorms. Winds in the storm cloud column spin faster and faster, whipping around in a circular motion. **When the winds reach between 25 and 38 mph, the storm is called a tropical depression.**
- **Tropical storm:** When the **wind speeds reach 39 mph**, the **tropical depression becomes a tropical storm**. **Wind direction is counterclockwise (west to east) in the northern hemisphere and clockwise (east to west) in the southern hemisphere.**
- **Tropical cyclone:** When the **wind speeds reach 74 mph**, the storm is officially a Tropical cyclone (hurricane, cyclone or typhoon). The winds and the low air pressure also cause a huge mound of ocean water to pile up near the eye of the hurricane, which **can cause monster storm surges** when all this water reaches land.

12. Among the following, which one is the largest producer of milk in the world ?

- a) China
- b) India
- c) New Zealand
- d) Vietnam

Answer: B

**Explanation**

- In most developing countries, **milk is produced by smallholders**, and milk production contributes to household livelihoods, **food security and nutrition**.

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- In many developing countries, dairy productivity is **constrained by poor-quality feed resources, diseases, limited access to markets** and services (e.g., health, credit and training) and dairy animals' low genetic potential for milk production.
- Unlike developed countries, many developing countries have **hot and/or humid climates that are unfavourable for dairying.**
- In the last three decades, **world milk production has increased by more than 58 percent**, from 522 million tonnes in 1987 to 828 million tonnes in 2017.
- **India is the world's largest milk producer**, with **21 percent of global production**, followed by the United States of America, China, Pakistan and Brazil
- Milk production in India has been **increasing steadily over the years** from 55.6 million tonnes in 1991-92 to **176.3 million tonnes in 2017-18**, at an average annual growth rate of 4.5 percent. It further increased to **187.7 million tonnes in 2018-19.**
- Since the 1970s, **most of the expansion in milk production has been in South Asia**, which is the main driver of milk production growth in the developing world.
- India's dairy sector provides **livelihood to about 70 million households**. A key feature of India's dairy sector is the predominance of small producers. India is **largely self-sufficient** in milk production.

<http://www.fao.org/dairy-production-products/production/en/>

### 13. Consider the following statements

- 1) A superbug is defined as a microorganism that's resistant to commonly used antibiotics.
- 2) AWaRe is an online tool aimed at guiding policy-makers and health workers to use antibiotics safely.
- 3) Antibiotic resistance is the same as that of antimicrobial resistance.

**Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?**

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 3 only

d) 1,2 and 3

Answer: C

**Explanation**

**Superbug**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** A superbug is usually defined as a **microorganism that's resistant to commonly used antibiotics**. The number of different antibiotics to which it can be resistant determines the **degree of the superbug**. Some are resistant to one or two, but others can be resistant to multiple drugs.
- Decades of **easy availability and misuse of antimicrobials** has led to the emergence of **drug-resistant strains** of common pathogens like diarrhoea-causing **E coli**.
- India reported the world's **highest burden of extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB)** in 2017. This means they are more **expensive to treat**, the side-effects of treatment are typically more severe and **mortality rates are significantly higher**.

**AWaRe**

- The **AWaRe tool was developed by the WHO** to contain rising resistance and **make antibiotic use safer** and more effective.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a global campaign that urges countries to adopt its **new online tool aimed at guiding policy-makers and health workers to use antibiotics safely and more effectively**. Its another objective is to limit drugs that are at risk of resistance.
- The tool, known as 'AWaRe' **classifies antibiotics into three groups:**
  - **Access** — antibiotics used to **treat the most common and serious infections**
  - **Watch** — antibiotics **available at all times** in the healthcare system
  - **Reserve** — antibiotics to be **used sparingly** or preserved and used only as a last resort
- The campaign aims to achieve a **60 per cent increase in use of antibiotics under the Access group** — cheap, 'narrow-spectrum' drugs (that target a specific microorganism rather than several) and also lower the risk of resistance and also **reduce use of the antibiotics most at risk of resistance from the Watch and Reserve groups**.

**Antimicrobial resistance and Antibiotic resistance**

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Antibiotics are medicines **used to prevent and treat bacterial infections. Antibiotic resistance occurs when bacteria change in response** to the use of these medicines. Bacteria, not humans, become antibiotic resistant.
- On the other hand, **Antimicrobial resistance is a broader term**, encompassing resistance to drugs to treat infections caused by other microbes as well, such as **parasites (e.g. malaria), viruses (e.g. HIV) and fungi (e.g. Candida).**
- Antimicrobial resistance occurs when **microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites change** in ways that render the medications ineffective to cure the infections  
<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/18-06-2019-in-the-face-of-slow-progress-who-offers-a-new-tool-and-sets-a-target-to-accelerate-action-against-antimicrobial-resistance>  
<https://www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/2019/oct/04/superbugs-not-sci-fi-anymore-2042876.html>  
<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/who-launches-tool-for-safer-use-of-antibiotics-curb-resistance-65161>  
<http://www.emro.who.int/health-topics/drug-resistance/what-is-the-difference-between-antibiotic-and-antimicrobial-resistance.html>

**14. Which of the following diseases is/are caused by bacteria?**

1. Ringworms
2. Typhoid
3. Tuberculosis
4. Malaria

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

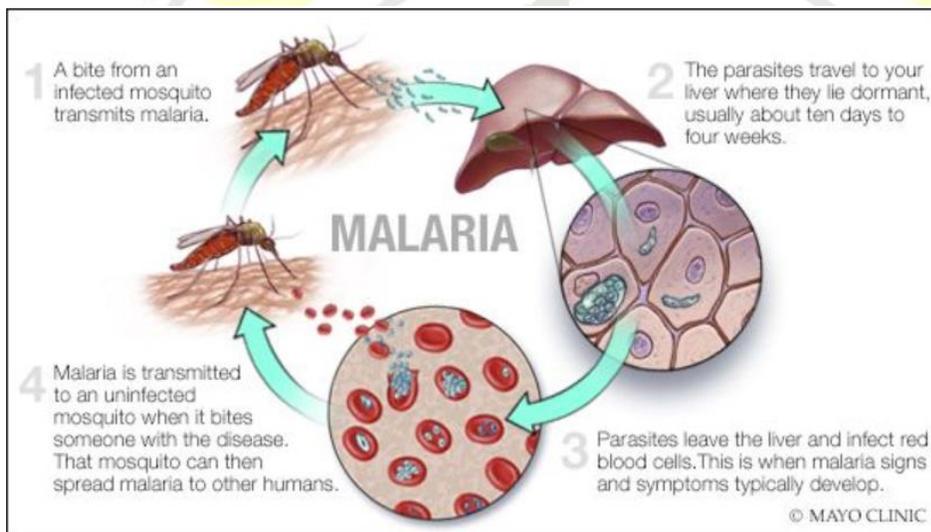
- a) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- b) 2 only
- c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- d) 2 and 3 only

Answer: d

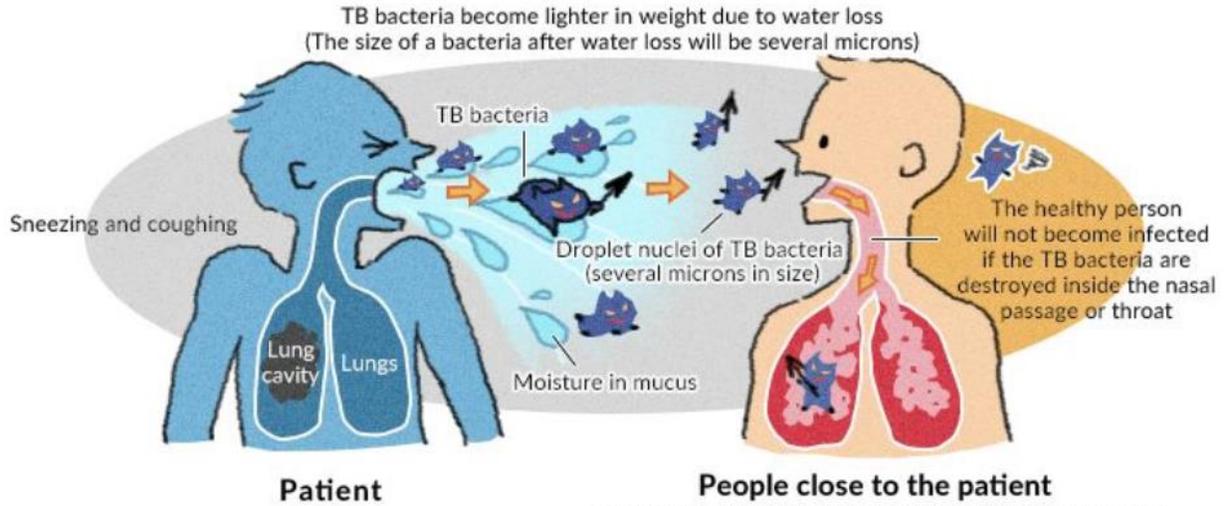
**Explanation**

- **Ringworms are caused by fungi.**
- Ringworm, or tinea, refers to several types of contagious fungal infections of the top layer of the skin, scalp, and nails. It is called ringworm because the itchy, red rash has a ring-like appearance. However, ringworm has nothing to do with worms. It can affect different parts of the body.

- **Malaria by protozoa**



- Tuberculosis is caused by bacteria.



- Typhoid is caused by bacteria

## TYPHOID FEVER

is a disease caused by the *Salmonella typhi* bacteria

### SYMPTOMS

Headache	Rashes	Fever	Abdominal pain	Diarrhea	Vomiting

### COMPLICATIONS

Intestinal bleeding	Inflammation of the brain	Psychosis

### PREVENTION

Drink boiled	Practice good hand hygiene procedures	Refrain from eating uncooked food

**HOW IT IS SPREAD**

Through contaminated food or water

**DANGER!**

Typhoid carriers may not display any symptoms

### Why in the news?

- The **World Malaria Report (WMR) 2020** released by WHO, which gives the estimated cases for malaria across the world, based on mathematical projections, indicates that India has made considerable progress in reducing its malaria burden.

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- India is the **only high endemic country** which has reported a decline of 17.6% in 2019 as compared to 2018.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1677601>

#### 15. With reference to the office of the Attorney General, Consider the Following Statements

- 1) The Attorney General is appointed by the Chief Justice of India.
- 2) The Attorney General holds the office during the pleasure of the President and does not have a specific term.

**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 **President shall appoint a person** who is qualified to be appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court to be Attorney-General for India.
- It shall be the duty of the Attorney-General to give advice to the Government of India upon such legal matters, and to perform such other duties of a legal character, as may from time to time be referred or assigned to him by the President, and to discharge the functions conferred on him by or under this Constitution or any other law for the time being in force.
- In the performance of his duties the Attorney General shall have right of audience in all courts in the territory of India.
- The Attorney-General shall hold office during the **pleasure of the President, and shall receive such remuneration as the President may determine. Hence, Statement 1 is incorrect and 2 is correct.**

**Why in the news?**

The procedure in cases of criminal contempt of court, which means the publication of material that scandalises or lowers the dignity of the court or prejudices or interferes with the proceedings of the court, the consent of the Attorney General is required under the law.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/consent-for-contempt-attorney-general-for-india-k-k-venugopal-rachita-taneja/>

**16. Consider the following statements regarding Minimum Support Price (MSP)**

1. MSP is a form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices.
2. MSP is recommended by Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

- Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices.
- The minimum support prices are announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season for certain crops on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).

**17. Consider the following statements about the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).**

1. It is a 6-member body entrusted with the task of fixing policy interest rate required to achieve the inflation target.
2. The decisions of the MPC are taken by a simple majority.
3. It is headed by the Finance Minister who enjoys a casting vote.

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Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: C

#### Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is a committee of the RBI, headed by its Governor, which is entrusted with the task of fixing the benchmark policy interest rate (repo rate) to contain inflation within the specified target level.
- The MPC has six members
  - RBI Governor (**Chairperson**), RBI Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy, one official nominated by the RBI Board and remaining 3 members would represent the Government.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The MPC takes decisions based on majority vote.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** In case of a tie, the RBI governor will have a second or casting vote.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-why-rbis-monetary-policy-committee-kept-policy-rates-unchanged-yet-again-7091389/>

18. Which of the following is/are the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)?

- 1. Nigeria
- 2. Saudi Arabia
- 3. Russia
- 4. China

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

- a) 2, 3 and 4 only
- b) 1, 2 and 3 only

- c) 1 and 2 only
- d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: C

**Explanation**

- The **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** is a permanent, **intergovernmental organization**, created at the **Baghdad Conference** in 1960, by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
- In accordance with its Statute, the mission of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is **to coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its Member Countries** and **ensure the stabilization of oil markets** in order to secure an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a **steady income to producers** and a fair return on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry
- It aims to **manage the supply of oil** in an effort to set the price of oil in the world market, in order to **avoid fluctuations that might affect the economies** of both producing and purchasing countries.
- OPEC membership is open to any country that is a substantial exporter of oil and which shares the ideals of the organization.
- As of 2019, **OPEC has a total of 14 Member Countries** viz. Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), **Saudi Arabia**, Algeria, Libya, **Nigeria**, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Angola, Ecuador and Venezuela are members of OPEC.
- The **non-OPEC countries** which export crude oil are termed as **OPEC plus countries**. OPEC plus countries include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

**19. Bhasan char is the place recently in news is located in**

- a) Myanmar
- b) Australia
- c) Bangladesh

d) Nepal

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**



**Why in the news?**

Authorities in Bangladesh have begun relocating thousands of Rohingya refugees to an isolated island named Bhasan char despite calls by human rights groups for a halt to the process.

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Bangladesh-starts-relocation-of-Rohingyas-to-the-newly-developed-facility-at-Bhashan-Char-Island&id=405467>

**20. Tropic of Cancer passes through which of the following states in India?**

1. West Bengal
2. Rajasthan
3. Manipur
4. Chhattisgarh

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

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

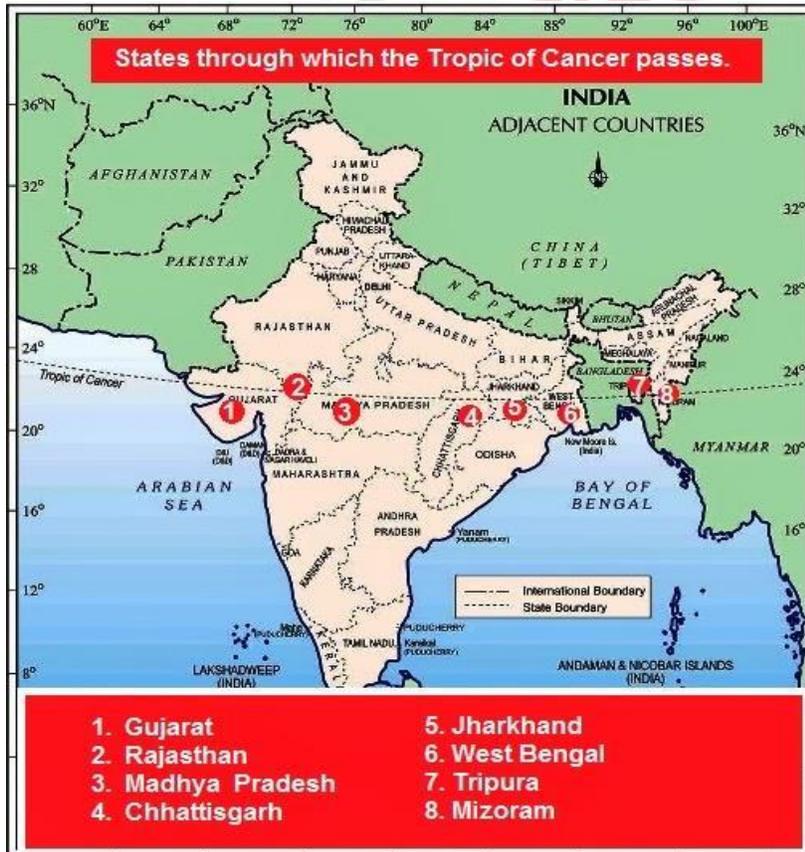
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Ans : C

## Explanation

- India is located in the northern hemisphere. The **Tropic of Cancer (23°30'N)** passes almost halfway through the country
- it passes through 8 states Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhan, West Bengal, Tripura and Mizoram.



## 21. Consider the following statements regarding the Delimitation Commission

1. The orders of the commission are laid before the Lok Sabha in which no modifications are permitted
2. The orders of the commission has the force of law and they cannot be challenged before any court

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Ans: D

**Explanation**

- Delimitation literally means the **process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies** in a state that has a legislative body.
- Delimitation is undertaken by a highly powerful commission. They are formally known as **Delimitation Commission or Boundary Commission**.
- These bodies are so powerful that its orders have the force of law and **they cannot be challenged before any court**
- Such commissions have been **constituted at least four times in India** — in 1952 under the Delimitation Commission Act, 1952; in 1963 under Delimitation Commission Act, 1962; in 1973 under Delimitation Act, 1972 and **last in 2002 under Delimitation Act, 2002**
- The commissions' orders are enforced as per the date specified by the President of India. **Copies of these orders are laid before the Lok Sabha** or the concerned Legislative Assembly. **No modifications are permitted.**
- According to the Delimitation Commission Act, 2002, the Delimitation Commission appointed by the Centre has to have **three members: a serving or retired judge of the Supreme Court** as the **chairperson**, and the Chief Election Commissioner or Election Commissioner nominated by the CEC and the State Election Commissioner as ex-officio members
- Recently, the government has **constituted a Delimitation Commission**, to be headed by former **Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai**, to redraw Lok Sabha and assembly constituencies of the Union Territory Jammu and Kashmir and the northeastern states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland.

22. **Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) which measures how social beliefs obstruct gender equality in areas like politics, work, and education is being released by?**

- a) World Economic Forum
- b) UNDP
- c) World Bank
- d) UNESCO

Ans: B

**Explanation**

- **Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI)**, which measures how social beliefs affect gender equality, was recently released by the **United Nations Development Programme**
- Gender disparities are a **persistent form of inequality** in every country. Despite remarkable progress in some areas, no country in the world—rich or poor—has achieved gender equality. All too often, **women and girls are discriminated against in health, in education**, at home and in the labour market **with negative repercussions** for their freedoms.
- The **Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI)** measures how social beliefs obstruct gender equality in areas like politics, work, and education, and **contains data from 75 countries**, covering over 80 percent of the world's population.
- The analysis reveals that, despite decades of progress closing the equality gap between men and women, **close to 90 percent of men and women hold some sort of bias against women**, providing new clues to the invisible barriers women face in achieving equality.
- According to the index, about **half of the world's men and women feel that men make better political leaders**, and over 40 percent feel that men make better business executives and that men have more right to a job when jobs are scarce.

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### 23. Consider the following statements regarding India International Science Festival

1. The prime objective of the festival is to instil scientific temper among the masses, showcase India's contribution in the field of S&T and encourage translation of its benefits to people.
2. The proposed theme for IISF 2020, 'Science for Self-Reliant India and Global Welfare'.

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

**Ans : C**

#### **Explanation**

The **prime objective of the India International Science Festival is to instill scientific temper among the masses, showcase India's contribution in the field of S&T and encourage translation of its benefits to people.**

India International Science Festival (IISF) 2019 is an **annual event organised jointly by science and technology related Ministries and Departments of the Government of India and Vijnana Bharati (Vibha)**. Vigyan Prasar is the nodal agency to coordinate the IISF 2019.

**Theme for the year 2019 is RISEN India - Research, Innovation, and Science Empowering the Nation.**

The proposed theme for IISF 2020, 'Science for Self-Reliant India and Global Welfare'.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1678449>

### 24. Which among the following is/are major ports in India, situated in the east coast (along the Bay of Bengal)?

1. Haldia
2. Paradip

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3. Marmagao

4. Kandla

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

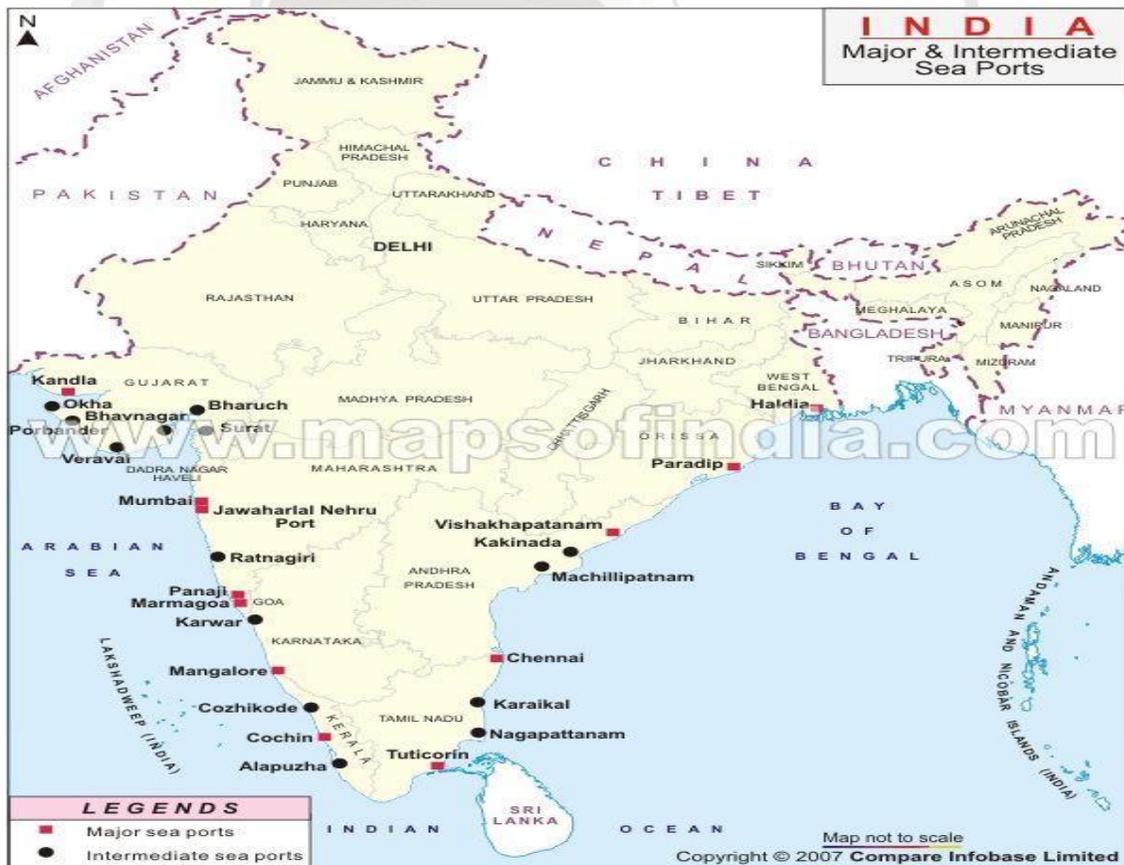
c) 2 and 4 only

d) 1 and 4 only

Ans: A

## Explanation

- Haldia and Paradip is situated in the **state of West Bengal and Odisha** respectively. These are located in the **eastern coast along the Bay of Bengal**
- **Marmagao and Kandla** are ports situated in the **state of Goa and Gujarat** respectively. These are located in western coast **along the Arabian Sea**.



**25. Which of the following best describes the term 'Blue water force'?**

- a) A navy whose operations are restricted close to the shore, where the water is muddy.
- b) It is a naval force that is designed to operate in its nations and littoral zones.
- c) Naval force that is able to carry out operations far from its borders, without being required to return to its home port to refuel or re-stock
- d) Policy of Portuguese during the 16th century to become masters of Indian Ocean.

**Ans: C**

**Explanation**

A Blue Water Navy is one that can go into the **vast, deep oceans of the world**. A Blue Water Force is able to carry out operations far from its borders, without being required to return to its home port to refuel or re-stock. Owning one or more aircraft carriers is sometimes seen as a marker of a Blue Water Navy.

**Navies are classified in terms of colours.**

- A navy whose operations are restricted close to the shore, where the water is muddy, is called a **Brown Water Force**.
- A navy that is designed to operate in its nations and littoral zones is called a **Green Water Force**.

**Why in the news?**

Every year, India celebrates December 4 as Navy Day to commemorate Operation Trident – a key offensive during the 1971 India-Pakistan War, when the Indian Navy inflicted heavy damage on Pakistani vessels in Karachi harbour.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/navy-day-2020-why-india-remembers-operation-trident-every-year-on-december-4-7092063/lite/>

**26. With reference to Bodo tribe in India, consider the following statements:**

1. They are the single largest community among the notified Scheduled Tribes in Assam.

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2. Bodoland Territorial Council is an autonomous body under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

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:**

- Bodos are the single largest community among the notified Scheduled Tribes in Assam. Hence **statement 1 is correct.**
- Part of the larger umbrella of Bodo-Kachari, the Bodos constitute about 5-6% of Assam's population.
- Bodoland Territorial Council is an autonomous body under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. Hence **statement 2 is correct.**
- There have been two Bodo Accords earlier, and the second one led to the formation of BTC.
- The ABSUled movement from 1987 culminated in a 1993 Bodo Accord, which paved the way for a Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC), but ABSU withdrew its agreement and renewed its demand for a separate state.
- In 2003, the second Bodo Accord was signed by the extremist group Bodo Liberation Tiger Force (BLTF), the Centre and the state. This led to the BTC.
- The area under the jurisdiction of BTC, formed under the 2003 Accord, was called the Bodo Territorial Autonomous District (BTAD). Recently, BTAD was renamed Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR). BTAD comprises Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri districts, accounting for 11% of Assam's area and 10% of its population. BTAD comprises Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri districts, accounting for 11% of Assam's area and 10% of its population

**Why in the news?**

Voting begins for the 1st phase of Bodoland Territorial Council polls in Assam.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-takeaways-from-bodo-accord-6240082/>

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Voting-begins-for-1st-phase-of-Bodoland-Territorial-Council-polls-in-Assam&id=405640>

**27. Consider the following statements with reference to Geographical indication (GI) tag**

1. A GI tag conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness, which is essentially attributable to the place of its origin.
2. Himachal Pradesh has the highest number of GI tagged products.

**Which of the above given statements 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:** A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a **specific geographical origin** and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. Typically, such a name **conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness which is essentially attributable to the fact of its origin** in that defined geographical locality, region or country
- A geographical indication tag is used for an **agricultural, natural or a manufactured product** (handicraft and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory.
- According to experts, the tag gives **protection to the producer of those genuine products** which command premium pricing in domestic as well as international markets. GI registration gives to the registered proprietor and its authorized users, the **legal right to the exclusive use of the GI** and also the right to obtain relief in case of its infringement.

- GI tag is valid for a **period of 10 years** following which it can be renewed. The **first product** to get a GI tag in India was the **Darjeeling Tea** in 2004.
- In India, GI is given under the **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999**. The Act is administered by the Controller General of Patents, Designs & TradeMarks, GI (CGPDTM-India) under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The **highest number of Geographical Indication (GI) tagged goods/products in the country are from Karnataka**, with 42 products of the state getting the tag. Among the 42 items, **18 are from Mysuru**, like Mysore betel leaf, Mysore Jasmine, Mysore paintings, Mysore Sandal Soap etc

#### **Why in the news?**

Himachal Pradesh seeks GI Tag for five products originating from the state.

#### **What is special about these five products from Himachal?**

**Karsog Kulth:** Kulthi or Kulth (horse gram) is a legume grown as a kharif crop in Himachal Pradesh. Kulth grown in the Karsog area of Mandi district is believed to be particularly rich in amino acids.

**Pangi ki Thangi:** It is a type of hazelnut which grows in Pangi valley located in the northwestern edge of Himachal. It is known for its unique flavour and sweetness.

**Chamba metal crafts:** These include items such as metal idols and brass utensils which, historically, were made by skilled artisans in the courts of kings of Chamba. There are efforts to revive the trade, and a plate made from a brass-like alloy and having carvings of gods and goddesses is still popular.

**Chamba Chukh:** It's a chutney made from green and red chillies grown in Chamba, and prepared in traditional and unique ways. The practice has largely declined in rural households of Chamba, but survives to some extent at the small-scale industrial level.

**Bharmouri Rajmah:** It's more specifically called the Kugtalu Rajmah, since it grows in the area around Kugti Pass in the Bharmour region of Chamba district. It is rich in proteins and has a unique flavour.

**How many registered GIs does Himachal currently have?**

**Eight.** These include four handicrafts (Kullu Shawl, Chamba Rumal, Kinnauri Shawl and Kangra Paintings), three agricultural products (Kangra Tea, Basmati and Himachali Kala Zeera) and one manufactured product (Himachali Chulli Oil).

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/himachal-pradesh-wants-gi-status-for-five-products-here-is-why-7093919/>

28. **Consider the following statements:**

1. Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) is the first regulatory body set up by the Government of India.
2. One of the tasks of PNGRB is to ensure competitive markets for gas.
3. Appeals against the decisions of PNGRB go before the Appellate Tribunals for Electricity.

**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

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) was established under 'The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006' to protect the interests of consumers and organisations engaged in petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas sector. **It is not the first regulatory body.**
- The Act provide for the establishment of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board to **protect the interests of consumers and entities engaged in specified activities relating to petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas** and to promote competitive markets and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

- **Statement 2 and 3 are correct.**The Board works to foster fair trade and competition amongst the entities. The appeals against the decisions of the Board go before the Appellate Tribunal established under section 110 of the Electricity Act, 2003.

**Why in the news?**

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) has notified a new tariff structure for 14 natural gas pipelines.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-petroleum-boards-new-unified-tariff-structure-its-impact-and-challenges-in-implementation-7093848/>

**29. Consider the following about Hayabusa 2:**

1. It is a comet found by chinese space agency named after the God of War.
2. It is named so because of its resemblance to the mythological character.

**Which of the above statements is/are Incorrect?**

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

**Both the statements are incorrect.**

- Hayabusa 2 is an asteroid sample-return mission operated by the Japanese space agency, JAXA.
- It is in the process of surveying the asteroid for a year and a half . It will return to Earth in December 2020.
- Hayabusa2 carries multiple science payloads for remote sensing, sampling, and four small rovers that will investigate the asteroid surface

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- The Hayabusa2 is scheduled to position an 'impactor' that will explode above the asteroid, shooting a two-kilo copper object to make it blast into a small crater on the surface. The probe will then collect samples from the artificial crater using an extended arm.
- The collected material could help answer many fundamental questions about life and the universe, including whether elements from space helped give rise to life on earth.
- The comet found by Chinese space agency is Hally's comet.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-what-is-japans-hayabusa2-mission-7092921/>

### 30. Which of the following is/are the components of the 'Sagarmala' programme?

1. Developing port-proximate industrial clusters and Coastal Economic Zones
2. Optimizing cost and time of cargo movement through multi-modal logistics solutions including domestic waterways
3. Promoting sustainable development of coastal communities through skill development and livelihood generation activities
4. Capacity expansion of existing ports and development of new greenfield ports

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

**Answer: D**

#### Explanation

- Presently, **Indian ports handle more than 90 percent of India's total Export-Import (EXIM) trade volume.** However, the current proportion of merchandise trade in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India is only 42 percent, whereas for some developed countries and regions in the world such as Germany and European Union, it is 75 percent and 70 percent respectively.

- Therefore, there is a **great scope to increase the share** of merchandising trade in India's GDP. Therefore **Sagarmala project has been envisioned** to provide ports and the shipping the rightful place in the Indian economy and to enable **port-led development**.

### Sagarmala Programme

- The Sagarmala Project intends to **achieve the broad objectives of enhancing the capacity of major and non-major ports** and modernizing them to make them efficient, thereby enabling them to become **drivers of port-led economic development**, optimizing the use of existing and future transport assets and developing new lines/linkages for transport (including roads, rail, inland waterways and coastal routes), **setting up of logistics hubs**, and establishment of industries and manufacturing centres to be served by ports in EXIM and domestic trade.
- It should provide a platform for central, state governments and local authorities to work in tandem and coordination under the established principles of "**cooperative federalism**", in order to **achieve the objectives of the Sagarmala Project** and ensure port-led development.

**Vision of the Sagarmala Programme** is to **reduce logistics cost for EXIM** and domestic trade with **minimal infrastructure investment**. This includes

- **Reducing cost** of transporting domestic cargo through **optimizing modal mix**
- Lowering logistics cost of bulk commodities by locating **future industrial capacities** near the coast
- **Improving export competitiveness** by developing port proximate discrete manufacturing clusters
- Optimizing time/cost of EXIM container movement

**Components of Sagarmala Programme** are

- **Statement 4 is correct - Port Modernization & New Port Development:** De-bottlenecking and **capacity expansion of existing ports** and development of new greenfield ports
- **Statement 2 is correct - Port Connectivity Enhancement:** Enhancing the connectivity of the ports to the hinterland, optimizing cost and time of cargo movement through **multi-**

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**modal logistics solutions** including domestic waterways (inland water transport and coastal shipping)

- **Statement 1 is correct - Port-linked Industrialization:** Developing **port-proximate industrial clusters** and **Coastal Economic Zones** to reduce logistics cost and time of EXIM and domestic cargo
- **Statement 3 is correct - Coastal Community Development:** Promoting sustainable development of coastal communities through **skill development & livelihood generation activities**, fisheries development, coastal tourism etc.
- **Coastal Shipping & Inland Waterways Transport:** Impetus to **move cargo through the sustainable and environment-friendly** coastal and inland waterways mode

<http://sagarmala.gov.in/about-sagarmala/vision-objectives>

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/printrelease.aspx?relid=117691>

### 31. Consider the following statements with respect to organic farming

1. Usage of organic manure and natural pesticides instead of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
2. Genetic modification is done to increase the yield of the crop
3. It aims to protect the long term fertility of soil by encouraging soil biological activity.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 2 and 3 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 1 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3.

Ans : B

#### **Explanation**

- Organic farming is a **method of farming system** which primarily aimed at cultivating the land and raising crops in such a way, as **to keep the soil alive and in good health** by use of organic wastes (crop, animal and farm wastes, aquatic wastes) and other biological materials

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along with **beneficial microbes (biofertilizers)** to release nutrients to crops for increased sustainable production in an eco friendly pollution free environment.

- **Statement 1 is correct** : In this type of farming, **organic manure and natural pesticides are used instead of chemicals.**
- **statement 2 Is incorrect** : **No genetic modification is done** to increase the yield of the crop.

### BENEFITS

- **Statement 3 Is correct** : Protecting the **long term fertility of soils by maintaining organic matter levels, encouraging soil biological activity,** and careful mechanical intervention
- Nitrogen self-sufficiency through the **use of legumes and biological nitrogen fixation,** as well as effective **recycling of organic materials** including crop residues and livestock manures
- Weed, disease and pest control **relying primarily on crop rotations, natural predators, diversity, organic manuring, resistant varieties** and limited (preferably minimal) thermal, biological and chemical intervention
- The **extensive management of livestock,** paying full regard to their evolutionary adaptations, behavioural needs and animal welfare issues with respect to nutrition, housing, health, breeding and rearing

### Why in the news?

With the entire Lakshad-weep group of islands being declared an organic agricultural area, the island administration is eyeing an expansion of the traditional business in coconuts and coconut products.

[http://agritech.tnau.ac.in/org\\_farm/orgfarm\\_introduction.html](http://agritech.tnau.ac.in/org_farm/orgfarm_introduction.html)

### 32. Consider the following statements with respect to World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

1. It is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
2. It was initiated to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against drugs in sports.

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3. Recently, WADA banned Russia from major international sporting events for four years, on charges of tampering with doping-related reports.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

**WADA – World Antidoping Agency**

- Established in **1999** as an **international independent agency**
- Its key activities include **scientific research, education, development of anti-doping capacities, and monitoring of the World Anti-Doping Code (Code)** – the document harmonizing anti-doping policies in all sports and all countries.
- The **38-member Foundation Board** is **WADA's supreme decision-making body**.
- It is composed equally of representatives from the **Olympic Movement and Governments**.
- The **Foundation Board delegates day-to-day running of the Agency** to the **Executive Committee, WADA's ultimate policy-making body**.
- The **12-member Executive Committee** is also composed **equally of representatives from the Olympic Movement and Governments**
- **WADA's Presidency** – a volunteer position – **alternates between the Olympic Movement and Governments**.

**CAS**

- CAS is an institution **independent of any sports organization**, which provides for services to facilitate the **settlement of sport-related disputes**, through arbitration or mediation.
- **WADA has a right of appeal to CAS** for doping cases under the jurisdiction of organizations that have implemented the Code.

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- It is **located at Lausanne, Switzerland. Generally**, an arbitration is expected to take **six to 12 months**, which means that regardless of whether an appeal is filed, Russia will not be present at the Winter Youth Olympic Games that starts in Lausanne, Switzerland from January 9, 2020.

#### India:

- In India, WADA rules have been enforced by the Government-run **National Anti-Doping Agency**.
- It is mandated to conduct in-competition and out-of-competition tests on the athletes in its registered testing pool.

#### Why in the news?

- Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports reiterated that India will provide all support to the World AntiDoping Agency to ensure integrity of sport in a webinar held recently on Anti-Doping and Sports Science.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1678848>

### 33. Consider the following pairs

#### Economic Integration - Meaning

1. Free Trade Area - Common external tariffs
2. Common Market - Factors of production are mobile among members
3. Economic Union - Integration of monetary and fiscal policies

#### Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

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

Answer: B

**Explanation**

- Economic integration is an **arrangement among nations** that typically includes the **reduction or elimination of trade barriers** and the coordination of monetary and fiscal policies. Economic integration aims to reduce costs for both consumers and producers and to **increase trade between the countries involved in the agreement.**
- Economic integration takes the form of Free Trade Area, Customs Union, Common Market and Economic Union.
- A **free trade area** is the region encompassing a **trade bloc** whose member countries have signed a **free-trade agreement (FTA)**. Such agreements involve cooperation between at least two countries to **reduce/abolish trade barriers**. **Example:** The South Asian Free Trade Area (**SAFTA**)
- A **customs union** is defined as a type of trade block which is composed of a **free trade area with no tariffs among members** (zero tariffs among members) with a **common external tariff**.
- A **common market** has the same features as a customs union but in addition, **factors of production (labour, capital and technology) are mobile among members**. Restrictions on immigration and cross-border investment are abolished. **Example:** European Common Market (**ECM**)
- An **economic union** is the last step in an economic integration process. In addition to free movement of goods, services and production factors, it also **requires integration of economic policies, both monetary and fiscal**. Under an economic union, members harmonize monetary policies, taxation and government spending. **Example:** European Union

**34. Forest Fires pose a threat not only to the forest wealth but also to the entire regime to fauna and flora seriously disturbing the bio-diversity and the ecology and environment. Considering this, which of the following reasons could be the causes for Forest Fires?**

1. Lightning
2. Low Atmospheric pressure
3. High Humidity
4. Jhum Cultivation
5. Swaying Bamboos

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

The most common hazard in forests is forest fire. Forests fires are as old as the forests themselves. They pose a threat not only to the forest wealth but also to the entire regime to fauna and flora seriously disturbing the biodiversity, ecology and environment of a region. Forest fire causes imbalances in nature and endangers biodiversity by reducing faunal and floral wealth.

**Causes of Forest Fire**

Forest fires are caused by Natural causes as well as Man made causes

- **Natural causes-** Many forest fires start from natural causes such as lightning which set trees on fire. However, rain extinguishes such fires without causing much damage. **High atmospheric temperatures and dryness (low humidity) offer favorable circumstances for a fire to start.**
- **Man made causes-** Fire is caused when a source of fire like naked flame, cigarette or bidi, electric spark or any source of ignition comes into contact with inflammable material.

Causes of forest fires can be divided into two broad categories: environmental (which are beyond control) and human related (which are controllable).

**Environmental causes** are largely related to climatic conditions such as temperature, wind speed and direction, level of moisture in soil and atmosphere and duration of dry spells. Other natural causes are the **friction of bamboos swaying due to high wind velocity** and rolling stones that result in sparks setting off fires in highly inflammable leaf litter on the forest floor.

**Human related causes** result from human activity as well as methods of forest management. These can be intentional or unintentional, for example:

- graziers and gatherers of various forest products starting small fires to obtain good grazing grass as well as to facilitate gathering of minor forest produce like flowers of *Madhuca indica* and leaves of *Diospyros melanoxylon*
- **the centuries old practice of shifting cultivation (especially in the North-Eastern region of India and in parts of the States of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh).**
- the use of fires by villagers to ward off wild animals
- fires lit intentionally by people living around forests for recreation
- fires started accidentally by careless visitors to forests who discard cigarette butts.

**Why in the news?**

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) estimated that more than 60,000 koalas were killed, injured or displaced in Australian bushfires last summer.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/australias-black-summer-bushfires-harmed-more-than-60000-koalas-wwf/article33268123.ece>

**35. Which of the following is/are objectives of One District One Product Scheme?**

- 1) Preservation and development of local crafts
- 2) Increase in the incomes and local employment
- 3) Transforming the products in an artistic way
- 4) To connect the production with tourism
- 5) To resolve the issues of economic difference and regional imbalance.

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

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

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- The **Government of Uttar Pradesh** has initiated “One District, One Product” Scheme to **encourage indigenous and specialized products and crafts of the state.**
- The scheme aims to capitalize the rich heritage of Uttar Pradesh by reviving them through **modernization and publicisation** to enhance the reach of these products
- ODOP is aimed at giving a **major push to traditional industries** synonymous with the respective districts of the state.

The main objectives of the One District One Product Programme of Uttar Pradesh are as follows:

- **Preservation and development of local crafts / skills** and promotion of the art.
- **Increase in the incomes and local employment** (resulting in decline in migration for employment).
- Improvement in product quality and skill development.
- **Transforming the products in an artistic way** (through packaging, branding).
- **To connect the production with tourism** (Live demo and sales outlet – gifts and souvenir).
- To resolve the issues of economic difference and regional imbalance.
- To take the concept of ODOP to national and international level after successful implementation at State level.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1656130>

<http://odopup.in/en/page/objective>

**36. Consider the following statements about United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**

- 1) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is a permanent intergovernmental body established to promote development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy.
- 2) The World Investment Report is released by UNCTAD.

**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**

- The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was established in 1964 to promote development-friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy.
- UNCTAD is a permanent intergovernmental body headquartered at Geneva in Switzerland. Some of the reports published by it are:
  - Trade and Development Report
  - World Investment Report
  - The Least Developed Countries Report

**Hence both the statements are correct.**

**Why in the news?**

The Union Home Minister has greeted Invest India for winning the UNCTAD's 2020 United Nations Investment Promotion Award.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1679123>

37. The main objective of the 'one nation, one ration card' initiative is

- A. Implement recommendations of the Shantha kumar committee
- B. Moving towards universal public distribution system
- C. National portability in distribution of foodgrain to beneficiaries
- D. Linking fair price shops with the e-NAM portal

Answer: C

**Explanation:**

- The central government is working on a plan to launch a "One Nation One Ration Card" scheme for beneficiaries, especially migrant workers, to access the Public Distribution System from any PDS shop across the country.
- The scheme is aimed at providing freedom to beneficiaries, as they will not be tied to one PDS shop, reduce their dependence on shop owners and curtail corruption.
- The biggest beneficiaries will be migrant workers who move to other states to seek better job opportunities.
- The ration shops/ fair price shops must use point of sale (PoS) machines which allows the one nation, one ration card scheme.
- There will also be creation of a Central Repository of all Ration Cards to help national level deduplication.

Present status:

- **Integrated Management of PDS (IMPDS)** is a system that is already operational in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana and Tripura wherein a beneficiary can avail his share of food grain from any district in the State.

**Why in the news?**

A total of nine states have completed the implementation process of One Nation One Ration Card System. Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh have successfully completed the reforms in PDS.

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<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Nine-states-complete-implementation-for-One-Nation-one-Ration-Card-System&id=405780>

**38. Which among the following countries are members of SAARC but not of BIMSTEC?**

- a) Thailand and Myanmar
- b) Pakistan and Maldives
- c) Nepal and Bhutan
- d) Bhutan and Bangladesh

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is a **regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union consists of 8 member states-- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Maldives.**  
<http://saarc-sec.org/about-saarc>
- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional organization comprising seven Member States lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal constituting a contiguous regional unity.
- This sub-regional organization came into being on 6 June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.
- It constitutes seven Member States: five deriving from South Asia, including **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka**, and two from Southeast Asia, including Myanmar and Thailand.

[https://bimstec.org/?page\\_id=189](https://bimstec.org/?page_id=189)

**Why in the news?**

SAARC can only be fully effective in the absence of “terror and violence”, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a message to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation on its 36th Charter Day anniversary.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/saarc-potential-cant-be-realised-until-terror-ends-pm-modi/article33281688.ece>

**39. SAFTA, sometimes in news is related to ;**

- a. SASEC
- b. SAARC
- c. ASEAN
- d. BIMSTEC

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

The South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) is the free trade arrangement of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The agreement came into place in 2006, succeeding the 1993 SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement. SAFTA signatory countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The **basic principles** underlying SAFTA are as under;

1. overall reciprocity and mutuality of advantages so as to benefit equitably all Contracting States, taking into account their respective level of economic and industrial development, the pattern of their external trade, and trade and tariff policies and systems;
2. negotiation of tariff reform step by step, improved and extended in successive stages through periodic reviews;
3. recognition of the special needs of the Least Developed Contracting States and agreement on concrete preferential measures in their favour;
4. inclusion of all products, manufactures and commodities in their raw, semi-processed and processed forms

**40. Which are all the countries that share a border with the United Arab Emirates ?**

- (1) Qatar
- (2) Bahrain

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- (3) Saudi Arabia
- (4) Oman

Select the correct answer from the options given below

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

Answer : C

**Explanation**



**41. With reference to Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), consider the following statements.**

1. An exchange-traded fund is a basket of securities that trade on an exchange
2. The Government of India uses ETF to disinvest its holdings in public sector companies
3. Bharat-22 is an ETF launched by the government, which includes both public and private

sector companies

4. Bharat-22 is managed by the RBI

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

A. 1 only

B. 1, 2 and 3 only

C. 1, 2 and 4 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: **B**

**Explanation:**

- An exchange-traded fund (ETF) is a basket of securities that trade on an exchange. ETFs can contain all types of investments including stocks, commodities, or bonds. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- ETFs are in many ways similar to mutual funds; however, they are listed on exchanges and ETF shares trade throughout the day just like ordinary stock.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Government of India uses ETF to disinvest its holdings in public sector companies. According to the Department of Investment & Public Asset Management (DIPAM), the total subscription received by the Centre from various ETFs launched so far stands at Rs 1.87 lakh crores.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Bharat 22 is an open-ended Exchange-Traded Fund (ETF) which allows investors to invest in a basket of government-owned and private sector entities. Bharat 22 ETF invests in the 22 companies that comprise the S&P BSE Bharat 22 index—19 companies are in the public sector and three in the private sector.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Bharat 22 is managed by ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company.

**Why in the news?**

After seven straight months of net inflows, gold exchange traded funds witnessed a pull-out of ₹141 crore in November primarily on the back of profit-booking by investors.

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=173505>

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/gold-etfs-clock-141-cr-outflow-in-nov/article33292543.ece>

42. The Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is associated with which of the following?

- a) Regional connectivity scheme for airlines
- b) Transport and Logistics
- c) Skill oriented education
- d) Telecommunication

**Answer: D**

**Explanation**

- Established in 2002, the USOF is headed by the USOF Administrator who reports to the Secretary, **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)**
- The Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003 gave statutory status to the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)
- The USOF's main aim is to **provide universal telecom services** and ensure that even the unconnected areas in the country reap the benefits of inclusive development.

**Functions:**

- To provide widespread and non-discriminatory access to quality ICT services at affordable prices to people in rural and remote areas.
- To provide an effective and powerful linkage to the hinterland thereby mainstreaming the population of rural and remote parts of the country.

**Working:**

- The funds come from **Universal Service Levy (USL)**
- The USL is charged from all the telecom operators on their **Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR)**
- These are then deposited into the Consolidated Fund of India, and prior parliamentary approval is required for dispatching.

**Why in the news?**

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Cabinet approves Universal Service Obligation Fund Scheme for providing Mobile Coverage in Arunachal Pradesh and two Districts of Assam under the Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for North Eastern Region

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1679338>

<http://usof.gov.in/usof-cms/usof-function.jsp>

43. **The main objective of the PM SVANidhi Scheme is**

- A. Aid, assist and advice farmers on how to improve their farming techniques and raise their incomes.
- B. Providing affordable loans to street vendors.
- C. Providing health insurance to COVID-19 frontline workers.
- D. Implementing Direct Benefit Transfer for procurement of food grains by the Food Corporation of India.

Answer: **B**

**Explanation:**

- The Central government launched the Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme on 1 June 2020 for providing affordable loans to street vendors.
- The vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments within a year. The loans would be without collateral.
- The main objective of the scheme is to ensure that daily wage earners like vegetable sellers, fruit sellers, earn their livelihood. This short term assistance of Rs. 10,000 will enable small street vendors to restart their work which is badly hit due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/swiggy-to-onboard-nearly-30-000-street-food-vendors-under-pm-svanidhi-scheme/story-Fub8wGCozsA4WNa2NpvTgP.html>

44. **Which of the following are classified as "Minor Forest Produce" in the country?**

1. Bamboo
2. Timber

3. Wild fruits

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: C

**Explanation:**

- Minor Forest Produce means **all non-timber forest produce** of plant origin and will include **bamboo**, canes, fodder, leaves, gums, waxes, dyes, resins and many forms of food including nuts, **wild fruits**, Honey, Lac, Tusser etc.
- MFP is a major source of livelihood for tribals living in forest areas. Tribals derive 20-40% of their annual income from MFP.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/chhattisgarh-govt-to-procure-52-forest-produce-items/story-3j1u288l7ED4pAr5bG36hI.html>

45. According to the RBI's guidelines, a 'wilful defaulter' is

- A. An individual who has committed some specified offences and has absconded from India
- B. A borrower whose principal or interest payment remained overdue for a period of 90 days
- C. A borrower whose principal or interest payment remained overdue for a period of 270 days
- D. An individual who defaulted in meeting his repayment obligations to the lender despite having the capacity to do so

Answer: D

**Explanation:**

- According to RBI guidelines, a wilful default is deemed to have occurred if the borrower has defaulted in meeting his payment / repayment obligations to the lender even when he has the capacity to honour the said obligations.
- Option A is related to **fugitive economic offenders**.

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- A fugitive economic offender is an individual who has committed some specified offence(s) involving an amount of one hundred crore rupees or more and has absconded from India or refused to come back to India to avoid or face criminal prosecution in India.
- Option B is the criteria used in classification of a **non performing asset (NPA)**.  
<https://www.livemint.com/videos/rbi-names-30-major-willful-defaulters-transparency-or-public-shaming-11574333410687.html>

#### 46. Consider the following statements about NEFT and RTGS

- 1) There is no limit on minimum and maximum amount of transaction that can be done through NEFT and RTGS
- 2) NEFT is available all around the clock without any time limit.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

**National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT):**

- NEFT is a **nation-wide payment system facilitating one-to-one funds transfer**.
- Under this Scheme, individuals, firms and corporates can electronically transfer funds from any bank branch to any individual, firm or corporate having an account with any other bank branch in the country participating in the Scheme.
- NEFT is a payment system facilitating funds transfers from one bank account to another. One can access this service either by using **Internet banking or by visiting the bank branch**. (Not all bank branches are enabled with this service.)

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- Once you initiate the transfer, the money reaches the beneficiary account within hours. **There is no limit on the minimum or maximum amount you can transfer, however, individual banks may put restrictions on the per transaction.**
- The bank account in which money has to be transferred will receive the money within **two hours.**
- Earlier, NEFT payment system operated for customers from 8:00AM to 7:00 PM on all working days except on 2nd and 4th Saturday as banks remain close on that day.
- Recently, NEFT has **allowed the bank customers to transfer the money all around the clock. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

### Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)

- This is a facility used for transferring high value amounts. In real time gross settlement (RTGS), the **minimum amount that can be currently transferred is Rs 2 lakh whereas under NEFT there is no limit on the minimum or maximum amount for transfer, however, individual banks may put restrictions on the per transaction. Hence statement 1 is Incorrect.**
- The funds can be **transferred using RTGS on any working day between Monday and Saturday** either via internet banking or bank branch.

### Why in the news?

The Reserve Bank has announced that the Real Time Gross Settlement System or the RTGS facility will now be available for round the clock transactions, with effect from 14th December.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/wealth/personal-finance-news/rbi-removes-neft-rtgs-payment-charges-to-push-digital-transactions/articleshow/69672695.cms?from=mdr>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/wealth/save/transfer-money-via-neft-24x7-from-today-from-jan-1-it-will-be-free-of-cost-heres-all-you-need-to-know/articleshow/72742169.cms>

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=RTGS-to-be-available-24x7-from-December-14%2c-says-RBI&id=405896>

**47. Consider the following statements regarding Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)**

1. The GCC is India's largest regional-bloc trading partner.
2. All the countries which are the members of the GCC are also the members of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

**Which of the following statements 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.** The GCC is India's **largest regional-bloc trading partner**, which accounted for \$104 billion of trade in 2017-18, nearly a 7 per cent increase from \$97 billion the previous year. This is higher than both India-ASEAN trade (\$81 billion) and India-EU trade (\$102 billion) in 2017-18.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), political and economic alliance of six Middle Eastern countries—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman. The GCC was established in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in May 1981.

**Statement 2 is incorrect.** Although the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a full Member of the FATF, the **individual Member countries of the GCC (of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) are not.** As an FATF Member, the GCC is committed to implementing the anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CFT) measures agreed to by the FATF Members - in particular, the FATF Recommendations.

**What is FATF?**

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by the Ministers of its Member jurisdictions.

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- The objectives of the FATF are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
- The FATF is therefore a “policy-making body” which works to generate the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas.

#### Why in the news?

Ministry of External Affairs is about to hold panel discussions on Gulf Cooperation Council-India in run up to Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention.

Source:

<https://www.iiss.org/blogs/analysis/2018/08/india-gulf-strategic-partnerships>

<http://gcc-sg.org/en-us/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=MEA-to-hold-panel-discussions-on-Gulf-Cooperation-Council-India-in-run-up-to-Pravasi-Bharati-Divas-Convention&id=405891>

#### 48. Which of the following is not a member of Gulf Cooperation Council(GCC)?

- United Arab Emirates
- Saudi Arabia
- Oman
- Iran

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- The **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** is a political and economic union of Arab states bordering the Gulf.
- It was **established in 1981** and its 6 members are the **United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait and Bahrain.**



49. Which of the following are the producers of Aerosols?

1. Automobiles
2. Smelters
3. Power plants

Select the correct answer using the codes given:

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

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- Aerosols are minute suspended in the atmosphere. When these particles are sufficiently large, we notice their presence as they scatter and absorb sunlight. Their scattering of sunlight can reduce visibility (haze) and redden sunrises and sunsets.
- Aerosols are short-lived, unlike greenhouse gases that persist and accumulate in the atmosphere for a longer period.

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- Automobiles, incinerators, smelters, and power plants are prolific producers of sulfates, nitrates, black carbon, and other particles.

#### Why in the news?

- Scientists have found that aerosols like black carbon and dust, which make the Indo-Gangetic Plain one of the most polluted regions of the world, have led to increased incidents of high rainfall events in the foothills of the Himalayan region.

<https://www.news18.com/news/india/aerosols-in-indo-gangetic-plain-have-led-to-increase-in-high-rainfall-in-himalayan-foothills-study-3166034.html>

#### 50. Which of the following statements about Asian Development Bank is incorrect?

- a) It is dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.
- b) India is a founding member of the ADB.
- c) ADB is an official United Nations Observer.
- d) The two largest shareholders of the ADB are US and India.

**Answer: D**

#### Explanation:

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank. It is dedicated to reducing poverty in **Asia and the Pacific** through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth, and regional integration.
- ADB assists its members, and partners, by providing loans, technical assistance, grants, and equity investments to promote social and economic development.
- ADB maximizes the development impact of its **assistance by facilitating policy dialogues**, providing advisory services, and mobilizing financial resources through cofinancing operations that tap official, commercial, and export credit sources.
- India is a founding member of the ADB and is **currently the fourth largest shareholder** and the **largest borrower of the ADB**.
- It is headquartered in Manila, Philippines.

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- At present, ADB comprises 68 members (including India)- of which 49 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside.
- The two largest shareholders of the ADB are Japan and the US .
- ADB is an official United Nations Observer.

#### Why in the news?

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) upgraded its forecast for the Indian economy, projecting 8% contraction in 2020-21 as compared to 9% estimated earlier.

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/adb-narrows-indias-fy21-gdp-contraction-projection-to-8/article33302178.ece>

#### 51. Consider the following statements regarding Khelo India Programme

1. The Khelo India programme has been introduced to revive the sports culture in India at the grass-root level.
2. Promotion of Sports among the disabled is one of its objectives.
3. Annual financial assistance of 15 lakh per annum for the first 18 years of the age of players is given.

#### Which of the above statements is /are correct?

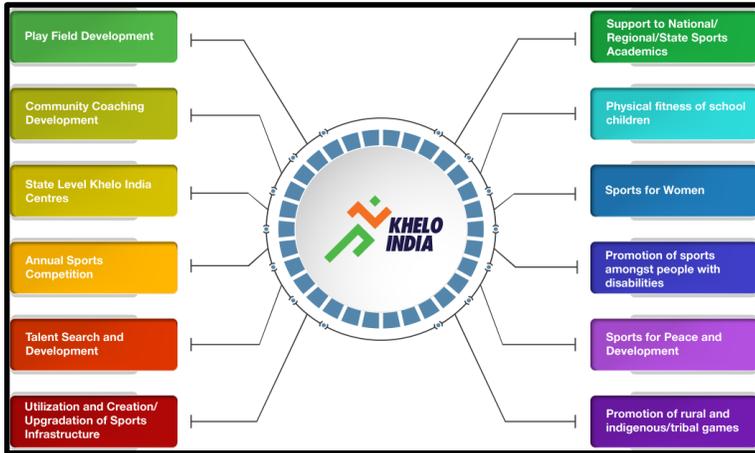
- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) Only 1
- d) 1, 2 and 3

**Answer: A**

**Explanation: Statements 1 and 2 are correct.** The Khelo India programme has been introduced to revive the sports culture in India at the grass-root level by building a strong framework for all sports played in our country and establish India as a great sporting nation.

**Its objectives are :**

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**Statement 3 is incorrect.**

Talented players identified in priority sports disciplines at various levels by the High-Powered Committee will be provided **annual financial assistance of INR 5 lakh per annum for 8 years.**

**Why in the news?**

Addressing the 10th Global Sports Summit, organized by FICCI, Union Sports Minister said that the government is committed to start 1000 Khelo India small centres across the country that will help retired sports persons get employment or some role in shaping the sports culture of the country

**Source:**

<https://kheloindia.gov.in/about>

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=190865>

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Govt-to-start-1000-Khelo-India-small-centres-to-encourage-sports-culture-in-country&id=405769>

**52. World malaria report is published by**

- (a) World bank
- (b) World health organisation
- (c) United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- (d) Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

Answer : B

Explanation:

**About Malaria**

- Malaria is caused by **Plasmodium parasites**.
- The parasites are spread to people through the bites of infected **female Anopheles mosquitoes**, called "malaria vectors",
- There are five kinds of malarial parasites — Plasmodium falciparum, Plasmodium vivax (the commonest ones), Plasmodium malariae, Plasmodium ovale and Plasmodium knowlesi.
- The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** has released the **World Malaria Report, 2020**.

**About the report**

- The report provides a **comprehensive update** on global and regional malaria data and trends including prevention, diagnosis, treatment, elimination and surveillance.
- It gives the estimated cases for malaria across the world, based on mathematical projections.

**Key highlights of World Malaria Report 2020:**

**National analysis**

- India continues to make Impressive Gains in reduction of Malaria Burden
- India is the **only high endemic country** which has reported a decline of 17.6% in 2019 over 2018
- India has **sustained Annual Parasitic Incidence (API)** of less than one since 2012
- The Annual Parasitic Incidence (API) reduced by 27.6% in 2018 compared to 2017 and by 18.4% in 2019 as compared to 2018.
- India has also **contributed to the largest drop** in cases region-wide, from approximately 20 million to about 6 million.
- India achieved a reduction of 83.34% in malaria morbidity and 92% in malaria mortality between the year 2000 and 2019 thereby **achieving Goal 6 of the Millennium Development Goals** (50-75% decrease in case incidence between 2000 and 2019).

**Regional analysis**

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- Malaria has been made notifiable in 31 states/UTs and decline has been observed in the hitherto **high endemic states** like Odisha, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

#### Steps taken by government to eliminate malaria

- Malaria Elimination efforts were initiated in the country in 2015 and were intensified after the launch of **National Framework for Malaria Elimination (NFME)** in 2016 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination (2017-22)** was launched by the Health Ministry in July, 2017 which laid down strategies for the next five years.
- Efforts were made by the Government of India in provision of **microscopes, rapid diagnostics Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs)**.
- They are being supplied/distributed to **high burden areas** leading to reduction in endemicity in these otherwise very high endemic states.

#### Steps taken at global level

- WHO has initiated the **High Burden to High Impact (HBHI) initiative** in 11 high malaria burden countries, including India to enhance response to malaria in those countries.

#### Why in the news?

A not very common type of malaria, Plasmodium ovale, has been identified in a jawan in Kerala.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-plasmodium-ovale-other-types-of-malaria-7101500/>

### 53. Consider the following statements with respect to the Convention on international trade in Endangered species of Wild fauna and flora (CITES)

1. It is legally binding on the States that have joined it, though this Convention does not take the place of national laws
2. It aims to conserve only those species which are declared 'endangered' under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red list.

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**

- The **international wildlife trade** is diverse, ranging from **live animals and plants to a vast array of wildlife products** derived from them, including food products, exotic leather goods, wooden musical instruments, timber and medicines
- Human activities in **several parts of the world have disturbed the natural habitats** of many species. Due to **indiscriminate killings**, several birds and animals have either become extinct or are on the verge of extinction
- Due to this, an **international convention CITES has been established** that lists several species of animals and birds in which trade is prohibited. Today, it accords varying degrees of protection to more than 37,000 species of animals and plants
- CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an **international agreement between governments**.
- **Statement 1 is correct:** Although CITES is **legally binding** on the Parties (in other words they have to implement the Convention), it **does not take the place of national laws**. Rather it provides a **framework to be respected by each Party**, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** It aims to ensure that **international trade** in specimens of wild animals and plants **does not threaten their survival**.
- It **does not aim to conserve only those species which are declared 'endangered'** under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red list
- Rather it has **listed species in three CITES Appendices**. The species are grouped in the Appendices **according to the level of threat faced by them** due to international trade

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- Roughly **5,000 species of animals and 28,000 species of plants are protected**. Bears, dolphins, cacti, corals and orchids are some examples.

#### Why in the news?

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has come out with an advisory on a one-time voluntary disclosure scheme that allows owners of exotic live species that have been acquired illegally, or without documents, to declare their stock to the government between June and December 2020.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/declare-exotic-pets-avoid-prosecution-how-one-time-scheme-works-7101504/>

#### 54. Consider the following statements about the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

1. ASI functions under the Ministry of Culture.
2. ASI declares ancient monuments which are of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which have been in existence for not less than 1000 years as Monuments of national importance.

#### 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:** The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), under the **Ministry of Culture**, is the premier organization for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- Maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance is the prime concern of the ASI.

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- Besides, it regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per the provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. It also regulates the Antiquities and Art Treasure Act, 1972.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** According to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, an "Ancient Monument means any structure, erection or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock-sculpture, inscription or monolith which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for **not less than 100 years.**"

#### Why in the news?

Ammakulam at Keezhraivanthavadi village in Tiruvannamalai district and an elephant statue at Azhagarmalai village in Ariyalur district are declared as protected sites in Tamilnadu.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/two-tamil-nadu-monuments-declared-protected-sites/article33311004.ece>

<https://www.businessinsider.in/india/news/over-800-asi-monuments-which-have-places-of-worship-will-open-from-june-8/articleshow/76245582.cms>

#### 55. Bonn challenge sometimes seen in the news is related to

- a) international agreement that aims to conserve migratory species
- b) global effort to restore 150 million hectares of the world's degraded and deforested lands by 2020.
- c) international treaty designed to protect human health from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury
- d) aims to eliminate or restrict the production and use of persistent organic pollutants

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

**Bonn Challenge:**

- The Bonn Challenge is a **global effort to bring 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land into restoration by 2020 and 350 million by 2030.**

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- The 2020 target was launched at a high level event in Bonn in 2011 organised by the Government of Germany and IUCN, and was later endorsed and **extended to 2030 by the New York declaration on forests of the 2014 UN Climate Summit.**
  - To date, 56 governments, private associations and companies have pledged over 168 million hectares to the Challenge.
  - The Bonn Challenge is an **implementation vehicle** for national priorities such as **water and food security and rural development while simultaneously helping countries contribute to the achievement of international climate change, biodiversity and land degradation Commitments.**
  - For example, multi-country programmes such as **The Restoration Initiative (TRI), supported by the Global Environment Facility and led by IUCN in partnership with UNEP and FAO,** are also catalysing implementation and providing models for collaboration.
  - **Option A refers to Bonn Convention**
  - **Option C refers to Minamata Convention**
  - **Option D refers to Stockholm Convention**
- <https://www.iucn.org/theme/forests/our-work/forest-landscape-restoration/bonn-challenge>

**56. On which of the following products, one can see the Bureau of Energy Efficiency's star label?**

1. Solar Water Heaters
2. Ceiling fans
3. Room Air Conditioners
4. LED lamps

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

- a) 1, 2 and 4 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 1, 2, 3 and 4

d) 2, 3 and 4 only

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

• The **Bureau of Energy Efficiency initiated the Standards & Labeling (Star) programme for equipment and appliances in 2006** to provide the consumer an **informed choice about the energy saving** and thereby the cost saving potential of the relevant marketed product.

• The energy efficiency labeling programs under BEE are intended **to reduce the energy consumption of appliance** without diminishing the services it provides to consumers

• The scheme is **invoked for 24 equipment/appliances** including **10 for which it is mandatory**. The other appliances are presently under **voluntary labeling phase**. The estimated savings from these labeling programmes have been about 12000 MW since 2007.

**Products notified under mandatory appliance**

• Frost Free (No-Frost) Refrigerator, Tubular Fluorescent Lamps, Room Air Conditioners, Distribution Transformers, **Room Air Conditioners** (Cassette, Floor Standing Tower, Ceiling, Corner AC), Direct Cool Refrigerator, Electric Geysers, Color TV, Room Air Conditioners (Inverter type), **LED lamps**

**Products under voluntary labeling**

- Induction Motors, Agricultural pump sets, **Ceiling fans**, Domestic Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Stoves, Washing machine (This programme is under abeyance), Computer (Notebook/Laptops), Ballast (Electronic/Magnetic), Office equipment's (Printer, Copier, Scanner, MFD's), Diesel Engine Driven Monoset Pumps for Agricultural Purposes, Solid State Inverter, Diesel Generator, Chillers, Microwave Ovens **and Solar Water Heaters**

- ü Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has **recently launched the star rating programme for Deep Freezer and Light Commercial Air Conditioners (LCAC)**. These were added under the voluntary regime. With this, there are **26 appliances now covered under this programme**.

**Why in the news?**

The **National Energy Conservation Day** is organized on 14th December every year by the **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)** with an aim to showcase India's achievements in energy efficiency and conservation.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1596314>

**57. Myristica swamp treefrog, a rare arboreal species is endemic to**

- a) Eastern ghats
- b) Western ghats
- c) Northeastern Himalayas
- d) Western Himalayas

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- Myristica swamp treefrog, a rare arboreal species **endem-ic to the Western Ghats** that bears the scientific name **Mercurana myristicapalus- tris**, has been recorded for the first time north of the Shencottah gap in the Vazha-chal Reserve Forest in **Kera-la's Thrissur district**.

**Unique trait**

- These frogs are rare and elu-sive for the reason that they are **arboreal and active** only for a few weeks during their breeding season.
- During this season, there is a large aggregation of males that descend from the high canopy of the trees. The males vocalise in groups from the low perches in the swamps.
- They exhibit **unique breeding behaviour**.
- The breeding season, unlike for other frogs, starts in the pre monsoon season (May) and ends before the monsoon becomes fully active in June.
- Before the end of the breeding season, the female frogs along with their male counterparts descend on the forest floor. The female digs the mud and lays eggs in shallow burrows in mud.

- Af-ter breeding and egg laying, they retreat back to the high canopies of the tree and remain elusive till the next breeding season.

**Significance of the finding:**

- Extended distribution of such rare frogs in the West-ern Ghats have **conservation implications** and provide a **suitable niche** for further studies on the diverse amphibian fauna of the Ghats.

**58. It is a national park in the state of Assam, India. The national park hosts two-thirds of the world's great one-horned rhinoceros. It is a World Heritage Site. It was declared a Tiger Reserve in 2006.**

**The above description refers to which of the following national parks?**

- Kaziranga National Park
- Manas National Park
- Orang National Park
- Dibru Saikhowa National Park

**Answer: A**

**Explanation**

**Kaziranga National Park**

- Kaziranga National park is a 430 square kilometer area sprinkled with elephant-grass meadows, swampy lagoons, and dense forests are home to more than 2200 Indian one-horned rhinoceros, **approximately 2/3rd of their total world population.**
- It is located at the **edge of the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspots** – Golaghat and Nagaon district of Assam.
- **The river Brahmaputra flows through this national park.**
- **In the year 1985, the park was declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.**
- The park is the breeding ground of elephants, wild water buffalo, and swamp deer, Hoolock Gibbon, Tiger, Leopard, Sloth Bear, etc.

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- **Over the time, the tiger population also increased** in Kaziranga, and that's the reason why Kaziranga was declared as Tiger Reserve in 2006.
- Also, the park is recognized as an **Important Bird Area** by BirdLife International for the conservation of avifaunal species as good number of bird species migrate from Central Asia to this national park during the winter season.
- The other National Parks like **Dibrusaikowa, , manas, nameri, orang** national park are also located in Assam.

#### Why in the news?

- Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, billed as the best-conserved home of the one-horned animal can now be explored by boats apart from elephant and jeep safaris.

<https://www.kaziranga-national-park.com/>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/eco-tourism-boats-bicycles-new-ways-of-exploring-kaziranga/article33319832.ece>

#### 59. Haldibari-Chilahati railway line runs between which of the two countries?

- a) India and Bhutan
- b) India and Myanmar
- c) India and Bangladesh
- d) India and Nepal

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

**Why in the news?**

The rail line between Haldibari in **West Bengal** and Chilahati in **Bangladesh** is finally set to open on December 17, after a period of 55 years.

<https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/india-bangladesh-to-re-launch-cross-border-rail-route-after-55-years-the-significance-of-the-defunct-line/693363>

**60. Consider the following statements with regards to vaccine hesitancy**

- 1) Vaccine hesitancy refers to the delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccination services.
- 2) Vaccine hesitancy is one of the greatest threats to human health which finds its place in ten global threats by WHO.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

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

**Answer : C**

**Explanation:**

- As defined by WHO, Vaccine hesitancy is a “delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccination services. Hence **statement 1 is correct.**
- More than 90% of countries in the world are facing the situation of vaccine hesitancy.
- Vaccination is one of the most cost-effective ways of avoiding disease – it currently prevents 2-3 million deaths a year, and a further 1.5 million could be avoided if global coverage of vaccinations improved.
- According to WHO report, **Vaccine hesitancy is on the WHO's list of 10 threats to global health in 2019. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **The 10 threats to Global Health includes:**
  - (i) Air pollution and Climate change
  - (ii) Non communicable Diseases
  - (iii) Global Influenza Pandemic
  - (iv) Fragile and vulnerable settings
  - (v) Antimicrobial Resistance
  - (vi) Ebola and other high threat pathogens
  - (vii) Weak Primary Healthcare

(viii) Vaccine hesitancy

(ix) Dengue

(x) HIV

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642\(19\)30092-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(19)30092-6/fulltext)

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/ten-threats-to-global-health-in-2019>

61. Which among the following statements is *incorrect* with respect to Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), a component under the Ayushman Bharat?

- a) PM-JAY is the world's largest health insurance/ assurance scheme fully financed by the government and cost of implementation is shared between the Central and State Governments
- b) It provides a cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare care needs across public and private empanelled hospitals in India
- c) The households included are based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 for rural and urban areas respectively
- d) Benefits of the scheme are portable across the country i.e. a beneficiary can visit any empanelled public or private hospital in India to avail cashless treatment

Answer : B

#### Explanation

#### Ayushman Bharat

- Ayushman Bharat, a **flagship scheme of Government of India**, was launched as recommended by the **National Health Policy 2017**, to achieve the **vision of Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**
- This scheme aims to undertake path breaking interventions to **holistically address the healthcare system (covering prevention, promotion and ambulatory care)** at the primary, secondary and tertiary level.
- Ayushman Bharat adopts a continuum of care approach, comprising of two inter-related components, which are

Ø Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)

Ø Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)

### Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs)

- In February 2018, the Government of India announced the **creation of 1,50,000 Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)** by transforming the existing Sub Centres and Primary Health Centres
- Health and Wellness Centers are **envisaged to deliver an expanded range of services** to address the **primary health care needs** of the entire population in their area, expanding access, universality and equity close to the community.

### Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)

- The **second component under Ayushman Bharat** is the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna or PM-JAY as it is popularly known
- **Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY** is the **largest health assurance scheme in the world** which aims at providing a health cover of **Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization (not for primary health care needs)** to over 10.74 crores poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) that form the bottom 40% of the Indian population.
- The households included are **based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas respectively.**
- PM-JAY was earlier known as the **National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS)** before being rechristened.
- It subsumed the then existing Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) which had been launched in 2008. The coverage mentioned under PM-JAY, therefore also **includes families that were covered in RSBY** but are not present in the SECC 2011 database.
- PM-JAY is **fully funded by the Government** and cost of implementation is shared between the Central and State Governments

### Key Features of PM-JAY

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- PM-JAY is the **world's largest health insurance/ assurance scheme** fully financed by the government
- It provides a **cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year** for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization across public and private empanelled hospitals in India.
- Over 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable entitled families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) are eligible for these benefits.
- PM-JAY provides **cashless access to health care services** for the beneficiary at the point of service, that is, the hospital.
- It covers up to **3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days post-hospitalization expenses** such as diagnostics and medicines.
- There is **no restriction on the family size, age or gender.**
- All pre-existing conditions are covered from day one
- Benefits of the scheme are **portable across the country** i.e. a beneficiary can visit any empanelled public or private hospital in India to avail cashless treatment.
- Public hospitals are reimbursed for the healthcare services at par with the private hospitals.

<https://pmjay.gov.in/about/pmjay>

### 62. Consider the following statements regarding S-400 defence missile system:

- 1) It is a long-range surface-to-air missile system developed by Russia.
- 2) It has the capability of destroying any incoming hostile air object within a range of 400 km.

**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:**

- The S-400 Triumf is a modern **long-range surface-to-air missile (MLR SAM) system developed by Russia.**
- The missile system **integrates a multifunction radar, autonomous detection** and targeting systems, anti-aircraft missile systems, launchers, and command and control centre. It can provide a layered defence as it is capable of firing three types of missiles.
- The S-400 Triumf can engage **all types of aerial targets** such as aircraft, ballistic and cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) which are within the **range of 400km, at an altitude of up to 30km.Hence both the statements are correct.**

**Why in the news?**

- U.S. imposes CAATSA sanctions on Turkey for S-400 Purchase from Moscow.

**About CAATSA:**

- The Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) mandates the U.S. administration to impose sanctions on any country carrying out significant defence and energy trade with sanctioned entities in North Korea, Iran and Russia.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-imposes-caatsa-sanctions-on-turkey-for-s-400-purchase/article33333317.ece>

**63. Consider the following statements about the “core inflation”.**

1. It measures the price movements of eight core industries (Electricity, steel, refinery products, crude oil, coal, cement, natural gas and fertilizers) which comprise 40.27 per cent of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
2. The flexible inflation targeting (FIT) framework of the RBI targets to contain CPI core inflation within 4 percent with a band of (+/-) 2 percent.

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: D

**Explanation:**

- Core inflation is a measure of inflation obtained by excluding commodities of high price volatility such as food items, energy products etc.
- If temporary price shocks are taken into account, they may affect the estimated overall inflation numbers in such a way that they are different from actual inflation. To eliminate this possibility, core inflation is calculated to gauge the actual inflation apart from temporary shocks and volatility.
- Under the flexible inflation targeting (FIT) framework, RBI aims to contain **headline CPI (Combined)** within 4 percent with a band of (+/-) 2 percent.

**Why in the news?**

Food inflation in November drops to 9.43% from 11%.

<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/november-sees-food-inflation-drop-to-943/article33332634.ece>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/Core-inflation>

64. Which among the following is/are the likely measure to increase the tax-GDP ratio of a country.

1. Widening the tax base
2. Increasing tax exemptions
3. Formalisation of economy
4. Promoting Round tripping and Treaty shopping

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Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer: A

#### Explanation:

- The tax-to-GDP ratio is the ratio of tax collected compared to national gross domestic product (GDP). It marks the contribution of taxes towards GDP.
- According to the Economic Survey 2019, the gross tax to GDP ratio in India is 10.9 per cent in 2018-19.
- Some of the major reasons for India's low tax-to-GDP ratio are low direct tax base and large unorganised sector where tax evasion is more rampant compared to the organized sector.

**Hence, statements 1 and 3 are correct.**

- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** “Round tripping” and “Treaty shopping” are tax avoidance strategies employed by corporates. It further reduces the tax-to-GDP ratio. Increasing tax exemptions reduces the tax base and results in lowering the tax-to-GDP ratio. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**

#### 65. Consider the following statements about the Capital market

1. The primary market is where companies float shares to the general public in an initial public offering (IPO) to raise capital
2. A stock exchange is an example of the primary market
3. In India, the primary and secondary markets are regulated by the Security and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only

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

Answer: C

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The primary market is where companies float shares to the general public in an initial public offering (IPO) to raise capital.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Once new securities have been sold in the primary market, they are traded in the secondary market—where one investor buys shares from another investor at the prevailing market price or at whatever price both the buyer and seller agree upon. A stock exchange is an example of the secondary market.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** In India, the primary and secondary markets are regulated by the Security and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

**Why in the news?**

Strong markets led to a 2.25 times jump in the initial public offerings in 2020 to Rs 45,000 crore.

[https://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/ipo-fundraising-more-than-doubles-to-rs-45-000-crore-in-2020-kib-120121401324\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/ipo-fundraising-more-than-doubles-to-rs-45-000-crore-in-2020-kib-120121401324_1.html)

**66. With reference to the Crime & Criminal Tracking Network System (CCTNS), Consider the following statements.**

1. CCTNS aims at creating an integrated system for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of policing at the Police Station level.
2. It is a Mission Mode Project (MMP) under the National e-Governance Plan of Government of India.

**Which of the above statements is /are correct?**

- a) 1 only  
b) 2 only

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation: Both the statements are correct.**

- CCTNS aims at creating a comprehensive and integrated system for enhancing the efficiency and effective policing at all levels and especially at the Police Station level through adoption of principles of e-Governance, and creation of a nationwide networked infrastructure for evolution of IT-enabled state-of-the-art tracking system around "investigation of crime and detection of criminals" in real time, which is a critical requirement in the context of the present day internal security scenario.
- The Crime and Criminal Tracking Network Systems (CCTNS) was conceptualized by the **Ministry of Home Affairs** in detailed consultation with all stakeholders and is being implemented as a "Mission Mode Project (MMP)" since 2009 under National e-Governance Plan.

**What is National e-Governance Plan ?**

- The National e-Governance Plan is an initiative of the Government of India to make all government services available to the citizens of India via electronic media.
- NeGP was formulated by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances.

**Objectives:**

- Provide Citizen Centric Police Services via a web portal
- Pan India search on National database of Crime & Criminal records
- Crime and Criminal reports at State and Center
- Computerization of Police Processes

**Why in the news?**

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The Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, has said that integrated database concepts like the CCTNS and ICJS have become indispensable to realize the dream of New India.

#### **About Interoperable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)**

- Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) is a common platform for information exchange and analytics of all the pillars of the criminal justice system comprising Police, Forensics, Prosecution, Courts and Prisons.
- Invested under the CCTNS project of the MHA, the ICJS enables a nation wide search on police, prisons & courts databases across all States/ UTs in the country.
- Consumption of data between pillars is also being enabled.
- The objective of ICJS is to reduce errors and time taken in sharing of necessary information between the pillars, which often lead to larger challenges like longer duration of trials, poorer convictions, transit losses of documents etc.
- Some other critical benefits arising out of the ICJS ecosystem are usable analytics products like the National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO) to identify & track repeat and habitual sexual offenders.

#### **Source:**

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1680827>

[https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/WSDivision\\_SheRakshaVol2\\_08112019.pdf.pdf](https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/WSDivision_SheRakshaVol2_08112019.pdf.pdf)

<http://vikaspedia.in/e-governance/national-e-governance-plan/mission-mode-projects/crime-criminal-tracking-network-and-systems>

#### **67. Consider the following statements about Quality Council of India (QCI)**

- 1) QCI was set up jointly by the Government of India and the Indian Industry.
- 2) Chairman of QCI is appointed by the Prime Minister on the recommendations of the industry to the Government.

#### **Which of the above given statements is/are incorrect?**

- a) 1 only

- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: D

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Quality Council of India (QCI) was **set up jointly** by the **Government of India and the Indian Industry** represented by the three premier industry associations i.e. Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (**ASSOCHAM**), Confederation of Indian Industry (**CII**) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (**FICCI**), to establish and **operate national accreditation structure** and promote quality through National Quality Campaign
- QCI is registered as a **non-profit society** with its own Memorandum of Association. QCI is **governed by a Council** of 38 members with **equal representations of government, industry and consumers**
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Chairman of QCI is **appointed by the Prime Minister** on the recommendation of the industry to the government. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), **Ministry of Commerce & Industry is the nodal ministry** for QCI

**Functions**

- To develop, establish & operate **National Accreditation program in accordance with the relevant international standards**
- To encourage development & **application of third party assessment model** for use in government, regulators, **organizations and society**
- To lead **nationwide quality movement** in the country through **National Quality Campaign** aimed at creating awareness amongst citizens, empowering them to demand quality in all spheres of activities

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- Promoting the establishment of quality improvement and **benchmarking centre**, as a **repository of best international / national practices** and their dissemination among the industry in all sectors

#### Why in the news?

- **Quality Council of India (QCI)** at the behest of the FSSAI has come out with a **Scheme for approval of Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies** to scale up Hygiene Rating by increasing the number of recognised Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies in the country.

#### News in detail:

- FSSAI's initiative of "**Food Hygiene Rating Scheme**" is a **certification system for food businesses** supplying food directly to consumers, either on or off premise, the ministry said in a statement.
- The food establishments are rated based on hygiene and safety conditions observed at the time of audit.
- It said the rating will be in the form of smileys (1 up to 5) and the certificate should be displayed prominently in the consumer facing area.

#### Significance of the new scheme

- The recognised Hygiene Rating Audit Agency will **verify the compliance** with food hygiene and safety procedures laid by FSSAI.
- The hygiene rating and its recognition scheme will help in **improving confidence** of Indian consumers and food service operators in basic hygiene and quality of food.
- The scheme aims to allow consumers to make **informed choices/decisions** pertaining to the food outlets where they eat by encouraging food businesses to improve their hygiene and safety standards

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1680753>

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/qci-launches-recognition-scheme-for-hygiene-rating-audit-agencies/1993469>

68. Consider the following statements with respect to Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Cardholders.

- 1) OCI cardholders do not need permission to make donations to religious and charitable institutions.
- 2) OCI cardholders enjoy all fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, except the right to freedom of speech and expression.

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: D**

**Explanation:**

**Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Cardholder**

The Ministry of Home Affairs defines an OCI as a person who:

- Was a citizen of India on or after 26th January 1950; or
- Was eligible to become a citizen of India on 26th January 1950; or
- Is a child or grandchild of such a person, among other eligibility criteria.

According to Section 7A of the OCI card rules, an applicant is not eligible for the OCI card if he, his parents or grandparents have ever been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh.

**Statement 1 and 2 are incorrect:**

Recently, the Union government has told the Delhi High Court that **Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders do not enjoy fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, including the right to freedom of speech and expression.**

- This response was to a plea seeking information under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.

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- The plea also sought exemption for overseas citizens from seeking permission under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010 (FCRA) to make donations to religious and charitable institutions.
- According to the plea, the right to make donations to religious institutions and the fundamental right to freedom of religion are guaranteed by the Constitution.

The OCI card holders have merely been given **statutory right under the Indian Citizenship Act 1955**. And therefore **Overseas citizens have to seek permission under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010 (FCRA) to make donations to religious and charitable institutions**.

#### Why in the news?

The Karnataka High Court recently held that Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) cardholders need not seek admission only under the quota meant for Non-Resident Indian (NRI) students in professional educational institutions (medical/dental or engineering colleges), but are eligible for admission under institutional as well as State Government quota seats.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/karnataka/2020/dec/16/oci-students-eligible-for-govt-quota-seats-hc-2236810.html>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/fundamental-rights-not-for-oci-card-holders-govt-to-hc-6245108/>

#### 69. Consider the following statements regarding Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC).

1. An apex-level FSDC is a statutory body.
2. The Union Finance Minister of India is the chairperson of FSDC.
3. Funds are separately allocated to the Council for undertaking its activities like financial stability, financial sector development, inter-regulatory coordination, financial literacy, financial inclusion etc..

**Which of the above statements is/ are correct?**

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect.**

- The Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was constituted in December, 2010.
- The FSDC was set up to strengthen and institutionalise the mechanism for maintaining financial stability, enhancing inter-regulatory coordination and promoting financial sector development.
- An apex-level FSDC **is not a statutory body.**

**Statement 2 is correct.**

- The Council is chaired by the **Union Finance Minister** and its members are **Governor, Reserve Bank of India;** Finance Secretary and/or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs; Secretary, Department of Financial Services; Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance; Chairman, Securities and Exchange Board of India; Chairman, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority and Chairman, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority.
- It also includes the chairman of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board (IBBI).

**Statement 3 is incorrect.** The Council deals, inter-alia, with issues relating to financial stability, financial sector development, inter-regulatory coordination, financial literacy, financial inclusion and macro prudential supervision of the economy, including the functioning of large financial conglomerates. **No funds are separately allocated** to the Council for undertaking its activities.

**Why in the news?**

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The Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) meeting, chaired by Finance Minister held recently discussed further measures that may be needed to ensure consistent support to the financial sector for achieving faster real economic growth and overall macroeconomic targets, while continuing to maintain financial stability.

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/economic-recovery-will-be-faster-than-predicted-fsdc/article33338954.ece>

70. Which among the following are examples of Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)?

1. Housing Finance Companies
2. Nidhi Companies
3. Chit Funds
4. Stock Exchanges

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer: **D**

#### Explanation:

- Housing Finance Companies, Merchant Banking Companies, Stock Exchanges, Companies engaged in the business of stock-broking/sub-broking, Venture Capital Fund Companies, Nidhi Companies, Insurance companies and Chit Fund Companies are examples of NBFCs.

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71. With reference to the "Human Development Report", consider the following statements:

1. It is released by the World Bank.
2. It ranks countries based on their Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

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: D

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Human Development Report is released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** It ranks countries based on
  - **Standard of living-** measured by the gross national income (GNI) per capita;
  - **Health-** measured by life expectancy at birth;
  - **Education-** levels calculated by mean years of education among the adult population and the expected years of schooling for children.
- The Human Development Report 2019 ranked India at 129th position among 189 countries.

72. Which of the following organization started the Momentum for Change initiative?

- (a) UN Climate Change secretariat
- (b) UNEP
- (c) IUCN
- (d) UNICEF

Answer: A

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**Explanation:** Momentum for Change is an initiative spearheaded by the **UN Climate Change secretariat** to shine a light on the enormous groundswell of activities underway across the globe that are moving the world toward a highly resilient, low-carbon future.

- Momentum for Change recognizes innovative and transformative solutions that address both climate change and wider economic, social and environmental challenges. Hence, option (a) is correct

**73. The Government of India recently launched the GEMINI device. Which of the below best describes its purpose?**

- (a) To detect a pandemic outbreak
- (b) To find cyber attacks and prevent them
- (c) To find drought prone areas using satellites
- (d) To issue warnings related to disasters to fishermen

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- Gagan Enabled Mariner's Instrument for Navigation and Information (GEMINI) is a device that is used for seamless and effective dissemination of emergency information and communication on disaster warnings, Potential Fishing Zones (PFZ) and Ocean States Forecasts (OSF) to fishermen.
- The device will help to provide information related to disaster warnings when fishermen move away from the coast beyond 10 to 12 kilometres. Hence option d is the correct answer.

74. Beagle Channel is shared between which of the following countries?

- a) Chile and Argentina
- b) Brazil and Chile
- c) Brazil and Mexico
- d) Mexico and Chile

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Puerto Williams in Chile has become the world's southernmost city** after its status upgraded from hamlet to city.
- It is the **main settlement, port and naval base on Navarino Island in Chile.**
- It took over the title from Ushuaia in Argentina which was the world's southernmost city till recently.
- Puerto Williams faces the Beagle Channel, which is a strait in Tierra del Fuego Archipelago (shared by Chile and Argentina) on South America's extreme southern tip.



75. 'Point Sonam' is located on which of the following?

- a) Kanchenjunga
- b) Mt Everest
- c) Siachen Glacier

d) Mt Etna

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

- Siachen Glacier is among the **largest glaciers in the non-polar region of the world.**
- It lies in the Karakoram Range system which is a part of western Himalayas.
- Siachen Glacier also boasts of the **world's highest helipad built by India at Point Sonam, to supply its troops.**
- **India also installed the world's highest telephone booth on the glacier.**

**76. Recently, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an equipment called 'UV blaster' for which of the following purpose?**

- a) For Pathogen Reduction in Food Processing
- b) For rapid and chemical free disinfection of high infection prone areas
- c) To diffuse Unexploded Bombs with low order detonation
- d) To aid India's effort towards Automated border control systems

**Ans: B**

**Explanation**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an **Ultra Violet (UV) Disinfection Tower** for rapid and **chemical free disinfection** of high infection prone areas.
- The **equipment named UV blaster** is a **UV based area sanitiser** designed and developed by Laser Science & Technology Centre (LASTEC), the Delhi based premier laboratory of DRDO with the help of M/s New Age Instruments and Materials Private Limited, Gurugram
- The UV Blaster is **useful for high tech surfaces** like electronic equipment, **computers and other gadgets in laboratories** and offices **that are not suitable for disinfection with chemical methods.**

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- The product is also **effective for areas with large flow of people** such as airports, shopping malls, metros, hotels, factories, offices, etc
  - The UV based area sanitiser may be used by **remote operation** through laptop/mobile phone using wifi link.
  - This **sanitiser switches off on accidental opening of room or human intervention**.
- One more salient safety feature of the product is the key to arm operation

**77. Consider the following statements with respect to Minorities mentioned in the Indian Constitution?**

- 1) The definition for the term Minorities is provided in the Indian Constitution.
- 2) Only Religious minorities can set up their own education institutions.

**Which of the above statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

**Statement 1 is Incorrect**

- The Constitution **uses the word 'minorities'** in some articles **but does not define it** anywhere and speaks of those 'based on religion or language only'.
- The Constitution of India used the word 'minorities' or its plural form in some articles 29 to 30 and 350 A to 350 B.
- **Article 29** has the word 'minorities' in its marginal heading but speaks of "any section of citizens having a distinct language, script and culture".

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**All minorities, religious or linguistic**, can set up their own educational institutions. By doing so, they can preserve and develop their own culture. The government will not, while granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the basis that it is under the management of minority community. Hence, it is not just religious minorities. **Statement 2 is incorrect.**

**Why in the news?**

**World Minorities Rights Day** celebrated on **18th December**.

- The day is celebrated by the **National Commission for Minorities** in India which focuses on religious harmony, respect, and a better understanding of all minorities' communities.
- The Constitution of India provides equal rights for all citizens and safeguards the rights of linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities. It also has provisions for economically or socially disadvantaged people, including the people of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=World-Minorities-Rights-Day-celebrated-on-18-Dec&id=406301>

**78. The terms "Ethereum", "Ripple", "Libra", "Stellar (XLM)" sometimes mentioned in news are associated with**

- a) Cyber Attacks
- B) Exoplanets
- C) Mini Satellites
- D) Cryptocurrencies

**Answer : Option D**

**Explanation :** Generally people think BitCoin is the only cryptocurrency but other than that there are many other important cryptocurrencies dominating the digital world. **Most important in cryptocurrencies are** Ethereum, Ripple, NEO , Stellar.

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**Libra** is a permissioned blockchain digital currency proposed by the American social media company **Facebook**. The currency and network do not yet exist, and only rudimentary experimental code has been released. The launch is planned to be in **2020**.

Ethereum, Blockchain technology is being used to create applications that go beyond just enabling a digital currency. Launched in July of 2015, Ethereum is one of the largest and most well-established, open-ended decentralized software platforms. It has evolved as a potential competitor to bitcoin.

### 79. Consider the following statements with respect to the sessions of the Parliament

1. The President addresses the joint session of parliament at the commencement of the first session of each year
2. The constitution stipulates that there should be three sessions of parliament every year

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: A**

#### **Explanation**

As per constitution, the President addresses joint session of parliament at the commencement of first session of each year and also at the commencement of first session after each general election to the Lok Sabha.

**Statement 2 is not correct** because the constitution only stipulates that not more than six months shall lapse between two sessions of parliament. Having three sessions in a year is as per convention and not as per provisions of constitution.

**Why in the news?**

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/parliament-winter-session-lok-sabha-rajya-sabha-7107893/>

**80. Jaivik Kheti Portal sometimes seen in the news is related to**

- a) Facilitating organic farmers to sell their organic produce
- b) Facilitate reporting of labour inspections and submission of Returns.
- c) Aviation Jobs Portal for Aspirants and prospective Employers
- d) Platform for farmers to seek any information related to agriculture.

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

Jaivikkheti portal is a unique initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Department of Agriculture (DAC) along with MSTC **to promote organic farming globally.**

**Key Features of the portal:**

- **Promotion of organic farming:** It is a one-stop solution for facilitating organic farmers to sell their organic produce and promoting organic farming and its benefits.
- **E-Commerce & knowledge platform:** The portal is an E-commerce as well as a knowledge platform. Knowledge repository section of the portal includes case studies, videos, and best farming practices, success stories and other material related to organic farming to facilitate and promote organic farming. The e-commerce section of the portal provides the whole bouquet of organic products ranging from grains, pulses, fruits and vegetables.
- **Products available at door-step:** Through this portal buyers can now avail organic products at their doorstep through the portal at much lower prices.
- **Linking the stakeholders:** This portal links various stakeholders like regional councils, local groups, individual farmers, buyers, government agencies and input suppliers for the all-inclusive development and promotion of organic farming.

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- **Price discovery Mechanism to Farmers:** The portal provides various price discovery mechanisms to help farmers get the best prices for their products through forward auction, price-quantity bidding, book building and reverse auction mechanisms.

#### **Benefits from the point of view of farmers**

- The fertile capacity of the land increases.
- Irrigation intervals increase.
- Reducing dependence on chemical fertilizer reduces costs.
- Increase in productivity of crops.

#### **Benefits of soil**

- The use of organic manure improves the quality of the land.
- The water holding capacity of the land increases.
- Evaporation of water from the land will be less.

#### **Environmental benefits**

- The water level of the land increases.
- There is a reduction in pollution through soil, food and water in the ground.
- The use of waste, in composting, reduces diseases.
- Reduction in cost of crop production and increase in income.
- Quality of organic product in the international market competition.

#### **Statement b refers to Shram Suvidha Portal**

Shram Suvidha Portal facilitates businessmen to get all kinds of registrations and submit returns that are required under labour laws at a single online window. It also makes available to them the inspection reports prepared by the enforcement agency inspectors online. The procedures have been simplified; returns and registration forms have been unified to provide a business environment that encourages compliance by reducing transaction costs and promoting ease of business.

#### **Statement c refers to Aviation Jobs Portal**

Aviation Jobs portal is a unique initiative to harness the growth potential of the aviation sector to contribute to employment and re-employment in skilled aviation jobs in India. Both Candidates and Employers would be able to access a wider choice. Candidates will be able to seek job opportunities matching their profiles. Employers will be able to shortlist those suitable to serve their HR requirements as per their company policy through an online medium.

**Statement d refers to National Agriculture Market (eNAM) portal**

National Agriculture Market (eNAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the lead agency for implementing eNAM under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India. Its main objective is to promote uniformity in agriculture marketing by streamlining of procedures across the integrated markets, removing information asymmetry between buyers and sellers and promoting real time price discovery based on actual demand and supply.

**81. It is one of the largest freshwater lakes in India. It is located between Krishna and Godavari delta. It serves as an important habitat for migratory birds. The lake has been designated as a wildlife sanctuary and a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.**

**The above description refers to which of the following?**

- a) Kolleru lake
- b) Chilika lake
- c) Pulicat lake
- d) Wular lake

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

**Kolleru lake**

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- Kolleru, one of the largest freshwater lakes in India, is situated between the **Krishna and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.**
- Many birds migrate here in winter, such as Siberian crane, ibis, and painted storks.
- The lake is an important habitat for an estimated 20 million resident and migratory birds, including the grey or spot-billed pelican .
- The lake was declared as a wildlife sanctuary in November 1999 under India's Wildlife Protection Act of 1972,
- It is designated as a **wetland of international importance** under the international **Ramsar Convention.**

#### **Chilika lake**

- Chilika Lake is **Asia's largest brackish water lake** and a shallow lagoon with estuarine character spread across the districts of **Puri, Khurda and Ganjam in the state of Odisha** in eastern India.
- It is the **largest wintering ground for migratory waterfowl** found anywhere on the Indian sub-continent.
- Chilika lake is designated as a **"Ramsar Site", that is a wetland of International Importance.**

#### **Pulicat lake**

- **Pulicat Lagoon** is the **second largest brackish water lagoon** in India, after Chilika Lake. It is present in the Coromandel Region i.e. Andhra Pradesh-Tamil Nadu Border.
- The barrier island of Sriharikota separates the lake from the Bay of Bengal and is home to the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.

#### **Wular lake**

- Wular Lake is also one of the largest freshwater lakes in Asia. The lake lies at an altitude of 1,580 m.
- The lake basin was formed as a result of tectonic activity and is fed by the Jhelum River.
- The lake is one of the Indian wetlands designated as a Ramsar site.

#### **Ramsar convention:**

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- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.
- The inclusion of a wetland in the List embodies the government's commitment to take the steps necessary to ensure that its ecological character is maintained. The Convention includes various measures to respond to threats to the ecological character of Sites.

#### Why in the news?

The Kolleru lake bed villages in Krishna and West Godavari districts are buzzing with tourists once again, after months of pandemic break.

82. Which of the following is/are advantages of 5G technology?

- 1) Faster speed
- 2) Ultra Low latency
- 3) Increased connectivity

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

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

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

The fifth generation of mobile communication networks is 5g technology.

5G is projected to bring three main benefits:

**Faster speed:** Data transfer speeds are projected to be about 10 times higher with 5G than is possible with 4G. That means significantly faster transmission of images and videos. With 4G/LTE, downloading a high-definition movie might take about 10 minutes. With 5G, it should take less than a second.

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**Shorter delays:** Though it's not always noticeable, there is often a brief lag in time from when data is sent to when it's received. 5G should reduce this so-called latency, making it possible, for example, to watch high-speed virtual reality video with no delays or glitches.

**Increased connectivity:** Cell towers equipped with 5G technology would have greatly increased capacity over 4G/LTE. That means more people — and more devices — should be able to communicate at the same time.

**Hence all three are advantages of 5G technology.**

**Why in the news?**

The emerging 5G technology with Internet of Things (IoT) is becoming the most revolutionary technology in the world.

83. Consider the following statements about 'State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index' (SARAL)

- 1) SARAL is the first of its kind index to provide a comprehensive overview of state-level measures adopted to facilitate rooftop solar deployment.
- 2) SARAL has been designed by the Ministry of Science and Technology.
- 3) The State of Karnataka has been placed at the first rank in the Index .

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

- SARAL has been designed collaboratively by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy(not ministry of Science and Technology),Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and Ernst & Young (EY). Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**

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- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has set a target of 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022, of which 100 GW solar power is to be operational by March 2022, of which 40 GW is expected to come from grid connected solar rooftops.
- State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index (SARAL) is the first of its kind index to provide a comprehensive overview of state-level measures adopted to facilitate rooftop solar deployment. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

#### About SARAL Index:

- The Index evaluates Indian states based on their attractiveness for rooftop development.
- It was launched during the Review Planning and Monitoring (RPM) Meeting with States and State Power Utilities.

#### SARAL currently captures five key aspects –

- i. robustness of policy framework
  - ii. implementation environment
  - iii. investment climate
  - iv. consumer experience
  - v. business ecosystem
- The State of Karnataka has been placed at the first rank. Hence statement 3 is correct.
  - Telangana, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh have got 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> rank respectively.

84. The term cellular agriculture seen in the news refers to

- (a) Production of electrical energy from agricultural fields without use of fossil fuel
- (b) The practice of agriculture that focuses on the production of proteins, fats, and tissues using biotechnology
- (c) Production of hydrogen fuel cells
- (d) Method of zero budget farming technique

Answer: B

#### **EXPLANATION**

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- **Cellular agriculture** refers to the practice of agriculture that focuses on the production of proteins, fats, and tissues using biotechnology
- **Cultured meat** is meat produced by in vitro cultivation of animal cells, instead of from slaughtered animals.
- It is a form of cellular agriculture.

### 85. Consider the following statements regarding the Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC)

1. IPCC aims to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies
2. It is an initiative of World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
3. IPCC identifies the strength of scientific agreement in different areas and indicates where further research is needed.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

Ans: C

#### Explanation

- Created in **1988** by the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** and the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, the IPCC aims to provide **governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies.**
- The IPCC provides **regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change**, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.

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- The IPCC is an **organization of governments that are members of the United Nations or WMO**. The IPCC currently has 195 members. Thousands of people from all over the world contribute to the work of the IPCC.
- For the assessment reports, IPCC scientists volunteer their time to assess the thousands of scientific papers published each year to provide a comprehensive summary of what is known about the drivers of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and how adaptation and mitigation can reduce those risks.
- An open and transparent review by experts and governments around the world is an essential part of the IPCC process, **to ensure an objective and complete assessment** and to reflect a diverse range of views and expertise.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Through its assessments, the **IPCC identifies the strength of scientific agreement** in different areas and indicates where further research is needed. **The IPCC does not conduct its own research.**

#### 86. Identify the correctly matched pairs of Martial art forms in India with their states:

1. Thang-ta - Meghalaya.
2. Kalaripayattu - Kerala.
3. Thoda - Himachal Pradesh.
4. Gatka - Punjab

#### Select the correct answer from the below codes:

- a. 1 and 3 only
- b. 2,3 and 4 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1,2,3 and 4.

Answer: B

Explanation:

**Kalaripayattu – Kerala Kalarippayattu** is a famous Indian martial art from land of attraction Kerala and one of the oldest fighting systems in existence. It is practiced in most of the part of south India.

**Thang Ta – Manipur**

Thang Ta is popular term for the ancient Manipuri Martial Art also known as HUYEN LALLONG. Manipuri martial arts with swords and spears, is a strong yet gracefully sophisticated art.

Huyen Langlon martial art from Manipur consists of two main components, armed combat and unarmed fighting. Sword and spear are the two primary weapons of huyen langlon.

**Thoda** martial art also known as the dance of archery from **Himachal Pradesh**. Thoda is known as a form of a martial art form that is commonly seen in Himachal Pradesh, especially in the valleys of Kullu and Manali. This sport needs excellence in archery, where the main weapons are bows and arrows. This game has two groups and the main target is the opponent's legs below knees.

**Why in the news?**

- The Sports Ministry has approved the inclusion of four indigenous Games to be a part of Khelo India Youth Games 2021, scheduled to take place in Haryana. The games include Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta and Mallakhamba.
- **Mallakhamba** has been well-known across India and **Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra** have been the hotspots of this sport. **Gatka** originates from **Punjab** and this traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defense as well as a sport.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Govt-approves-inclusion-of-four-indigenous-sports-in-Khelo-India-Youth-Games-2021&id=406417>

**87. India is reported to have a “double burden of malnutrition” which means**

- (a) Existence of malnourishment among mother and children in a family
- (b) Co-existence of wasting and stunting among children
- (c) Prevalence of under-nutrition and overnutrition among population

(d) Deficiency of both macronutrients and micronutrients

**Answer: (c)**

- The double burden of malnutrition is characterised by the **coexistence of undernutrition along with overweight and obesity** (overnutrition), or **diet-related noncommunicable diseases**, within individuals, households and populations, and across the lifecycle.
- While the **Global Hunger Index (GHI)** ranked **India at 102 among 117 countries** in 2019, in view of the prevalent undernutrition situation, **overnutrition is emerging as a silent epidemic in many parts of the country.**
- The WHO groups India—with **over 10 percent of under-five children overweight**—with Thailand and Indonesia in the region, both of which have much higher per capita incomes.
- The proportion of overweight children is less than three percent in countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- In the wake of urbanisation, globalisation and economic growth, there has been a major shift in the nutrition profile of the population which is characterised by high rates of undernutrition alongside high and increasing rates of overweight and obesity.
- Simultaneously, the **proportion of diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is increasing** as a major cause of death even as communicable, maternal, neonatal and nutritional causes are coming down.

**88. It is a Wildlife Sanctuary located in the state of Kerala. It is now an integral part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. It is part of the Deccan Plateau and the vegetation is predominantly of the south Indian moist deciduous teak forests. Also, the sanctuary has pastures of the west-coast semi-evergreen trees. The wildlife sanctuary comes under Project Elephant. It holds the largest tiger population in the State.**

**The above description refers to which of the following Wildlife Sanctuary ?**

- a) Mudumalai
- b) Bandipur
- c) Nagarhole

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d) Wayanad

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary is an animal **sanctuary in Wayanad, Kerala**. It has an extent of 344.44 km<sup>2</sup> with four ranges namely **Sulthan Bathery, Muthanga, Kurichiat and Tholpetty**
- Established in 1973, the sanctuary is **now an integral part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**. It is bounded by the protected area network of Nagarhole and Bandipur of Karnataka in the northeast, and on the southeast by Mudumalai of Tamil Nadu.
- It is **part of the Deccan Plateau and the vegetation** is predominantly of the south Indian moist deciduous teak forests. Also, the sanctuary has pastures of the west-coast semi-evergreen trees. The wildlife sanctuary comes under Protect Elephant and one can spot a herd of elephants roaming in the area.
- Wayanad district has the **largest population of Adivasi in Kerala**. Scheduled tribes here include Paniyas, Kurumas, Adiyans, Kurichiyas, Ooralis and Kattunaikkans.
- A monitoring programme of the Forest Department for 2017-18 has found that the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS), **holds the largest tiger population in the State**.

**89. Consider the following pairs:**

1. Alipore conspiracy - PrafullaChaki and Khudiram Bose
2. Delhi conspiracy - Sachin Sanyal and Rash Behari Ghosh
3. Nasik Conspiracy - V.D. Savarkar
4. Kakori conspiracy - Ram prasad Bismil

Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?

- (a) 1,2 and 3
- (b) 2,3 and 4
- (c) 2 and 4 only
- (d) All of the above

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Answer: (d)

Explanation: In 1908 a revolutionary conspiracy called **Alipore conspiracy** was intrigued to kill the Chief Presidency Magistrate D.H. Kingford of Muzaffarpur. The task was entrusted to **Khudiram Bose and PrafullaChaki**. They threw the bombs on a vehicle coming out of the magistrate's home on April 30, 1908.

**Delhi-Lahore Conspiracy** was organised by the Indian revolutionary underground in Bengal and Punjab and headed by **Rashbehari Bose** to assassinate the then Viceroy of India, Lord Hardinge. Basant Kumar Biswas, Amir Chand and AvadhBehari were convicted and executed in the trial of this Delhi Conspiracy Case.

On December 21, 1909, AnantLaxmanKanhare (one of the member of Abhinav Bharat Society) shot the Collector of Nashik , A M T Jackson in the theatre at Nasik. This sensational murder is known as **Nasik Conspiracy Case**. The members of the Abhinav Bharat Society viz. **V.D. Savarkar**, Ganesh Savarkar, etc. were convicted and punished.

**Kakori train robbery or Kakori Case** was a train robbery against the British Indian Government.It was organised by revolutionary organisation i.e., Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) under the leadership of **Ram Prasad Bismil and supported by Ashfaulla Khan, RajendraLahiri, Chandrashekhar Azad**.

Why in the news?

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-who-was-khudiram-bose-7111682/>

### 90. Consider the following statements about exoplanets

1. Planets that orbit around another planet are called exoplanets.
2. No exoplanet has been found so far by any scientists

**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: D

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** All of the planets in our solar system orbit around the Sun. **Planets that orbit around other stars** (not Planets that orbit around another planet) **are called exoplanets.** Exoplanets are **planets beyond our own solar system.**
- **Statement 2 is incorrect: Thousands of exoplanets have been discovered** in the past **two decades**, mostly with NASA's Kepler Space Telescope. These worlds come in a huge variety of sizes and orbits. Some are gigantic planets hugging close to their parent stars.
- NASA and other agencies are looking for a special kind of planet, one that has the same size as that of Earth, orbiting a sun-like star in the **habitable zone**
  - **Habitable zone:** The habitable zone is the range of **distances from a star** where a **planet's temperature allows liquid water oceans**, critical for life on Earth.
  - The earliest definition of the zone was based on simple thermal equilibrium, but current calculations of the habitable zone include many other factors, including the **greenhouse effect of a planet's atmosphere**
- The first **confirmed discovery** of a world orbiting a sun-like star, in 1995, was **51 Pegasi b**, a Jupiter-mass planet 20 times closer to its sun than that of earth's closeness to its Sun.
- Astronomers announced in August 2016 that they might have found a habitable planet orbiting **Proxima Centauri**. The newfound world, known as **Proxima b**, is about 1.3 times more massive than Earth.
  - The planet is also in the **star's habitable zone, just 4.7 million miles** (7.5 million kilometers) from its host star. It completes one orbit every 11.2 Earth-days.

**Why in the news?**

An international team of scientists has collected the first possible radio signal from a planet beyond our solar system, emanating from an exoplanet system about 51 light-years away.

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/first-potential-radio-signal-from-exoplanet/article33373218.ece>

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**91. In the context of the Consumer Protection Act 2019, consider the following statements**

- 1) The new act provides flexibility to the consumers to file complaints from anywhere in the country.
- 2) The central consumer protection authority created under the act can impose penalty on manufacturers as well as endorsers for false or misleading advertisement.
- 3) The act does not include a person as a consumer who obtains a good for resale or for commercial purposes.

Which of the statements is/are **not** correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 1 and 2 only
- C) 3 only
- D) None of the above

**Answer: Option D**

- The Parliament passed the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 which replaces the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.
- The act defines consumer as a person who buys any goods or avails a service for a consideration.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** It does not include a person who obtains a good for resale or a good or service for commercial purposes.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The central government will set up a Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers. It will regulate matters related to violation of consumer rights, unfair trade practices, and misleading advertisements. Advertisers promoting misleading advertisements can be penalised with penalty up to Rupees 10 lakhs and imprisonment for a term which may extend up to 2 years.
- **Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions (CDRCs)** will be set up at the district, state, and national levels. The Act also enables regulations to be notified on E-commerce and direct selling with focus on protection of interest of consumers.

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- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Act allows consumers to file their complaint with the court from anywhere. This comes as a big relief as earlier they were required to file a complaint in the area where the seller or service provider was located.

#### Why in the news?

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1682347>

92. He was one of the most eminent freedom fighters of India. He advocated complete Swaraj and was in favour of the use of force to gain it. He started a newspaper named swaraj in 1921. He formed the All India Forward Bloc in 1939 as a faction within the Congress. His famous quote is, "Give me blood, and I shall give you freedom!".

The above description refers to which of the following leaders?

- a) Mahatma Gandhi
- b) Jawaharlal Nehru
- c) Subash Chandra Bose
- d) Rash Behari Bose

Answer: C

Explanation:

- Subhas Chandra Bose was one of the most eminent freedom fighters of India.
- Bose joined the Indian National Congress (Formed on December 28, 1885) in 1921. He also started a newspaper called 'Swaraj'.
- Bose authored the book 'The Indian Struggle' which covers the Indian independence movement from 1920 to 1942.
- He advocated **complete Swaraj** and was in favour of the use of force to gain it.
- He had differences with Gandhi and he wasn't keen on non-violence as a tool for independence.
- Bose stood for and was elected the party's president in 1939 but was forced to resign due to differences with Gandhi's supporters.
- He formed the **All India Forward Bloc** in 1939 as a faction within the Congress.

- His famous quote is, "Give me blood, and I shall give you freedom!".

**Why in the news?**

Government decides to constitute a High Level Committee headed by Union Home Minister to commemorate the 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1682423>

**93. Consider the following statements about the Price Stabilisation Fund.**

- 1) It is constituted for the purpose of containing extreme volatility in prices of selected commodities.
- 2) The government constituted the Price Stabilisation Fund for the first time in 2014 and discontinued the mechanism since then.

**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:**

- Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) refers to any fund constituted for the purpose of containing extreme volatility in prices of selected commodities.
- The amount in the fund is generally utilised for activities aimed at bringing down/up the high/low prices say for instance, procurement of such products and distribution of the same as and when required, so that prices remain in a range.
- PSF was first set up in 2014-15 to help regulate the price volatility of important agricultural commodities like onion, potatoes and pulses.
- It provides for maintaining a strategic buffer of commodities for subsequent calibrated release to moderate price volatility and discourage hoarding and unscrupulous speculation.

**Statement 2 is incorrect:**

- The government still implements PSF when a situation arises.
- To contain onion prices, the government purchased 35,857 tonne of onion from the overseas market under the Price Stabilisation Fund since November 2019.
- In the Union Budget 2020-21, the Government announced that it will implement PSF to help moderate volatility in prices of agri-horticultural commodities like pulses, onion, and potato.

**94. Consider the following statements regarding the provisions of Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897**

1. It empowers state governments/UTs to take special measures for containing the outbreak of diseases
2. The act empowers only the Central government to prescribe regulations to be observed by the public as it paves way for uniform regulations throughout the country
3. It gives legal protection to the implementing officers acting under the Act

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer : B**

**Explanation**

**Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897**

- It is routinely enforced across the country for dealing with **outbreaks of diseases** such as swine flu, dengue, and cholera. It was introduced by colonial government to tackle the **epidemic of bubonic plague** that had spread in the erstwhile Bombay Presidency in the 1890s

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· Historians have criticised the Act for its potential for abuse. Using powers conferred by the Act, colonies authorities **would search suspected plague cases in homes and among passengers**, with forcible segregations, evacuations, and demolitions of infected places.

· In 1897, the year the law was enforced, **freedom fighter Bal Gangadhar Tilak was punished with 18 months rigorous imprisonment** after his newspapers Kesari and Mahratta admonished imperial authorities for their handling of the plague epidemic

**Provisions of the 1897 Epidemic Diseases Act**

· It empowers **state governments/UTs to take special measures** and formulate regulations for containing the outbreak.

· It also empowers state to **prescribe such temporary regulations** to be observed by the public or by any person or class of persons as it shall deem necessary to prevent the outbreak of such disease or the spread thereof

· The state may determine in what manner and by whom any expenses incurred (including compensation if any) shall be defrayed.

· The State Government may **take measures and prescribe regulations** for the inspection of persons travelling by railway or otherwise, and the segregation, in hospital, temporary accommodation or otherwise, of persons suspected by the inspecting officer of being infected with any such disease.

· It also **provides penalties for disobeying any regulation** or order made under the Act. These are according to section 188 of the Indian Penal Code (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant).

· It also gives **legal protection to the implementing officers** acting under the Act.

**95. Consider the following statements about UDAN**

- 1) Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) was launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- 2) It aims to create affordable yet economically viable and profitable flights on regional routes.

**Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?**

- a) 1 only

- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: D**

**Explanation.**

**UDAN**

**Both the statements are correct.**

- Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) was launched as a **regional connectivity scheme under the Ministry of Civil Aviation** in 2016.
- It is an innovative scheme to develop the regional aviation market.
- It aims to create affordable yet economically viable and profitable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns.

**Why in the news?**

The first flight operations from Belgaum (Karnataka) to Surat (Gujarat) to Kishangarh (Ajmer) were flagged off today under the RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) of the Government of India.

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1682459>

**96. Consider the following statements regarding the ‘*floor test*’ in State legislature**

1. It is the determination on the floor of the House whether the Chief Minister commands the support of the majority of the MLAs
2. The voting process can happen orally, with electronic gadgets or a ballot process

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation**

- A floor test is **the determination on the floor of the House** whether the Chief Minister commands the support of the majority of the MLAs
- This can be done by **means of a voice vote**, or by recording the vote of each MLA in the House. This determination of majority is done in a sitting of the legislature, for which the legislature has to be convened
- This voting **process happen in the state's Legislative Assembly** or the Lok Sabha at the central level
- Technically, the chief minister of a state is appointed by the Governor. The appointed chief minister usually belongs to the single largest party or the coalition which has the '**magic number**'
- The magic number is the total number of seats required to form a government, or stay in power. It is the half-way mark, plus one. In case of a tie, the **Speaker casts the deciding vote**
- However, at times, a **government's majority can be questioned**. The leader of the party claiming majority has to move a vote of confidence
- If some MLAs **remain absent or abstain from voting**, the majority is counted on the basis of those present and voting. This effectively reduces the strength of the House and in turn brings down the majority-mark.
- The **voting process can happen orally**, with electronic gadgets or a ballot process.
- The Governor can also ask the Chief Minister **to prove his or her majority in the House** if the stability of the government comes into question

**97. Consider the following statements about Great Indian Bustard**

- 1) It is a critically endangered species under the red list of IUCN.
- 2) The great Indian bustard inhabits dry grasslands and scrublands on the Indian subcontinent.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

- a) 1 only

- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- The Great Indian Bustard is one of the heaviest flying birds, which can weigh up to 15 kg and grow up to one metre in height.
- It is considered the flagship grassland species, representing the health of the grassland ecology.
- The great Indian bustard **inhabits dry grasslands and scrublands** on the Indian subcontinent. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.
- It has also been identified as one of the species for the recovery programme under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India.
- Rajasthan forest department, announced its own Project Great Indian Bustard to conserve the species. The bird also happens to be the **state bird of Rajasthan** and not Gujarat. It is a **critically endangered species** under the red list of IUCN. Hence, **Statement 1 is incorrect**.

**Why in the news?**

In a novel initiative to protect the critically endangered great Indian bustard from colliding with live wires, the Wildlife Conservation Society- India (WCSI) is installing 1,848 bird diverters on high-tension wires along a 6.5km stretch in Pokhran, Rajasthan.

**98. Consider the following pairs**

- | National park               | Important species    |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| (1) Desert National park    | Nilgiri Thar         |
| (2) Singalila National Park | Great Indian Bustard |
| (3) Mukurthi National park  | Red panda            |

**Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?**

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- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3
- (d) None

**Ans: D**

**Explanation:**

National Park	Species
Desert National park	Great Indian Bustard
Singalila National park	Red panda
Mukurthi National park	Nilgiri Thar

**99. With reference to the International Solar Alliance, consider the following statements.**

1. It is a coalition of solar resource rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
2. The ISA is a treaty-based intergovernmental international organization that doesn't put any legal obligations on member countries.
3. UN member countries which are located beyond the Tropics can also join the ISA as "Partner Countries" with the right to vote.

**Which of the above statements is\are correct?**

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

**Answer:B**

### Explanation

**Statement 1 is correct:** International Solar Alliance (ISA) is a coalition of solar resource rich countries **lying fully or partially between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn** to specifically address energy needs by harnessing solar energy. The Alliance aims to provide a platform for prospective member countries to collaborate and address the identified gaps through a common agreed approach. ISA has been envisioned as a dedicated platform that aims to contribute towards the common goal of increasing utilization and promote solar energy and solar applications in the prospective member countries **to help the world transform to a low-carbon and greener society.**

**Statement 2 is correct:** The ISA Framework Agreement has a total of 14 articles. There are **no targets or legal obligations imposed on member-countries.** Members take coordinated actions through Programmes and activities launched on a voluntary basis, aimed at better harmonizing and aggregating demand for, inter alia, solar finance, solar technologies, innovation, research and development, and capacity building.

**Statement 3 is incorrect.**

- UN member countries which are **located beyond the Tropics can join the ISA as “Partner Countries”.**
  - Organizations that have potential to help the ISA achieve its objectives including regional intergovernmental economic integration organizations constituted by sovereign states at least one of which is a member of the ISA can join the ISA as a “Partner Organization”.
  - United Nations including its organs can join the ISA as “Strategic Partners”.
- Structure of the ISA and How are decisions taken?
- The ISA will have a two-tier structure – the Assembly and the Secretariat. Each member-country is represented on the Assembly, which meets annually at the Ministerial level at the seat of the ISA. The Assembly may also meet under special circumstances.
  - The Assembly makes all necessary decisions regarding the functioning of the ISA, including the selection of the Director General and approval of the operating budget.

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- Each Member has one vote in the Assembly.
- **Partner Countries**, Partner Organizations, Strategic Partners, and Observers may participate without having the right to vote.

**100. With reference to the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), consider the following statements.**

1. It was launched by India in 2019.
2. It is an international partnership to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks, thereby ensuring sustainable development.

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:** India launched the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) on the sidelines of the UN Climate Action Summit in September, 2019.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** This international partnership of national governments, UN agencies, multilateral development banks, private sector, and knowledge institutions will promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks, thereby ensuring sustainable development.
- Developed through consultations with more than 35 countries, CDRI envisions enabling measurable reduction in infrastructure losses from disasters, including extreme climate events.

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### 101. Consider the following statements regarding the PM-KISAN

1. Currently, the Scheme provides income support only to Small and Marginal Farmers across the country, holding cultivable land upto 2 hectares
2. The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiaries rests with the State / UT Governments

**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**

**Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM KISAN)**

- It is implemented as a **central sector scheme** by the Government of India.
- This scheme was **introduced to augment the source of income of many small and marginal farmers.**
- Under the Scheme **an amount of Rs.6000/- per year is transferred** directly into the bank accounts of the farmers, subject to certain exclusion criteria relating to higher income status.
- The entire **responsibility of identification of beneficiaries rests with the State / UT Governments**

**Ambit**

- The Scheme initially provided income support to all Small and Marginal Farmers' families across the country, holding cultivable land upto 2 hectares. Its ambit was later expanded w.e.f. 01.06.2019 **to cover all farmer families in the country irrespective of the size of their land holdings.**

**Exceptions**

- **Affluent farmers have been excluded** from the scheme such as **Income Tax payers** in last assessment year, professionals like Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants etc

and pensioners drawing at least Rs.10,000/- per month (excluding MTS/Class IV/Group D employees)

**102. Consider the following statements about Green Climate Fund (GCF)**

- 1) It is a financial mechanism set up by the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- 2) GCF funds developing countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and enhance their ability to respond to climate change.

**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**

**Green Climate Fund (GCF)**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** It was set up by the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** in 2010. GCF has a crucial role in serving the Paris Agreement, supporting the **goal of keeping average global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius**
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the **world's largest dedicated fund** helping developing countries reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and **enhance their ability to respond to climate change**
- It does this by **channelling climate finance to developing countries**, which have joined other nations in committing to climate action.
- GCF's **activities are aligned with the priorities of developing countries** through the principle of country ownership and the Fund has established a direct access modality so that

**national and sub-national organisations can receive funding directly** rather than only via international intermediaries

- GCF aims to **catalyse a flow of climate finance** to invest in low-emission and climate-resilient development, driving a paradigm shift in the global response to climate change
- **GCF's approach is marked by several distinct features**
- **Balanced portfolio:** GCF's investments are aimed at **achieving maximum impact in the developing world**, supporting paradigm shifts in both mitigation and adaptation. The Fund **aims for a 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaptation investments** over time.
  - It also aims for a floor of **50 percent of the adaptation** allocation for particularly vulnerable countries, including Least Developed Countries (LDCs), **Small Island Developing States (SIDS)** and African States.
- **Unlocking private finance:** The Fund is unique in its ability to **engage directly with both the public and private sectors** in transformational climate-sensitive investments. GCF engages directly with the private sector through its **Private Sector Facility (PSF)**.
  - It offers a **wide range of financial products** including grants, concessional loans, subordinated debt, equity, and guarantees. This enables it to match project needs and adapt to specific investment contexts, including **using its funding to overcome market barriers for private finance**.
- **Country ownership:** GCF recognizes the need to ensure that **developing country partners exercise ownership of climate change funding** and integrate it within their own national action plans.
  - Developing countries appoint a **National Designated Authority (NDA)** that acts as the interface between their government and GCF and must approve all GCF project activities within the country. This country-driven approach ensures GCF's activities operate in harmony with national priorities.

<https://www.greenclimate.fund/about>

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103. Consider the following statements

- 1) India is the largest fish producing nation in the world.
- 2) Neel Kranti Mission aims to triple the fish production by 2020.
- 3) Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) aims to address critical infrastructure gaps in fisheries sector.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

**Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) :**

- **The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) aims to address critical infrastructure gaps in fisheries sector. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- The scheme under the Department of Fisheries will establish a robust fisheries management framework.
- This will **address critical gaps in strengthening the value chain, including infrastructure, modernization, traceability, production, productivity, post-harvest management, and quality control.**

**Fisheries Sector:**

- The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying, and Fisheries is the main authoritative body for development of the fisheries industry in India.
- Presently **India is the second largest fish producing and second largest aquaculture nation in the world after China. Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- As per Economic Survey, “Fisheries is a fast-growing sector in India, which provides nutrition and food security to a large population of the country besides providing income and employment to more than 14.5 million people.”

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- The Government has **merged all the schemes of fisheries Sector into an umbrella scheme of 'Blue Revolution: Integrated Development and Management of Fisheries'** focusing on increasing fish production and productivity from aquaculture and fisheries resources, both inland and marine."

**Neel Kranti Mission:**

- Blue Revolution, the Neel Kranti Mission has the vision to achieve economic prosperity of the country and the fishers and fish farmers as well as contribute towards food and nutritional security through full potential utilization of water resources for fisheries development in a sustainable manner, keeping in view the bio-security and environmental concerns.

**Objectives**

- To fully tap the total fish potential of the country both in the inland and the marine sector and **triple the production by 2020. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- To transform the fisheries sector as a modern industry with special focus on new technologies and processes
- To double the income of the fishers and fish farmers with special focus on increasing productivity and better marketing postharvest infrastructure including e-commerce and other technologies and global best innovations
- To ensure inclusive participation of the fishers and fish farmers in the income enhancement
- To triple the export earnings by 2020 with focus on benefits flow to the fishers and fish farmers including through institutional mechanisms in the cooperative, producer companies and other structures
- To enhance food and nutritional security of the country

**Why in the news?**

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1682945>

104. Consider the following statements about Kisan Credit card

1) It enables farmers to purchase agricultural inputs and also draw cash to satisfy their agricultural needs.

2) Only landholding small and marginal farmers are eligible to avail this card.

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:**

**Kisan Credit Card(KCC) Scheme:**

- The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme **enables farmers to purchase agricultural inputs** such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. and **draw cash to satisfy their agricultural and consumption needs. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The beneficiaries under the scheme will be issued with a **Smart card/ Debit card.**

**Coverage :**

- Small farmers, marginal farmers, sharecroppers, oral lessee and tenant farmers.
- The Self Help Groups (SHGs) or Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) are also eligible for availing benefits under the said scheme.
- KCC has been extended to farmers who are involved in activities **related to animal husbandry and fisheries.**
- **Hence the scheme covers small and marginal farmers as well as sharecroppers, oral lessee and tenant farmers. Hence statement 2 is Incorrect.**
- Under the KCC Scheme, a **flexible limit of Rs.10,000 to Rs.50,000 has been provided to marginal farmers (as Flexi KCC)** based on the land holding and crops grown including post-harvest warehouse storage related credit needs and other farm expenses, consumption needs, etc., plus small term loan investments without relating it to the value of land.

**105. Consider the following statements about CITES**

1. Its aim is to ensure international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants without threatening their survival.
2. India is a party to CITES.

**Which of the above statements is/ are correct?**

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

- CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an **international agreement** between governments whose aim is to ensure that **international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants** does not threaten their survival. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.
- CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN (The World Conservation Union).
- CITES entered into force on 1 July 1975
- CITES is an international agreement to which States and regional economic integration organizations adhere voluntarily. States that have agreed to be bound by the Convention ('joined' CITES) are known as Parties.
- Although CITES is legally binding on the Parties – in other words they have to implement the Convention – it does not take the place of national laws.
- Rather it provides a framework to be respected by each Party, which has to adopt its own domestic legislation to ensure that CITES is implemented at the national level.
- India is one among the 183 Parties to CITES. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.

**About TRAFFIC:**

- TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, is a joint program of WWF and IUCN – the International Union for Conservation of Nature.
- TRAFFIC works to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature.

**Why in the news?**

A New research says that the Illegal trade in wild animals is unaffected by pandemic.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/illegal-trade-in-wild-animals-is-unaffected-by-pandemic-7117660/>

**106. Consider the following statements with respect to FASTag**

1. It is a device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly while the vehicle is in motion.
2. It is a reloadable tag that automatically deducts toll charges and enables cashless payment
3. It enables transfer of one FASTag to another Vehicle paving way for multiple access of the tag

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below**

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

Answer: A

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** FASTag is a device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for **making toll payments directly while the vehicle is in motion**
- FASTag (RFID Tag) is **affixed on the windscreen** of the vehicle and enables a customer to make the toll payments directly from the account which is linked to FASTag. It offers the

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**convenience of cashless payment** along with benefits like - savings on fuel and time as the customer does not have to stop at the toll plaza

- Reloadable tag is an **electronic, stored value card** that permits a user to increase the value on the card (e.g., prepaid credit card, store cash card)
- If a FASTag is linked to the prepaid account, then it **needs to be recharged/ topped-up** as per the usage of the customer. If **adequate balance is not maintained** by the customer, the **FASTag gets blacklisted** at the toll plaza. In such a scenario if the customer travels through a toll plaza without recharging then he won't be able to avail the National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) services and would be required to pay the toll fare through cash.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** FASTag is **vehicle specific** and once it is affixed to a vehicle, it cannot be transferred to another vehicle. So it **avoids duplication**.

#### Why in the news?

Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Shri Nitin Gadkari announced that FASTag is being made mandatory for all vehicles in the country from 1st of January, 2021.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1683339>

<https://www.npci.org.in/netc>

#### 107. Consider the following statements about Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana:

1. It is a scheme for retail marketing led value addition plan for minor forest produce.
2. It is an initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED.

**Which of the following Statements is/are correct?**

- a. 1 only.
- b. 2 only.
- c. Both 1 and 2.
- d. Neither 1 nor 2.

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

**Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY)**

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- Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) is a **retail marketing led value addition plan** for Minor Forest Produce (MFP), meant for forest-based tribes to optimize the tribal income, locally.
- Under the program, **MFP-based tribal groups / enterprises of around 300 members** are formed for collection, value addition, packaging & marketing of Minor Forest Produces (MFPs).
- These tribal enterprises will be in the form of Van Dhan SHGs which will be a group of 15-20 members and such 15 SHG groups will further be federated into a larger group of **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKS)** of around 300 members.
- TRIFED will support the VDVKS through providing them with **model business plans, processing plans & tentative list of equipment for carrying out the value addition work of MFPs.**

### **The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)**

- TRIFED came into existence in 1987. It is a **national-level apex organization** functioning under the administrative control of Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India

### **108. Consider the following statements about Tso Kar lake**

- 1)The site is one of the most important breeding areas of the Black-necked Crane
- 2)It has been recognised as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
- 3) It belongs to the state of Uttarakhand.

**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

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

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- The Tso Kar or 'white lake' lies in the Rupshu Valley in the Southern part of **Ladakh**.
- It is called as white lake as the white salt of the water deposits all over the lake shore.
- The Tso-Kar area is inhabited by the Khampas or Rupsa Chang, a nomadic group
- It has been recently declared as **Ramsar site and a wetland of International Importance**.
- The site is one of the most important breeding areas of the **Black-necked Crane**.

#### **Ramsar convention:**

- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an **intergovernmental treaty** that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the **conservation and wise use of wetlands** and their resources.
- At the time of joining the Convention, each Contracting Party must designate at least one wetland site within their territory for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar List).
- There are currently over 2,300 Ramsar sites all over the world.
- The Convention includes various measures to respond to threats to the ecological character of sites.
- The **2nd of February** each year is **World Wetlands Day**.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1683303>

**109. The 'NAMASTE portal' recently seen in news is related to which of the following?**

- a) It provides one stop facilitative service for international tourist in India
- b) It provides standardized terminologies and morbidity codes for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems of medicines
- c) It is citizen centric platform that aims to serve as common point for all innovation happening across the nation
- d) It is the e-commerce portal and a banner to sell various products by tribals across the country

Answer: B

#### **Explanation**

**NAMASTE Portal**

- **National AYUSH Morbidity and Standardized Terminologies Electronic Portal (NAMASTE Portal)** was launched on 17th October, 2017 (2nd Ayurveda day)
- The National Ayurveda Day is celebrated every year on the occasion of Dhanwantari Jayanti (Dhanteras).
- The portal **provides standardized terminologies & morbidity codes** for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems of medicines.
- Morbidity codes **provide a comprehensive classification of diseases** described in the traditional medicines system

**AYUSH Grid**

- AYUSH Grid, **initiated by the Ministry of AYUSH**, aims to bring **onboard all AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) facilities** including hospitals and laboratories and to promote traditional systems of healthcare.

**Why in the news?**

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1683320>

**110. Consider the following statements**

- 1) Sowa-Rigpa is an ancient Indian medical system conceived and propounded by Lord Buddha in India.
- 2) Sowa-Rigpa is acknowledged as a traditional medical system by the government of India only.

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:**

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- Sowa-Rigpa is an ancient Indian medical system conceived and **propounded by Lord Buddha in India** and later was enriched in the entire Trans-Himalayan region.
- Today, Sowa-Rigpa is acknowledged as a traditional medical system by the governments of **India, Bhutan, Mongolia and Tibet**.
- The principle medical text "rGyud-bZi" (Chatush Tantra-a textbook of fundamental principles of Sowa-Rigpa in Sanskrit language) was pioneered by Lord Buddha and translated into Bhoti language around 8-12 Century and amended by Yuthok Yontan Gombo and other scholars of Trans Himalayan region according to the socio-climatic conditions.
- According to Sowa-Rigpa, **health is an equation of balance of tridosha and five cosmophysical energies** (Panchmahabuta), balance within the body, balance with the environment, and with the Universe.
- Pulse examination and astrological evaluation/analysis of an individual are the unique diagnostic tools in Sowa-Rigpa. The natural resources which are safe, effective and time-tested are used as the sources of medication.

#### Why in the news?

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1683320>

111. Which of the following is/are the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries plus (OPEC+) initiative ?

1. Azerbaijan
2. Sudan
3. Russia
4. China

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: B

**Explanation**

• The **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** is a permanent, **intergovernmental organization**, created at the **Baghdad Conference** in 1960, by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.

• In accordance with its Statute, the mission of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is **to coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its Member Countries** and **ensure the stabilization of oil markets** in order to secure an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a **steady income to producers** and a fair return on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry

• It aims to **manage the supply of oil** in an effort to set the price of oil in the world market, in order to **avoid fluctuations that might affect the economies** of both producing and purchasing countries.

• OPEC membership is open to any country that is a substantial exporter of oil and which shares the ideals of the organization.

• As of 2019, **OPEC has a total of 14 Member Countries** viz. Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), **Saudi Arabia**, Algeria, Libya, **Nigeria**, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Angola, Ecuador and Venezuela are members of OPEC.

• The **non-OPEC countries** which export crude oil are termed as **OPEC plus countries**. OPEC plus countries include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

**Why in the news?**

- Russia expects to support an increase in oil production by the group, known as OPEC+, of another 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) from February.

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/russia-backs-increase-in-oil-output-by-opec-from-feb/article33419733.ece>

112. Consider the following statements regarding Atal Bhujal Yojana

1. It aims for sustainable management of ground water with community participation.
2. The funding pattern is 60:40 between the Government of India and the World Bank.

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**

- Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY) envisages active participation of the communities in various activities such as formation of 'Water User Associations', monitoring and disseminating ground water data, water budgeting, preparation & implementation of Grampanchayat wise water security plans and IEC activities related to sustainable ground water management. Thus, it is for sustainable management of ground water with community participation.
- The funding pattern is 50:50 between the Government of India and the World Bank. The scheme will be implemented and looked over by the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1683785>

113. SahiFasal campaign recently seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Campaign to eliminate TB by the year 2025 against the global target of 2030
- b) Campaign aimed at reducing child mortality due to pneumonia
- c) Campaign aimed at bringing beneficiaries of PMAY (urban) into the fold of other central schemes
- d) Campaign to nudge farmers in the water stressed areas to grow crops which are not water intensive.

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- SahiFasal' campaign was launched by **National Water Mission** on 14.11.2019 to **nudge farmers in the water stressed areas to grow crops which are not water intensive**, but use water very efficiently; and are economically remunerative; are healthy and nutritious; suited to the agro-climatic-hydro characteristics of the area; and are environmentally friendly.
- Creating awareness among farmers on appropriate crops, micro-irrigation, soil moisture conservation etc; weaning them away from water intensive crops like paddy, sugarcane etc. to crops like corn, maize etc which require less water; assisting policy makers to frame policies that make effective pricing of inputs (water and electricity); improve procurement and market for these alternate crops; create appropriate storage them etc ultimately leading to increase in the income of farmers are the **key elements** of "SahiFasal".
- Under SahiFasal, series of **workshops** are being organized in the water stressed areas of the country.

**Option A refers to the Harega Desh Jeetega Campaign.**

**Option B refers to SAANS Campaign.**

**Option C refers to the Angikaar Campaign.**

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1683785>

**114. With reference to India's gold imports, consider the following statements.**

1. Importing huge amounts of gold might lead to depreciation of Indian Rupee
2. Gold Monetization Scheme and Sovereign Gold Bond scheme helps to reduce the Current Account Deficit.
3. Gold Bond Scheme offers zero coupon bonds to the investors.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

D. 2 and 3 only

Answer: C

**Explanation:**

- India is one of the world's largest gold importers. Import of gold increases the country's Current Account Deficit (CAD). Importing huge amounts of gold using foreign exchange reserves also depreciates the value of the rupee. This in turn makes key imports like crude oil more costly. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Investment in gold does not add much value to the productive capacity of the economy. They are either stored in bank lockers or get exchanged for making jewellery.
- The government introduced the Gold Monetization Scheme and Sovereign Gold Bond scheme to **reduce imports of gold** and to increase productive use of gold. Gold imports are the second biggest commodity imports into India after oil. As such, reduction in gold imports will positively affect the larger economy by reducing the Current Account Deficit (CAD). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **Gold Monetization Scheme** to bring out the gold lying idle in homes into the Indian Economy which would turn gold into a productive asset. Through this scheme, people can deposit their gold and can earn interest on it.
- **Sovereign Gold Bond scheme** to reduce the demand for physical gold which offers the same benefits as of physical gold. The value of gold bonds increases with the market rate of gold.
- **Gold Bond Scheme does not offer Zero coupon bonds** as the Bonds bear interest at the rate of 2.50 per cent (fixed rate) per annum on the amount of initial investment. Interest will be credited semi-annually to the bank account of the investor and the last interest will be payable on maturity along with the principal. **Hence statement 3 is incorrect.**

115. As a part of Mission Sagar-III, India's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries during the ongoing pandemic, Indian Naval Ship Kiltan, carrying humanitarian assistance, arrived at Nha Rong Port of which country?

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- a) Maldives
- b) Mauritius
- c) Vietnam
- d) Laos

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Mission Sagar-III** is being undertaken in accordance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of **SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region)**.
- It reiterates India's position as a dependable partner, and the Indian Navy as the **Preferred Security Partners** And First Responder.
- The Mission also highlights the importance accorded to ASEAN countries and further strengthens the existing bonds.
- **Indian Naval Ship Kiltan**, carrying humanitarian assistance, arrived at **Vietnam's Nha Rong Port, Ho Chi Minh City** recently to deliver 15 tonnes of relief material for flood-affected people.
- The assistance is as a part of Mission Sagar-III, India's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries during the ongoing pandemic.
- The ship will deliver **15 Tons of HADR Stores for the flood-affected people** of Central Vietnam, which will be handed over to Vietnam's Central Steering Committee for National Disaster Prevention and Control.
- This assistance is reflective of the deep people-to-people connection between the two friendly countries.

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Indian-humanitarian-assistance-ship-arrives-at-Vietnam%26%2339%3bs-Nha-Rong-Port&id=406706>

#### 116. Consider the following statements about Inner Line Permit (ILP)

- 1) It is a special permit required by "outsiders" from other regions of the country to enter the four northeastern states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram.

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- 2) It is based on the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act (BEFR), 1873.
- 3) It can be issued by both the central government and state government concerned.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

Answer: A

#### Explanation

- **Statement 1 is correct:** An Inner Line Permit is a document/**special permit that allows an Indian citizen to visit or stay in a state that is protected under the ILP system.** The system is in force today in **four Northeastern states — Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram and Manipur** and no Indian citizen can visit any of these states unless he or she belongs to that state, nor can he or she overstay beyond the period specified in the ILP
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Inner Line Permit (ILP) regulates visit of Indians to States where ILP regime is **prevalent under Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873.**
- In terms of **Section 2** of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations, 1873, the **Inner Line Permit system is prevalent in the three North Eastern States**, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland. Citizens of other States require ILP for visiting these three States.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** An ILP is **issued by the state government concerned** (not by the central government). It can be **obtained after applying either online or physically.** It states the **dates of travel and also specifies the particular areas** in the state which the ILP holder can travel to.

#### Background

- Under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation Act, 1873, the **British framed regulations restricting the entry and regulating the stay of outsiders** in designated areas. This was

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to protect the **Crown's own commercial interests** by preventing "British subjects" (Indians) from trading within these regions.

- In 1950, the **Indian government replaced "British subjects" with "Citizen of India"**. This was **to address concerns about protecting the interests of the indigenous people** from outsiders belonging to other Indian states.

#### 117. Consider the Following Statements

- 1) The Constitution entrusts the Centre with a duty to ensure that every State Government is run according to the provisions of the Constitution.
- 2) In case of failure of such conditions, the Centre can impose President's Rule in the State.

**Which of the Statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 and 2

**Answer- (c)**

**Explanation -**

- It shall be the duty of the Union to protect every State against external aggression and internal disturbance and to ensure that the Government of every State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution, according to article 355.
- It is this responsibility of the Centre which enables it to take over, once the Constitutional Machinery breaks down in a State- known as State Emergency or President's Rule. The President, by proclamation, can assume all of the functions of the Government of the State and declare that the powers of the Legislature of the State to be exercisable under the authority of Parliament

**Both the Statements are correct.**

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118. Consider the following statements about Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)

- 1) It is the third generation launch vehicle of India.
- 2) It is the first Indian launch vehicle to be equipped with liquid stages.
- 3) Chandrayaan 1 and Mangalyaan were launched using PSLV.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

**All the statements are correct.**

- Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) is the **third generation launch vehicle** of India.
- It is the **first Indian launch vehicle to be equipped with liquid stages**.
- After its first successful launch in October 1994, PSLV emerged as the reliable and versatile workhorse launch vehicle of India with 39 consecutively successful missions by June 2017.
- Besides, the vehicle successfully launched two spacecraft – **Chandrayaan-1 in 2008** and **Mars Orbiter Spacecraft (Mangalyaan) in 2013** – that later traveled to Moon and Mars respectively.
- The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle was developed to launch **Low Earth Orbit satellites** into **Polar and Sun Synchronous Orbits** (*These orbits allow a satellite to pass over a section of the Earth at the same time of day*).

**Note:**

Launchers or Launch Vehicles are used to carry spacecraft to space. India has two operational launchers: **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)** and **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV)**. GSLV with indigenous Cryogenic Upper Stage has enabled the launching up to 2 tonne class of communication satellites. The next variant of GSLV is

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GSLV Mk III, with indigenous high thrust cryogenic engine and stage, having the capability of launching 4 tonne class of communication satellites.

119. Arrange the following Islands in Indian Ocean as one proceeds from north to south?

1. Seychelles
2. Mauritius
3. Comoros

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

- a) 1-3-2
- b) 3-1-2
- c) 2-1-3
- d) 3-2-1

Answer: A

Explanation



- India launched **Mission Sagar** as part of **the government's outreach initiative** towards five Island nations in the Indian Ocean amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic
- **Indian Naval Ship Kesari** has departed for **Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros**, to provide Food Items, **COVID related Medicines** and Special

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Ayurvedic Medicines as part of the Government of India outreach amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic

- The operation is being progressed in close coordination with the Ministries of Defence and External Affairs, and other agencies of the Government of India

- **Mission Sagar** is inspired by Prime Minister's vision of **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**

- **INS Kiltan** arrived at **Nha Rong port** of Vietnam under "**Mission Sagar-III**", part of India's humanitarian assistance and disaster relief assistance to friendly foreign countries during the pandemic.

- Mission Sagar-III was launched in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of SAGAR or security and growth for all in the region, and "reiterates India's position as a dependable partner and the Indian Navy as the preferred security partner and first responder

#### **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**

- Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) **was launched in 2015**. It is India's strategic vision for the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

- Through SAGAR, India **seeks to deepen economic and security cooperation** with its maritime neighbours and assist in building their maritime security capabilities

- Further, **India seeks to safeguard its national interests and ensure Indian Ocean region to become inclusive, collaborative and respect international law**

**120. Consider the following statements with respect to the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats**

1. While the Western Ghats are continuous, the Eastern Ghats are discontinuous and irregular

2. The height of the Western Ghats progressively increases from south to north

3. The Anai Mudi and the Mahendragiri are the highest peaks in the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats respectively.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1 only
- c) 1, 2 and 3.
- d) 1 and 3 only.

Answer : D

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats **mark the western and the eastern edges of the Deccan Plateau respectively.** Western Ghats lie parallel to the western coast. **They are continuous** and can be crossed through passes only.
  - The Eastern Ghats stretch from the Mahanadi Valley to the Nigiris in the south. The **Eastern Ghats are discontinuous and irregular** and dissected by rivers draining into the Bay of Bengal
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Western Ghats **are higher than the Eastern Ghats.** Their average elevation is 900– 1600 metres as against 600 metres of the Eastern Ghats. **The height of the Western Ghats progressively increases from north to south**
- The Western Ghats cause orographic rain by facing the rain bearing moist winds to rise along the western slopes of the Ghats.
- **Statement 3 is correct** The highest peaks in **Western Ghats include the Anai Mudi (2,695 metres)** and the Doda Betta (2,637 metres). **Mahendragiri (1,501 metres) is the highest peak in the Eastern Ghats.**

**Why in the news?**

- Botanists have discovered a new species of **wild Sun Rose from the Eastern Ghats** in India.
- The new species, named **Portulaca laljii**, discovered from Prakasam district of **Andhra Pradesh** has unique features such as a tuberous root, no hair in its leaf axils, a reddish pink flower, prolate-shaped fruits, and copper brown seeds without lustre. These morphological features distinguish the species from other species of genus Portulaca.

121. Consider the following statements regarding the Blue Flag Programme.

1. The Blue Flag Programme is run by the IUCN in partnership with the United Nations .
2. The Programme requires a Beach to meet certain criteria such as having clean and hygienic bathing water, facilities/amenities, waste disposal facilities, being disabled friendly.

Which of the above given statements 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 Blue Flag Programme for beaches and marinas is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organisation FEE (the Foundation for Environmental Education).It started in France in 1985 and has been implemented in Europe since 1987, and in areas outside Europe since 2001.

**Statement 2 is correct.**

The 'Blue Flag' beach is an 'eco-tourism model' and marks out beaches as providing tourists and beachgoers clean and hygienic bathing water, facilities/amenities, a safe and healthy environment, and sustainable development of the area.

The certification is accorded with 33 stringent criteria under four major heads for the beaches, that are-

- Environmental Education and Information
- Bathing Water Quality
- Environment Management and Conservation
- Safety and Services

**Why in the news?**

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Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Prakash Javadekar recently virtually hoisted the international blue flags in 8 beaches across the country. India secured the International Blue Flag Certification for these beaches on 6th October 2020.

The beaches selected for the certification are: Kappad (Kerala), Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden (Odisha) and Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1684105>

#### 122. Consider the following statements about Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative

- 1) The programme aims to actively enhance interaction between people of diverse cultures living in different States and UTs in India.
- 2) The Ministry of Human Resource Development has been designated Nodal Ministry for coordination of the programme

**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:**

- The 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' initiative was announced by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 31st October, 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- The programme aims to **actively enhance interaction between people of diverse cultures** living in different States and UTs in India, with the objective of promoting greater mutual understanding amongst them.
- As per the programme, each year, every State/UT would be paired with another State/UT in India for **reciprocal interaction between the people**.

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- It is envisaged through this exchange, that the knowledge of the language, culture, traditions and practices of different states will lead to an enhanced understanding and bonding between one another, thereby strengthening the unity and integrity of India.
- The **Ministry of Human Resource Development** has been designated Nodal Ministry for coordination of the programme

123. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, consider the following statements.

1. It is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. It aims to align the competencies of the unregulated workforce of the country to the National Skill Qualification Framework.
3. Under this Scheme, Training and Assessment fees are completely paid by the Government.

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

Answer: C

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). The scheme was launched in 2015.
- The objective of this Skill Certification Scheme is to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood.
- Individuals with prior learning experience or skills will also be assessed and certified under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Under this Scheme, Training and Assessment fees are completely paid by the Government.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** It aims to align the competencies of the unregulated workforce of the country to the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF).

124. The 'SANKALP' scheme recently seen in news in the context of which of the following?

- a) Strengthening Industry-academia collaboration
- b) Skill development
- c) Digital literacy
- d) Boosting Food processing sector

Ans: B

**Explanation**

**Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Scheme (SANKALP)**

- SANKALP is an **outcome-oriented programme of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** with a special focus on **decentralised planning** and quality improvement
- It is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** which is collaborated with the **World Bank**.
- It aims to implement the **mandate of the National Skill Development Mission (NSDM)**.
- The main objectives of the scheme are
  - ∅ **Convergence:** Creating convergence among all **skill training activities, both State-led and Government of India funded**, at the state level.
  - ∅ **Quality:** Improving the **quality of skill development programs** through building a pool of quality trainers, developing model curriculum and content, and standardizing assessment and certification
  - ∅ **Evaluation System:** Establishing a **robust monitoring and evaluation system** for skill training programs
  - ∅ **Inclusiveness & Opportunity:** Providing **access to skill training opportunities** to the disadvantaged sections.

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125. Which of the following statements is / are correct regarding the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)?

1. It is an initiative of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
2. It can be used for retail shopping and as a debit card.
3. It has an inbuilt wallet which can be used for contactless payments.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

- In order to ensure a seamless travel across metros and other transport systems in addition to retail shopping and purchases, the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** came out with the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) Program.
- The NCMC card has 2 instruments on it – a regular debit card which can be used at an ATM, and a local wallet (stored value account), which can be used for contactless payments, without the need to go back to the server or additional authentication.

126. With reference to the Recognition of Forest Rights Act (2006), which of the following comes under the category of Minor Forest Produce (MFP)?

1. Canes
2. Timber
3. Cocoon
4. Bamboo

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 1, 3 and 4 only

- c) 3 and 4 only
- d) 1 and 3 only

**Ans: B**

**Explanation**

- Minor Forest Produce (MFP) is a **subset of forest produce** and got a definition only in 2007 when the **Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006**, was enacted
- Section 2(i) of the said Act defines a Minor Forest Produce (MFP) as **all non-timber forest produce** of plant origin and includes **bamboo, brushwood, stumps, canes, Tusser, cocoon, honey, waxes**, Lac, tendu/kendu leaves, medicinal plants and herbs, roots, tuber and the like.
- Thus, the definition of **“minor forest produce” includes bamboo and cane**, thereby changing the categorization of bamboo and cane as “trees” under the Indian Forest Act 1927.
- The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, popularly known as the Forests Rights Act (FRA), was enacted in 2007. The Act recognizes and vests **individual forest-dwellers with forest rights to live in and cultivate forest land** that was occupied before 13 December 2005 and grants community forest rights to manage, protect and **regenerate the forest under section 3(1)(i)**, and to own and dispose minor forest products from forests where they had traditional access.
- Section 3(1)(c) of the Forest Rights Act 2006 defines forest rights as **inclusive of ‘Right of ownership, access to collect, use and dispose of minor forest produce** which have traditionally been collected within or outside village boundaries’
- Individuals, communities and gram sabhas having rights under this particular section of the Act will not only have the rights to use but **also rights of ownership over MFPS.**
- This goes beyond the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension To The Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA Act) which had authorised states to entrust panchayats and gramasabhas as the owners of MFP

127. Which among the following statements is/are correct regarding biodegradable plastics?

- 1) Biodegradable plastics consume less energy during the manufacturing cycle.
- 2) Biodegradable plastics emit less carbon during manufacturing when compared to traditional plastics.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

- Biodegradable plastics or bioplastics are made from natural plant-based raw materials that enable the natural decomposition process.
- This is achieved when the bacteria and fungi present in the surrounding environment naturally metabolizes the plastics.
- They also help to further break down the structure of a biodegradable plastic.
- Created to address the plastic waste problem, these plastic types will turn to compost after a certain period of time.
- Below are four reasons why biodegradable plastics benefit the environment and help save natural resources.

**1) Saves Non-renewable Sources of Energy**

Biodegradable plastics help conserve petroleum supplies. Traditional plastics come from heating and treating oil molecules until they turn into polymers. Bioplastics come from natural sources including crops like corn and switch grass. This makes them conserve non-renewable sources of energy such as petroleum.

**2. Reduces carbon emission**

One of the main advantages of using biodegradable plastic is a significant reduction in carbon emissions during the manufacturing process. Hence **statement 2 is correct**. Furthermore, since the materials used to create biodegradable plastics are plant-based, minimal carbon is emitted during the composting process.

### 3. Consumes Less Energy

The manufacturing process of biodegradable plastics requires fewer amounts of energy. Also, they do not need fossil fuels to be recycled. Since the energy requirement is less, the pollution and environmental impact are significantly reduced. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.

### 4. Provides an Eco-Friendly Solution

Biodegradable plastics require composting or recycling to ensure proper breakdown of the plastic pieces. The requirement to properly dispose of biodegradable plastic products automatically reduces the amount of waste. This waste would otherwise be sent to landfills in order to discard them. Moreover, the land areas can be used for agriculture, residence or industrial applications instead of converting them to landfills.

#### 128. Consider the following statements:

1. UNEP is an intergovernmental Organization of the United Nations that works on environmental activities in developing countries.
2. It is the only UN programme headquartered in the developing world.
3. Global Environmental Outlook is published by UNEP.

**Which of the following statements is /are correct?**

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

Answer: A

#### Explanation

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- **Statement 1 is correct:** The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading global environmental authority that **sets the global environmental agenda**, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment.
  - UNEP's global and cross-sectoral outlook is **reflected in its organizational structure**, its activities and its personnel. Being based in Africa gives UNEP a **clear advantage** in understanding the **environmental issues facing the world's developing countries**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** UNEP's global base is in **Nairobi, Kenya**. It is **one of only two UN programmes headquartered in the developing world** (the other is UNEP's sister agency UN-HABITAT, which is also located in Nairobi). UNEP work encompasses
  - **Assessing global, regional and national** environmental conditions and trends
  - **Strengthening institutions** for the wise management of the environment
  - Facilitating the **transfer of knowledge** and technology for sustainable development
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is often referred to as UN Environment's flagship environmental assessment. The **first publication was in 1997** and was originally requested by Member States.
  - The Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is a **consultative and participatory process** to prepare an independent assessment of the state of the environment, the **effectiveness of the policy response** to address these environmental challenges and the possible pathways to **achieve various internationally agreed environmental goals**.

#### 129. Consider the following statements with respect to Electoral Bonds

1. Electoral bonds are interest-free bearer bonds that are used to donate money anonymously to political parties
2. It can be purchased by any citizen of India or a body incorporated in India.

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3. Only political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951 and have secured no less than one per cent votes in the last Lok Sabha or State elections are eligible to receive electoral bonds.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer : C**

**Explanation**

**Electoral Bond**

- An electoral bond is designed to be a **bearer instrument** like a **Promissory Note** — in effect, it will be similar to a bank note that is payable to the bearer on demand and **free of interest**.
- It can be purchased by **any citizen** of India or a **body incorporated in India**.
- The bonds will be issued in multiples of **₹1,000, ₹10,000, ₹1 lakh, ₹10 lakh and ₹1 crore** and will be available at specified branches of **State Bank of India**.
- **They can be bought by the donor with a KYC-compliant account.**
- Donors can donate the bonds to their party of choice which can then be **cashed in via the party's verified account within 15 days.**
- The donor will remain **anonymous**.
- The electoral bonds will **not bear the name of the donor**.
- The **donor and the party details will be available with the bank**, but the **political party might not be aware** of who the donor is.
- **Political parties are allotted a verified account by the Election Commission and all the electoral bond transactions are done through this account only.**
- **Only political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951 and has secured no less than one per cent votes in the last Lok Sabha or State elections are eligible to receive electoral bonds.**

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- The bonds will be available for purchase for a period of **10 days** each in the beginning of **every quarter**, i.e. in January, April, July and October as specified by the Central Government.
- An additional period of **30 days** shall be **specified by the Central Government** in the year of **Lok Sabha elections**.
- **Before 2017, the electoral bonds scheme was for donation of over Rs 20,000.**
- **In 2017**, the government capped the donation limit at Rs 2,000.
- A donor will get **tax deduction** and the recipient, or the political party, will get tax exemption, provided returns are filed by the political party
- The information furnished by the buyer shall be treated **confidential by the authorised bank** and shall not be disclosed to any authority for any purposes, **except when demanded by a competent court or upon registration of criminal case by any law enforcement agency.**

130. Consider the following statements about Agenda 21

- 1) Agenda 21 aims for achieving Global Sustainable Development.
- 2) It is an outcome of Rio Earth Summit.
- 3) It is legally binding on all its parties.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

- Agenda 21 is a **comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the United Nations System, Governments, and Major Groups in every area in which human impacts on the environment which aims to achieve Global Sustainable development. Hence statement 1 is correct.**

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- Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Statement of principles for the Sustainable Management of Forests **were adopted by more than 178 Governments at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 to 14 June 1992. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Agenda 21 is a non-binding action plan** of the United Nations with regard to sustainable development. **Hence statement 3 is Incorrect.**

131. Consider the following pairs with respect to rivers and the places where they originate

Rivers	Source of origin
1. The Krishna	- Mahabaleshwar
2. The Narmada	- Chota Nagpur Plateau
3. The Kaveri	- Brahmagiri range
4. The Mahanadi	- Amarkantak hills

Which of the above pairs is/are INCORRECTLY matched?

- a) 4 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 4 only
- d) 2 and 3 only

Ans : C

#### Explanation

- **The Krishna river:** Rising from a spring near **Mahabaleshwar**, the Krishna flows for about 1400 km and reaches the Bay of Bengal. The **Tungabhadra, the Koyana, the Ghatprabha**, the Musi and the Bhima are some of its tributaries.
- **The Narmada river:** The **Narmada rises in the Amarkantak hills (not in Chota Nagpur plateau)** in Madhya Pradesh. It flows towards the west in a rift valley formed due to faulting. On its way to the sea, the Narmada creates many picturesque locations. **The 'Marble rocks'**,

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near Jabalpur, where the Narmada flows through a deep gorge, and the **Dhuandhar falls**, where the river plunges over steep rocks, are some of the notable ones

- **The Mahanadi river:** The Mahanadi rises near Sihawa in Raipur district of Chhattisgarh and runs through Odisha to discharge its water into the Bay of Bengal. It is 851 km long and its catchment area spreads over 1.42 lakh sq. km.
- **The Kaveri river:** It rises in the **Brahmagiri range of the Western Ghats** and it reaches the Bay of Bengal in the south of Cuddalore in Tamil Nadu. The total length of the river is about 760 km. Its main tributaries are Amravati, Bhavani, Hemavati and Kabini.

#### Why in the news?

- The Water Resources De-partment is building storage in other city reservoirs as the waterbody in Poondi continues to get inflow from its catchment areas and from **Krishna water** released by Andhra Pradesh.

132. Which among these are included in the “Current account” transactions of India with the world?

1. Trade balance for goods
2. Flow of remittances
3. Loans given by foreign governments

Select the correct answer using the code below.

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

Answer: **A**

#### Explanation:

- Current account of the Balance of payment (BoP) includes **merchandise** (exports and imports) and **invisibles**.

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- Invisible transactions are further classified into three categories, namely (a) Services-travel, transportation, insurance, Government not included elsewhere (GNIE) and miscellaneous (such as, communication, construction, financial, software, news agency, royalties, management and business services); (b) Income; and (c) Transfers (**grants**, gifts, **remittances**, etc.) which do not have any quid pro quo.
- Loans given by foreign governments are part of Capital account of the BoP.

#### Why in the news?

India's current account surplus moderated to \$15.5 billion (2.4% of GDP) in the second quarter compared with a \$19.2-billion surplus (3.8% of GDP) in the April-June quarter.

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/current-account-surplus-moderates-to-155-bn-in-q2/article33456996.ece>

#### 133. Consider the following statements about Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA)

- 1) AFSPA gives armed forces the power to maintain public order in “disturbed areas”.
- 2) The Central government only can declare the whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a disturbed area.

#### 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:

#### About Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA)

- The Act came into force in the context of increasing **violence in the North-eastern States** decades ago, which the State governments found difficult to control.

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- **AFSPA gives armed forces the power to maintain public order in “disturbed areas”.** They have the authority to prohibit a gathering of **five or more persons** in an area, can use force or even open fire after giving due warning if they feel a person is in contravention of the law.
- If reasonable suspicion exists, the army can also **arrest a person without a warrant**; enter or search premises without a warrant; and ban the possession of firearms.

#### **Disturbed Areas**

- A disturbed area is the one which is declared by notification under **Section 3 of the AFSPA**. It can be invoked in places where the use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary.
- An area can be considered to be disturbed due to differences or disputes between members of different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities.
- The **Central Government or the Governor of the State or administrator** of the Union Territory can declare the whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a disturbed area.
- Once declared ‘disturbed’, the region is maintained as disturbed for a **period of three months** straight, according to The Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act, 1976. The government of the state can suggest whether the Act is required in the state or not.

#### **Why in the news?**

The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has declared the **entire State of Nagaland** as a “**disturbed area**” for **six more months**, under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA).

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Centre-declares-Nagaland-%e2%80%98disturbed-area%e2%80%99-for-six-more-months&id=407008>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/what-is-afspa-and-where-is-it-in-force/article23648102.ece>

#### **134. Consider the following statements regarding the Enforcement Directorate**

1. It is mandated with the task of enforcing the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).

2. The administrative control of the Directorate is under the Ministry of Finance.

**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

Ans: C

**Explanation**

- It is a **Multi Disciplinary Organization** mandated with the task of **enforcing the provisions of two special fiscal laws – Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) and Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA)**
- The origin of this Directorate goes back to 1st May, 1956, when an **'Enforcement Unit' was formed, in Department of Economic Affairs**, for handling Exchange Control Laws violations under Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947
- The administrative control of the Directorate was transferred from Department of Economic Affairs to **Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance** in 1960.

**Functions**

- Processing cases of fugitives from India **under Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018.**
- Sponsor cases of preventive detention under Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974(**COFEPOSA**) **in regard to contraventions of FEMA**

**The Directorate enforces two laws**

- **FEMA, a Civil Law having quasi judicial powers**, for investigating suspected contraventions of the Exchange Control Laws and Regulations with the **powers to impose penalties** on those adjudged guilty
- **PMLA, a Criminal Law** whereby the Officers are **empowered to conduct enquiries to locate, provisionally attach/confiscate assets** derived from acts of Schedules Offences besides arresting and prosecuting the Money Launderers.

135. Which of the following are not included in National Action Plan on Climate change (NAPCC)?

- a. National Water Mission
- b. National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency
- c. National Mission for a Green India
- d. National Soil Mission

**Answer (d)**

**Explanation:**

The National Action Plan on Climate change identifies measures that promote development objectives while also yielding co-benefits for addressing **climate change** effectively.

The Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change is in charge of the overall implementation of the plan. There are **eight "National Missions"** which form the core of the National action plan. They focus on promoting understanding of climate change, adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation."

The eight missions are:

- National Solar Mission
- **National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency**
- National Mission on Sustainable Habitat
- **National Water Mission**
- National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem
- **National Mission for a Green India**
- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture
- National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change

The NAPCC also describes other ongoing initiatives, including:

- **Power Generation:** The government is mandating the retirement of inefficient coal-fired power plants and supporting the research and development of IGCC and supercritical technologies.

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- **Renewable Energy:** Under the Electricity Act 2003 and the National Tariff Policy 2006, the central and the state electricity regulatory commissions must purchase a certain percentage of grid-based power from renewable sources.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Under the Energy Conservation Act 2001, large energy consuming industries are required to undertake energy audits and an energy labeling program for appliances has been introduced.

