

MCQ 1ST FEBRUARY TO 27TH FEBRUARY

1. Consider the following statements regarding the “Motion of Thanks”

1. The motion of thanks is moved in each House of the Parliament after the President has made an address to a joint sitting of Parliament at the start of the Budget session
2. The motion of thanks cannot be amended

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: B

Explanation

- The President makes **an address to a joint sitting of Parliament at the start of the Budget session**, which is prepared by the government and **lists its achievements**
- Ø It is essentially **a statement of the legislative and policy achievements of the government during the preceding year and** gives a broad indication of the agenda for the year ahead
- The address is **followed by a motion of thanks moved in each House by ruling party MPs**. During the session, political parties discuss the motion of thanks also suggesting amendments.

Amendments to the “Motion of Thanks”

- Notices of **amendments to Motion of Thanks on the President’s Address can be tabled** after the President has delivered his Address. Amendments may refer to matters contained in the Address as well as to matters, in the opinion of the member, the address has failed to mention.
- **Amendments can be moved to the Motion of Thanks** in such form as may be considered appropriate by the Speaker.

Limitations:

- The only limitations are that **members cannot refer to matters which are not the direct responsibility of the Central Government** and that the name of the President

cannot be brought in during the debate since the Government and not the President is responsible for the contents of the Address.

Provisions

- President's Address and Motion of Thanks are governed by **Articles 86 (1) and 87 (1) of the Constitution** and Rules 16 to 24 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.
- **Members of Parliament vote on this motion of thanks.** This motion must be passed in both of the houses.
- **A failure to get motion of thanks passed amounts to defeat of government and leads to collapse of government.**

2. Consider the following statements with reference to the Fifteenth Finance Commission

1. The commission has recommended to increase the share of tax revenues that the Centre shares with the states
2. The area under forest cover and income distance were also used by the Commission to arrive at the tax-sharing formula

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: B

Explanation

- FC has **considered the 2011 population along with forest cover, tax effort, area of the state**, and “demographic performance” to arrive at the states’ share in the divisible pool of taxes.
- In order to **reward population control efforts by states**, the Commission developed a criterion for demographic effort which is essentially **the ratio of the state’s population in 1971 to its fertility rate in 2011** — with a weight of 12.5%.

- The total area of states, **area under forest cover**, and **“income distance”** were also used by the FC to arrive at the tax-sharing formula.

Key recommendations

- The Commission has **reduced (not increased) the vertical devolution** — the share of tax revenues that the Centre shares with the states — from 42% to 41%.
- The Commission has said that it intends to set up an expert group to **initiate a non-lapsable fund for defence expenditure**

State- wise distribution

- Shares of the **southern states, except Tamil Nadu**, have **fallen** with Karnataka losing the most.
- Shares of states like Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, along with Tamil Nadu, all of which have fertility rates below the replacement level, have increased slightly.
- Incidentally, **Karnataka, the biggest loser in this exercise**, also had the highest tax-GSDP ratio in 2017-18, as per an RBI report on state finances.

3. ‘Patachitra’ painting is predominantly practiced in which of the following states?

- Odisha
- Maharashtra
- Andhra pradesh
- Uttarakhand

Ans: A

Explanation

- One of the oldest forms of artwork, **Patachitra art depicts Hindu mythological tales** and wonders. Pattachitra is a picture painted on a piece of cloth. It is based in the **states of West Bengal and Odisha**
- Primarily based on these stories from the past, Patachitra art is vibrant, unique and is a fine display of dexterous Indian craftsmanship at its best.
- This kind of artwork has a **traditional appeal and is intrinsic with Indian values**, customs and rituals, which are a part and parcel of the Hindu faith and religion.
- What started off as different forms of paintings has however evolved to become an immense **facet of Indian accessories** and other forms of traditional fashion as well.

- Patachitra style of painting is a **unique blend of classical and folk elements** but is more bent towards a folk style in the larger sense.
- What is even more interesting is that this artwork has **Mughal influences as well** when it comes to the character's apparel and fashion sense.
- Features of each character are defined with **clear dark lines** which give a definite shape and appeal. **Natural dyes and colors are used**, all of which are derived from fruits and vegetables.

4. 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

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.

5. Which of the following is referred to as 'twin deficits'?

- a) Capital account deficit and current account deficit
- b) Current account deficit and fiscal deficit
- c) Fiscal deficit and primary deficit
- d) Capital account deficit and budget deficit

Answer: B

Explanation

- **Current Account Deficit** and **Fiscal Deficit** are together known as **twin deficits**. Indian economy is one of the few economies in the world to have both fiscal and current account deficits. Hence it is also termed as a twin deficit economy.

Fiscal Deficit

- Fiscal Deficit is a term used to refer to the **difference between the government's total revenue and total expenditure** in a financial year. Since the government borrows from the market to bridge this gap, this also indicates the **total borrowings needed by the government** in a particular year.
- While a nominal fiscal deficit is considered normal for a developing economy, it becomes a worry when it shoots up beyond a threshold, which depends on different interpretations.
- One of the major problems with fiscal deficit is that the **larger it is, the larger the market borrowing the government of the day resorts to**, thereby **crowding out private investment**.
- The government has to borrow to meet its excessive expenditure leading to the government **absorbing a higher portion of domestic savings** and higher interest rates. This in turn leads to crowding out of private sector investment in the economy. Higher interest rates, in turn lowers the private sector investment and consumption levels.

Current Account Deficit

- Current account deficit is simply the **difference between the value of the goods and services that a country imports and the value of the products it exports**.
- It encompasses the trade deficit plus capital like net income and transfer payments. In other words, it can be measured with the **difference between foreign exchange inflows and**

outflows. An economy manages its current account deficit by **foreign savings/foreign capital inflows.**

- India's current account deficit (CAD) **narrowed to 0.9 percent of GDP**, or \$6.3 billion, in the September 2019 quarter, on account of lower trade deficit.

Primary deficit

- Primary deficit refers to the **difference between the current year's fiscal deficit and interest payment on previous borrowings.** It indicates the borrowing requirements of the government, excluding interest. It also shows how much of the government's expenses, other than interest payment, can be met through borrowings.

6. Consider the following statements about Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) Scheme

- 1) The objective of the scheme is to provide quality middle and high-level education to Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in remote areas.
- 2) The scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of Education.

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 scheme of Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) was introduced in the year 1997-98 with an objective to provide quality middle and high-level education to **Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in remote areas** in order to enable them to avail of reservation in high and professional educational courses and get jobs in government and public and private sectors.

- The schools focus not only on academic education but on the all-round development of the students. Each school has a capacity of 480 students, catering to students from **Class VI to XII.**
- It has been decided that by the year 2022, **every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons**, will have an EMRS.

- EMRS are set up in States/UTs with grants under **Article 275(1)** of the Constitution of India.
- The scheme is being implemented by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.

Why in the news?

MoU signed with 21 States/UTs for better functioning of Eklavya Model Residential Schools.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1694272>

7. Consider the following statements about Aadi Mahotsav

- 1) It is an annual event that attempts to familiarise people with the rich and diverse craft, culture of tribal communities across the country, at one place.
- 2) It is being organised by the Ministry of Tribal affairs and TRIFED.

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:

- Aadi Mahotsav is a **National Tribal Festival being organized** by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED.
- It is an annual event that attempts to familiarise people with the rich and diverse craft, culture of tribal communities across the country, at one place.
- The Mahotsav will consist of display and sale of items of tribal art and craft, tribal medicine & healers, tribal cuisine and display of tribal folk performance.
- Tribal artisans, chefs, folk dancers/musicians from various States of the country shall participate and provide a glimpse of their rich traditional culture.
- The theme of the festival is: "A celebration of the spirit of Tribal Craft, Culture and Commerce". TRIFED essentially is to play the role of a 'Service provider' & 'Market Developer'.

What is TRIFED ?

- TRIFED is Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED). It was established in August 1987 by the then Ministry of Welfare, Government of India,

under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act 1984 (which has now been replaced by the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002).

Why in the news?

The Vice President of India inaugurated the tribal festival Aadi Mahotsav in New Delhi recently.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1694269>

8. Consider the following:

1. Porous boundaries
2. Invasive alien species (Lantana Camara)
3. Private estate
4. Pilgrimage

Which of the above is/are responsible for the destruction of habitat in Periyar and Parambikulam tiger reserves?

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

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

Though the Periyar and Parambikulam tiger reserves have won national acclaim in Management Effectiveness Evaluation, the tiger status report of 2018 lists a few areas that need attention,

- The **porous borders** the reserve share with Tamil Nadu and the 18 illegal entry points along the nearly 90-km interstate boundary have been flagged as a matter of concern by the evaluators.
- The study has identified **Sabarimala pilgrimage** as the largest biotic factor that adds pressure to the fragile ecosystem of the reserve. Though the “biotic pressure from tourism and other activities has been reduced considerably, the pilgrimage pressure of 1 to 1.5 crore devotees to Sabarimala during the festive season.

- The spread of the **invasive species *Lantana camara*** along the grasslands and fields of the reserve has evolved as a major biodiversity threat. The grasslands and fields are gradually being infested by the invasive woody species.
- Of the 208 hectares of the **private estate** where cardamom is being farmed, 67.52 hectare was recently notified as Ecologically Fragile Land. The State government has plans to take over the estate from its owners by paying compensation to the owners.

Why in the news?

For the first time in the country, the Periyar Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Kerala has taken up training of a tiger cub to equip it to naturally hunt in the forest environment.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/tiger-cub-gets-hunting-lessons-from-humans/article33713772.ece>

9. Stardust 1.0 recently seen in the news is related to?

- a) First commercial space launch powered by biofuel
- b) Zoonotic disease predominantly affecting Pigs.
- c) Smartphone spyware
- d) A rare metallic asteroid

Answer: A

Explanation:

Stardust 1.0 was launched recently from Loring Commerce Centre in Maine, US, a former military base, becoming the first commercial space launch powered by biofuel, which is non-toxic for the environment as opposed to traditionally used rocket fuels.

Stardust 1.0 is a launch vehicle suited for student and budget payloads.

The rocket is 20 feet tall and has a mass of roughly 250 kg.

The rocket can carry a maximum payload mass of 8 kg and during its first launch carried three payloads.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-what-is-stardust-1-0-the-first-rocket-to-run-on-biofuel-7170230/lite/>

10. The term “**one country, two systems**” is sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of

- A. U.S.A
- B. Lebanon
- C. Iran
- D. China

Answer: **D**

Explanation:

- The term refers to China’s relationship with Hong Kong.
- Hong Kong, a former British colony, was returned to China in 1997 under the “**one country, two systems**” policy which promised the territory a high degree of autonomy.
- The policy has helped preserve Hong Kong’s civil service, independent courts, freewheeling press, open internet and other features that distinguish it from the Chinese mainland.

11. Consider the following initiatives/programmes

1. Sustainable Action for Transforming Human Capital (SATH)
2. Aspirational District Programme
3. Atal Innovation Mission
4. INSPIRE Programme
5. POSHAN Abhiyaan

Which of the given above are related to NITI Aayog?

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

Answer: **(c)**

- **SATH** program was **launched by NITI Aayog** (2017). The vision of the program is to initiate transformation in the **education and health** sectors. SATH aims to identify and build three future ‘role model’ states for health systems which are Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/printrelease.aspx?relid=165545>

- The 'Transformation of **Aspirational Districts**' programme aims to quickly and effectively transform these districts. The broad contours of the programme are **Convergence** (of Central & State Schemes), **Collaboration** (of Central, State level 'Prabhari' Officers & District Collectors), and **Competition** among districts driven by a mass Movement. At **Government of India level**, programme is anchored by **NITI Aayog**.

<https://niti.gov.in/about-aspirational-districts-programme>

- The **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** is a flagship initiative **set up by the NITI Aayog** to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country. AIM's objectives are to create and promote an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship across the country at school, university, research institutions, MSME and industry levels.

<http://vikaspedia.in/education/policies-and-schemes/atal-innovation-mission>

- **POSHAN Abhiyaan or National Nutrition Mission**, is Government of India's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** is implementing POSHAN Abhiyaan. **NITI Aayog** has played a **critical role in shaping the POSHAN Abhiyaan**. After launch of the mission, NITI Aayog has been entrusted with the task of closely monitoring the POSHAN Abhiyaan and undertaking periodic evaluations.

<https://niti.gov.in/poshan-abhiyaan>

- "Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (INSPIRE)" is an innovative programme sponsored and managed by the Department of Science & Technology for attraction of talent to Science. **NITI Aayog is not associated** with this programme in any way.

<http://vikaspedia.in/education/policies-and-schemes/scholarships/post-matric-scholarship/inspire-programme>

12. Which of the following documents is/are presented along with the Budget

1. Macro-economic framework for the relevant financial year
2. Fiscal Policy Strategy Statement for the financial year
3. Economic Survey
4. Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement

Select the answer using the code given below

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

Answer: **D**

Explanation:

- The Budget documents presented to Parliament comprise, besides the Finance Minister's Budget Speech, of the following:
 - Annual Financial Statement (AFS)
 - Demand for Grants (DG)
 - Appropriation Bill
 - Finance Bill
 - Memorandum Explaining the Provisions in the Finance Bill
 - **Macro-economic framework for the relevant financial year**
 - **Fiscal Policy Strategy Statement for the financial year**
 - **Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement**
 - Expenditure Profile
 - Expenditure Budget
 - Receipts Budget
- Economic Survey is presented before presenting the budget and not along with the budget.

13. The '100X100X100' program sometimes seen in news in the context of which of the following?

- a) Tuberculosis (TB) control program
- b) Improving startup ecosystem
- c) Improving the enrollment and retention of students in secondary education
- d) Universal health coverage initiative

Ans: B

Explanation

- To **accelerate the startup ecosystem in India**, Microsoft launched the 100X100X100 program for business to business (B2B) Software as a Service (SaaS) startups in India.

- A first of its kind program in India, this initiative will bring together 100 committed companies and 100 early and growth startups that have enterprise-ready solutions to offer.
- Each participating company will commit to spend \$100K over a course of 18 months on solutions provided by the SaaS startups.
- More than 50 startups are part of the program at launch. The 100X100X100 program will help enterprises fast track their digital transformation through faster adoption of SaaS solutions.
- It will aim to create a profitable domestic market for the fast growing Indian B2B SaaS startup segment by increasing their revenue and customer base

14. Which of the following states share border with Myanmar?

1. Nagaland
2. Manipur
3. Tripura
4. Arunachal Pradesh
5. Mizoram
6. Assam

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (b)

Four northeastern states share their border with Myanmar: **Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram.**



15. Consider the following statements about the National Population Register(NPR)

1. A usual resident is defined as a person who has resided in a local area for the past 6 months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next 6 months or more.
2. It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register with the NPR.

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

Ans-C

Explanation:

- The National Population Register (NPR) is a list of "usual residents" of the country.

- For the purposes of NPR, a **"usual resident"** is defined as a **person who has resided in a local area for the past six months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next six months or more. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The data for the National Population Register was first collected in 2010 and it is to be done every 10 years.
- The NPR will be prepared at the local (village/sub-Town), sub-district, district, state and national level under provisions of the **Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003.**
- It is **mandatory for every usual resident of India to register on NPR. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- According to the government notification, you don't have to give proof for NPR nor biometric particulars will be collected.
- Unlike the NRC, the NPR is not a citizenship enumeration drive, as it would record even a foreigner staying in a locality for more than six months.
- It will be conducted in conjunction with the houselisting phase, the first phase of the Census, by the Office of the Registrar General of India (RGI) under the Home Ministry for Census 2021. Only **Assam will not be included.**
- According to the Home Ministry, while registering with NPR is mandatory, furnishing of additional data such as PAN, Aadhaar, driving licence and voter ID is voluntary.

16. Which of the following are the applications of Lithium?

- 1) High energy additive to rocket propellant
- 2) Optical modulators for mobile phones
- 3) As a converter to tritium used as raw material in fusion reaction
- 4) Lubricating grease
- 5) In batteries

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

- Lithium is a chemical element with the symbol **Li** and atomic number **3**.
- It is a soft, **silvery-white alkali metal**.
- Lithium is **highly reactive and flammable**, and must be stored in mineral oil.
- It never occurs freely in nature, but only in (usually ionic) **compounds**, such as **pegmatitic minerals**, which were once the main source of lithium.
- Due to its solubility as an ion, it is present in **ocean water** and is commonly obtained from **brines**.

Applications of Lithium

- Lithium is a key element for new technologies and finds its use in **ceramics, glass, telecommunication and aerospace industries**.
- The well-known uses of Lithium are in
 - Lithium ion **batteries**
 - **Lubricating grease**
 - High energy **additive to rocket propellants**
 - **Optical modulators** for mobile phones and
 - As a **converter to tritium** used as a raw material for thermonuclear reactions i.e. fusion.

17. Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) are huge stockpiles of crude oil stored in the underground rock caverns to tackle emergency situations and allow a country to tide over short-term supply disruptions. In which of the following places, India has a Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR)?

1. Mangalore
2. Padur
3. Bikaner
4. Visakhapatnam

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: C

Explanation

- Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) are **huge stockpiles of crude oil** stored in the **underground rock caverns** to tackle emergency situations and allow a country to tide over short-term supply disruptions.
- They represent a **defense against any event of downfall in future oil production**, including physical or economic actions which disrupt any part of the production process from exploration and development through refining
- **The Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve (ISPR)** refers to the emergency fuel storage maintained by **Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited**, a Special Purpose Vehicle - wholly owned subsidiary of Oil Industry Development Board under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
- Strategic crude oil storages are at **Mangalore (Karnataka), Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and Padur (Karnataka)** as per Phase I. They have fuel storage of total 5.33 MMT (Million Metric Tonnes).
- The government of India is planning to set up two more such caverns at **Chandikhol (Odisha) and Udupi (Karnataka)** as per phase II through Public-Private Partnership. This will give an additional 6.5 million tons of the oil reserves.
- Crude oil from **underground rock caverns (considered safest for storage of Hydrocarbons)** can be supplied to refineries through pipelines and ships.
- Indian refiners also maintain **crude oil storage (industrial stock) of 65 days**. Thus, a total of 87 days (22 by ISPL + 65 by Indian refiners) of oil consumption will be made available in India after completion of Phase II by ISPR. This will be very close to **90 days mandate by the IEA**.

18. PM-AASHA initiative is related to which of the following?

- a) Crop procurement
- b) Primary health care
- c) Women empowerment
- d) Skill development

Answer: A

Explanation:

Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) is an umbrella scheme aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce.

Components of PM-AASHA:

- Price Support Scheme (PSS),
- Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS)
- Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS).

Giving a major boost to the pro-farmer initiatives of the Government and in keeping with Government's commitment and dedication for Annadata. It will help to protect farmers' income which is expected to go long way towards the welfare of farmers. Government has already increased the Minimum Support Price of Kharif crops by following the principle of 1.5 times the cost of production. It is expected that the increase in MSP will be translated to farmer's income by way of robust procurement mechanism in coordination with the State Governments.

19. Consider the following statements about Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)

- 1) AMRUT scheme seeks to lay a foundation to enable all Indian cities and towns to eventually grow into smart cities.
- 2) It was launched by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs

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;

- To recast the urban landscape of the country, to make urban areas more livable and inclusive besides driving the economic growth, the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs** has

launched two **centrally sponsored schemes** namely the **Smart Cities Mission** and the **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)**.

About AMRUT:

- AMRUT seeks to lay a foundation to **enable cities and towns to eventually grow into smart cities**.
- AMRUT adopts a **project approach to ensure basic infrastructure services** relating to water supply, sewerage, septage management, storm water drains, transport and development of green spaces and parks with special provision for meeting the needs of children.

Coverage:

- This Mission will be **implemented in 500 cities and towns** each with a population of one lakh and above, some cities situated on stems of main rivers, a few capital cities and important cities located in hilly areas, islands and tourist areas.(not in all Indian cities) Hence statement 2 is incorrect.

Approach:

- Implementation of this Mission will be **linked to promotion of urban reforms** such as
 - e-governance,
 - constitution of professional municipal cadre,
 - devolving funds and functions to urban local bodies,
 - review of Building bye-laws,
 - improvement in assessment and collection of municipal taxes,
 - credit rating of urban local bodies,
 - energy and water audit and
 - citizen-centric urban planning.

Funding:

- Central assistance will be to the **extent of 50 percent of project cost** for cities and towns with a population of up to 10 lakh and one-third of the project cost for those with a population of above 10 lakh.
- Central assistance will be released in **three instalments in the ratio of 20:40:40** based on achievement of milestones indicated in State Annual Action Plans.

20. With reference to Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya), consider the following statements

1. It is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Power.
2. Under Saubhagya, free electricity connection is provided to all households in rural and urban areas.

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:

Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – ‘Saubhagya’ a new scheme was launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister on 25th September, 2017, is a flagship scheme under the Ministry of Power. Statement 1 is correct.

Under Saubhagya free electricity connections is not provided to all households but only to BPL households. However, Non beneficiaries can avail the connection by paying 500 Rs in 10 instalments. Statement 2 is incorrect

The beneficiaries for free electricity connections would be identified using Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011 data.

The Rural Electrification Corporation Limited (REC) will remain the nodal agency for the operationalisation of the scheme throughout the country.

21. 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**.
- 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.

22. Consider the following statements about Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)
1. The objective of the scheme is to reduce maternal and infant mortality by promoting institutional delivery among pregnant women.
 2. Under the 'Scheme', all Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM) receive a cash benefit of Rs. 5,000 in three installments to meet enhanced nutritional needs.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans-D

Explanation:

Statement 1 is incorrect.

- **Janani SurakshaYojana (JSY)** is a **centrally sponsored scheme** which is being implemented with the objective of **reducing maternal and infant mortality by promoting institutional delivery among pregnant women.** (Not Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)).
- Under the JSY, eligible pregnant women are entitled for cash assistance irrespective of the age of mother and number of children for giving birth in a government or accredited private health facility. It is being implemented by the Ministry **of Health and Family Welfare.**

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) is a flagship scheme of the Government **for pregnant women and lactating mothers** integrated by **Ministry of Women and Child Development.**
- PMMVY is a **direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme** under which cash benefits are provided to pregnant women in their bank account directly to **meet enhanced nutritional needs and partially compensate for wage loss.**
- Under the 'Scheme', **Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers (PW&LM)** receive a **cash benefit of Rs. 5,000 in three installments** on fulfilling the respective conditionality, viz. early registration of pregnancy, ante-natal check-up and registration of the birth of the child and completion of first cycle of vaccination for the first living child of the family.

- The maternity benefits under Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) are available to all Pregnant Women and Lactating Mother (PW&LM), **except those who are in regular employment with the Central Government or State Government** or Public Sector Undertaking or those who are in receipt of similar benefits under any law for the time being in force, for first living child in all parts of the country. Hence **Statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The eligible beneficiaries also receive cash incentive under Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY).
- **Thus, on an average, a woman gets Rs. 6,000.**

23. Which of the following tools can be used by RBI to control inflation?

1. Increasing the Repo rate
2. Increasing currency deposit ratio
3. Consolidating fiscal deficit

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: **A**

Explanation:

- Repo rate is the rate of interest which is applied by RBI to commercial banks when the latter borrows from RBI. In the event of raising inflation, RBI increase repo rate which will act as a disincentive for banks to borrow from the central bank. This ultimately reduces the money supply in the economy and thus **helps in arresting inflation.**
- The currency deposit ratio shows the amount of currency that people hold as a proportion of aggregate deposits. The more cash a person keeps on hand compared with the total deposits, the higher the currency-deposit ratio and leads to inflation. **Hence, it is not a tool to control inflation.**
- Consolidating fiscal deficit can be done by the **Government of India** through its fiscal policy and **not RBI.**

24. What is the correct sequence of occurrence of the following protected areas as one proceeds from North to South?

1. Mukurthi
2. Bhitarkanika
3. Hemis
4. Ntangki

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 4-2-1-3
(b) 3-2-4-1
(c) 3-4-2-1
(d) 4-3-2-1

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

National Park	State
Hemis	Leh
Ntangki	Nagaland
Mukurthi	Tamil Nadu
Bhitarkanika	Odisha

25. What is the correct sequence of occurrence of the following cities in South-East Asia as one proceeds from south to north?

1. Manila
2. Hanoi
3. Jakarta
4. Phnom penh

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 4-2-1-3
(b) 3-2-4-1
(c) 3-4-1-2
(d) 4-3-2-1

Answer (c)



26. With reference to the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, consider the following statements.

1. The act superseded Vishakha Guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court in 1997.
2. Every employer is required to constitute an Internal Complaints Committee at each office or branch with 50 or more employees.
3. The act covers both the organised and unorganised sectors under its ambit.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 addresses the issue of workplace sexual harassment faced by women in private institutions and government organisations.
- **Statement 1 is correct:** The act superseded **Vishakha Guidelines** laid down by the Supreme Court in 1997.
- The Act defines sexual harassment at the work place and creates a mechanism for redressal of complaints. It also provides safeguards against false or malicious charges.
- Sexual harassment is defined to include unwelcome sexually determined behaviour such as physical contact, request for sexual favours, sexually coloured remarks, screening of pornography, or any other conduct of sexual nature.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Every employer is required to constitute an **Internal Complaints Committee** at each office or branch with **10 or more employees**.
- The District Officer will constitute a **Local Complaints Committee** (LCC) in every district so as to enable women in the unorganised sector or small establishments to work in an environment free of sexual harassment.
- The LCC will receive complaints:
 - From women working in an organisation having less than 10 workers;
 - When the complaint is against the employer himself;
 - From domestic workers.
- At least **50 percent** of the nominated members in any Internal or Local Committee must be women.
- The Complaints Committees have the powers of **civil courts** for gathering evidence.
- The Complaints Committees are required to provide for conciliation before initiating an inquiry, if requested by the complainant.
- A workplace is defined as “any place visited by the employee arising out of or during the course of employment, including transportation provided by the employer for undertaking such a journey.”
- **Statement 3 is correct:** As per this definition, a workplace covers both the organised and unorganised sectors.

- It also includes all workplaces whether owned by Indian or foreign company having a place of work in India.
- As per the Act, workplace includes:-
 - Government organizations, including Government company, corporations and cooperative societies;-
 - Private sector organisations, venture, society, trust, NGO or service providers etc. providing services which are commercial, vocational, educational, sports, professional, entertainment, industrial, health related or financial activities, including production, supply, sale, distribution or service;-
 - Hospitals/Nursing Homes;-
 - Sports Institutes/Facilities;-
 - Places visited by the employee (including while on travel) including transportation provided by employer;
 - A dwelling place or house.
- The Act defines the Unorganised Sector as:
 - Any enterprise owned by an individual or self-employed workers engaged in the production or sale of goods or providing services of any kind;
 - Any enterprise which employs less than 10 workers.

27. 'SHe-box' is sometimes mentioned in news with reference to

- a) An initiative to make rural households digitally literate
- b) An online complaint management system to report sexual harassment at workplace.
- c) An initiative to encourage energy efficiency technologies in light of Global Warming.
- d) Government e-commerce portal for buying and selling dairy products.

Answer: B

Explanation

- The **Sexual Harassment electronic Box (SHe-Box)** is an effort by **Ministry of Women and Child Development**, Government of India to provide a **single window access to every woman**, irrespective of her work status, whether working in organised or unorganised, private or public sector, to facilitate the **registration of complaint related to sexual harassment**.

- Any woman facing sexual harassment at workplace can register their complaint through this portal. Once a complaint is submitted to the 'SHe-Box', it will be **directly sent to the concerned authority** having jurisdiction to take action into the matter.
- This was made to ensure the effective implementation of the **Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013**. The act aims to create a safe and secure workplace for women. This Act caters to women working both in organised and unorganised sector and establishes a **redressal mechanism** for the disposal of their complaints
- This Act is unique in its broad coverage which includes all women irrespective of their work status, whether working in organised or unorganised, public or private sectors, regardless of hierarchy. The **domestic workers are also included within its ambit**.
- It defines "sexual harassment at the workplace" in a comprehensive manner, to cover circumstances of implied or explicit promise or **threat to a woman's employment prospects** or creation of hostile work environment or humiliating treatment, which can **affect her health or safety**
- **Option A refers to Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan:** It is the scheme to make **six crore persons in rural areas**, across States/UTs, **digitally literate**, reaching to around 40% of rural households. The Scheme aims to **bridge the digital divide**, specifically targeting the rural population including the **marginalised sections of society** like Scheduled Castes (SC) / Scheduled Tribes (ST), Minorities, Below Poverty Line (BPL), women and differently-abled persons and minorities.

28. Which of the following are the ways to reduce revenue deficit without creating liabilities for the government?

- A. Issuance of Treasury Bills
- B. Procuring loans from the World bank at a low rate of interest
- C. Increasing direct taxes
- D. Rationalisation of Subsidies

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, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: C

Explanation:

- Revenue deficit is the difference between revenue expenditure and revenue receipts. To reduce revenue deficit, either we need to increase the revenue receipts or reduce the revenue expenditure.
- Treasury bills or T-bills are short term money market instruments issued by the Government of India. It is a part of Capital Receipts and not the Revenue Receipt, it cannot reduce the revenue deficit. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- Loan or any borrowing is a part of Capital Receipt and not a part of Revenue Receipt. Hence it cannot reduce the revenue deficit. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Taxes are part of Revenue Receipt. Increasing direct taxes would increase the revenue receipt of the government which can control the revenue Deficit.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Rationalizing subsidies would reduce revenue expenditure and thus helps in controlling the Revenue Deficit.

29. Consider the following statements about the Scheme for Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Product (RoDTEP).

1. It was launched as a component of the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme.
2. The scheme will reimburse taxes and duties paid by exporters to make them competitive in the international market

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The government has launched the Scheme for Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Product (RoDTEP) **to replace** the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS).

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The scheme will reimburse taxes and duties paid by exporters such as value added tax, coal cess, mandi tax, electricity duties and fuel used for transportation, which are not getting exempted or refunded under any other existing mechanism.
- It makes the exporters competitive in the international market.
- The government has decided to replace the MEIS as it was found to violate the World Trade Organization rules. **RoDTEP is a WTO-consistent scheme.**

30. Sabka Vishwas scheme is related to

- dispute resolution-cum-amnesty scheme for settling pending disputes related to taxation
- Scholarship scheme exclusively for the children of SC/ST employees
- Initiative to promote organic farming in the country
- Scheme for financial assistance for strengthening education in human values

Answer: A

Explanation

- The Sabka Vishwas Scheme, 2019 is a **scheme proposed in the Union Budget, 2019** and introduced to **resolve all disputes relating to the erstwhile Service tax and Central Excise Acts**, which are now subsumed under GST.
- **The two main components of the Sabka Vishwas Scheme are dispute resolution and amnesty:** The dispute resolution component is **aimed at liquidating the legacy cases of Central Excise and Service Tax** that are subsumed in GST and are **pending in litigation at various forums.**
- The amnesty component of the Scheme **offers an opportunity to the taxpayers to pay the outstanding tax** and be free of any other consequence under the law. The most attractive aspect of the Scheme is that it provides **substantial relief in the tax dues for all categories of cases** as well as full waiver of interest, fine, penalty. There is also a complete amnesty from prosecution.
- For all the cases pending in adjudication or appeal – in any forum, **this Scheme offers a relief of 70% from the duty demand if it is Rs.50 lakhs or less** and 50% if it is more than Rs. 50 lakhs.
- The Scheme is especially tailored **to free the large number of small taxpayers of their pending disputes with the tax administration.**

31. **Exercise Yudhabhyas is a military exercise between**

- a) India and US
- b) India and Thailand
- c) India and France
- d) India and Myanmar

Answer: A

Explanation:

- Exercise Yudh Abhyas is one of the **largest joint running military training** and defence corporation endeavors between **India and USA**.

Why this question?

- Exercise Yudh Abhyas -2021 commenced on February 8th in Mahajan Field Firing Range of Bikaner district in Rajasthan.
- This is the **16th edition of annual bilateral** joint exercise of both the armies.

About Exercise Yudh Abhyas:

- Exercise Yudh Abhyas will provide an opportunity to the armed forces of both countries to **train in an integrated manner** at Battalion level with joint planning at Brigade level.
- Multiple scenarios will be rehearsed during the joint exercise with a view to understand each other's organisational structure and battle procedures which would result in a higher degree of jointmanship that would further facilitate interoperability between the armed forces of both countries to meet any unforeseen contingency across the globe.
- The exercise is also an ideal platform to learn from each other's expertise and experiences of planning and execution of operations.
- Both armies jointly train, plan and execute a series of well developed operations for neutralization of threats of varied nature.
- In the end, a joint exercise was undertaken by both countries in an operational setting under a UN mandate.
- Experts from both sides held expert academic and military discussions to share each other's experiences on varied topics for mutual benefit.

32. **Consider the following statements about Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana**

- 1) All farmers including sharecroppers and tenant farmers growing the notified crops in the notified areas are eligible for the scheme.
- 2) The premium paid by farmers is not uniform in nature for all the crops.

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:

Fasal Bima Yojana

1. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) is a **crop insurance scheme**
2. **All farmers** including sharecroppers and tenant farmers growing the notified crops in the notified areas are eligible for the scheme.

Coverage of Crops:

I. Food crops (Cereals, Millets & Pulses),

II. Oilseeds

III. Annual Commercial / Horticultural crops

3. There will be a uniform premium of **2% to be paid by farmers for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all Rabi crops.**

4. For **annual commercial and horticultural crops**, the premium to be paid by farmers will be **5%.**

5. **Thus premium paid by farmers is different for different crops and it is not uniform in nature.**

6. **Both pre-harvest loss as well as post harvest loss are covered under the scheme.**

7. **Losses arising out of war & nuclear risks, malicious damage and other preventable risks will be excluded.**

8. **The scheme is implemented by empanelled general insurance companies.**

9. **Selection of Implementing Agency (IA) is made by the concerned State Government through bidding.**

33. Which of the following are among the criteria to be fulfilled by a political party to be recognised as a national party?

- 1) It needs to win a minimum ten percent of seats in the Lok Sabha from at least three different states.
- 2) It needs to get at least six percent of votes in four states in Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, in addition to winning four Lok Sabha seats.
- 3) It needs to get recognised as a state party in four or more states.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

The **Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968**, lays down the criteria for declaring any registered political party as a national party or a state party.

National Party

- As per the order, a registered political party needs to fulfil at least one of the following three conditions to be recognised as a national party:
 1. It needs to win a minimum **two percent** of seats in the Lok Sabha (11 seats) from at least three different states.
 2. It needs to get **at least six percent of votes in four states** in Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, in addition to **winning four Lok Sabha seats**.
 3. It needs to get **recognised as a state party in four or more states**.
- There are seven political parties recognised as national parties: Bharatiya Janata Party, Indian National Congress, Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Nationalist Congress Party, Bahujan Samaj Party, and Trinamool Congress.

State party

- Each of the 29 states in India has at least one political party which comes under the category of state party.
- As of March 2019, the Election Commission of India recognises 52 political parties as such.

- In order to be recognised as a state party, a political party needs to fulfil at least one of the four criteria laid down by the Election Commission of India.
- A political party will be recognised as a state party:
 1. If it wins **three percent of the total seats** in the Legislative Assembly of the state (subject to a minimum of three seats).
 2. If it wins one Lok Sabha seat for every 25 Lok Sabha seats allotted for the state.
 3. If it gets **at least six percent of votes** in a state during a Lok Sabha or Assembly election. In addition, it also needs to win **at least one Lok Sabha or two Legislative Assembly seats**.
 4. If it wins **at least eight percent votes** in a state during the Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly elections.
- In the past few years, many political parties have been derecognised for failing to secure minimum number of seats and vote share as prescribed by the Election Commission.

Benefits of being a recognised state party or national party

- The Representation of Peoples' Act allows political parties to accept contributions voluntarily offered to it by any person or company other than a government company.
- Candidates of registered parties get preference in allotment of election symbols.
- A national/state party is allowed exclusive use of its allotted symbol during Assembly or parliamentary elections 'across the country/in a state' where it is recognised as such.
- A candidate belonging to such parties needs only one proposer for filing the nomination.
- These parties are also entitled to two sets of electoral rolls free of cost at the time of revision of rolls, while their candidates get one copy of electoral roll for no cost during general elections.
- Since 1998, these political parties also get broadcasting rights over All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan during Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.
- Both national and state parties also enjoy the privileges of utilising star campaigners for their election campaigns. A recognised national or state party can have a maximum of 40 star campaigners during a state or national election.
- Notably, the travel expenses of star campaigners cannot be accounted for in the election expense accounts of candidates.

Registered But Unrecognised Political Parties

- The 2,000 plus registered but unrecognised political parties do not have the privilege of contesting elections on a fixed symbol of their own.
- They have to choose from a list of 'free symbols' issued by the poll panel.
- However, these parties are allowed to have up to 20 star campaigners during an election campaign.
- It is to be noted that the **Election Commission cannot deregister a party**. However, it uses **Article 324 of the Constitution to “unlist” dormant political parties**.

34. Which among the following statement is *incorrect* regarding the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)?

- It is constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 by respective states and it is the primary fund available with state governments for responses to notified disasters
- Ministry of Home Affairs is the nodal ministry for overseeing the operation of the SDRF and monitors compliance with prescribed processes
- The State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) is entirely borne by the state government without any centre's contribution
- Every year, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) audits the account of State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)

Answer : C

Explanation

- Constituted under **the Disaster Management Act, 2005 by respective states** and it is the primary fund available with state governments for responses to **notified disasters**.
- **Composition:** The Central government **contributes 75 per cent towards the SDRF allocation for general category states** and UTs, and over **90 per cent for special category states/UTs**, which includes northeastern states, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand)
- For SDRF, the Centre releases funds in two equal installments as per the **recommendation of the Finance Commission**.
- **Support from the National Disaster Response Fund:** It supplements the SDRF of a state, in case of a disaster of severe nature, provided adequate funds are not available in the SDRF

- **The disasters covered under the SDRF include** cyclones, droughts, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches and pest attacks among others

Features of SDRF

- The **aggregate size of the SDRF for each state, for each year, is as per the recommendations of the Finance Commission**
- The share of GoI to the SDRF is treated as a **'grant in aid'**. The **financing of relief measures out of SDRF are decided by the State Executive Committee (SEC) constituted under Section 20 of the DM Act.**
- SEC is responsible for the **overall administration of the SDRF**. However, the administrative expenses of SEC are borne by the State Government from its normal budgetary provisions and not from the SDRF or NDRF
- The norms regarding the amount to be incurred on each approved item of expenditure (type of disaster) are **fixed by the Ministry of Home Affairs** with the concurrence of Ministry of Finance. Any excess expenditure has to be borne out of the budget of the state government
- **Ministry of Home Affairs is the nodal ministry for overseeing the operation of the SDRF** and monitors compliance with prescribed processes.
- **Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) audit the SDRF every year**

35. Consider the following statements with respect to Earthquakes

1. The place in the crust where the movement starts is called the focus
2. The place on the surface above the focus is called the epicentre.
3. Seismic waves radiate out in all directions.

Which of the statements given above is/are INCORRECT?

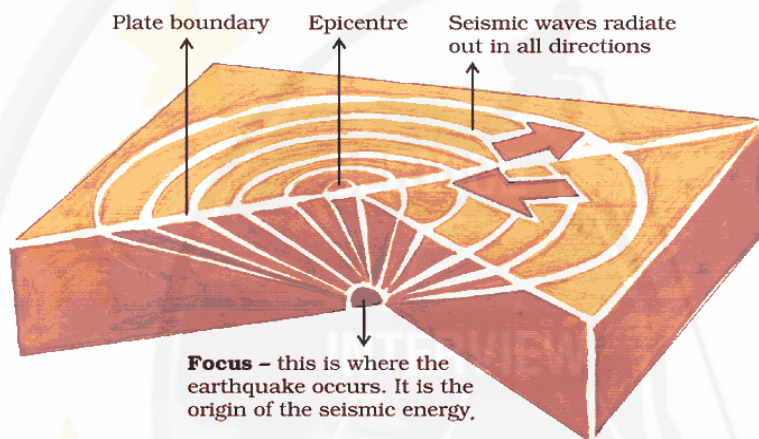
- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 3 only
- c) 1, 2 and 3
- d) None of the above

Answer : D

Explanation

- When the Lithospheric plates move, the surface of the Earth vibrates. **The vibrations can travel all round the Earth.** These vibrations are called **Earthquakes**

- **Statement 1 is correct :** The place in the crust where the movement starts is called the **focus**.
- **Statement 2 is correct :** The place on the surface above the focus is called the **epicentre**.
- **Statement 3 is correct :** Vibrations travel outwards from the epicentre as waves. **Seismic waves radiate out in all directions.**
- Greatest damage is usually closest to the epicentre and the strength of the Earthquake decreases away from the centre.



36. Consider the following statements about Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY)

1. Under the JSY, eligible pregnant women are entitled for cash assistance irrespective of the age of mother and number of children for giving birth in a government or accredited private health facility.
2. BPL pregnant women, who prefer to deliver at home, are entitled to a cash assistance of Rs 500 per delivery regardless of age of women and the number of children.

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

- Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) is a **safe motherhood intervention** under the National Health Mission.
- It is being implemented with the objective of reducing maternal and neonatal mortality by promoting institutional delivery among poor pregnant women. JSY **integrates cash assistance with delivery and post-delivery care.**
- The scheme, launched in 2005 by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, is under implementation in all states and Union Territories (UTs), with a special focus on Low Performing States (LPS).
- **Statement 1 is correct:** Under the JSY, eligible pregnant women are entitled for cash assistance irrespective of the age of mother and number of children for giving birth in a government or accredited private health facility.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** BPL pregnant women, who prefer to deliver at home, are entitled to a cash assistance of Rs 500 per delivery regardless of age of women and the number of children.

37. Mission Parivar Vikas is related to

- A. Drive towards 90% full immunization coverage of India and sustain the same by year 2020
- B. To provide information, commodities and services to meet the diverse needs of adolescents
- C. Substantially increasing access to contraceptives and family planning services in high fertility districts
- D. Complementary intervention to reduce the prevalence of anaemia and malnutrition in India

Answer: C

Explanation

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched **Mission Parivar Vikas** for substantially increasing access to contraceptives and family planning services in 146 high fertility districts with Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 3 and above in seven high focus states.
- These districts are from the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Assam that itself constitutes 44% of the country's population.
- **Option A** is related to Mission Indradhanush.
- **Option B** is related to Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram

38. With reference to the Ayushman Bharat programme, consider the following statements.

1. It envisages 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centres to provide comprehensive secondary & tertiary hospitalization services to the population.
2. The insurance component can be availed from any public/private hospitals across the country.
3. The insurance component will be based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of the Socio Economic Caste Census for rural and urban areas respectively.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

- Ayushman Bharat is an umbrella of two major health initiatives, namely **Health and Wellness Centres** and **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)**.

Health and Wellness Centres

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Under this 1.5 lakh existing sub centres will bring the health care system closer to the homes of people in the form of Health and wellness centres to provide comprehensive **primary health care** to the population.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana

- PMJAY will provide health cover to 10.74 crore poor & vulnerable families upto ` 5 lakh per family per year for **secondary & tertiary hospitalization**.
- To ensure that nobody is left out (especially women, children and elderly) there will be **no cap on family size** and age in the scheme.
- The benefit cover will also include pre and post-hospitalisation expenses.
- A defined transport allowance per hospitalization will also be paid to the beneficiary.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Benefits of the scheme are portable across the country and a beneficiary covered under the scheme will be allowed to take cashless benefits from any public/**private empanelled hospitals** across the country.

Eligibility criteria

- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Scheme has been rolled out based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of the **Socio Economic Caste Census** for rural and urban areas respectively.

Implementation Strategy

- At the national level to manage, a **National Health Authority** has been set up. It will be chaired by the Minister of Health & Family Welfare which will enable the decision making at a faster pace, required for smooth implementation of the scheme.
- States/ UTs are advised to implement the scheme by a dedicated entity called State Health Agency (SHA).

39. Kurubhas, a traditional sheep rearing community belong to which of the following state?

- a) Kerala
- b) Tamilnadu
- c) Karnataka
- d) Andhra Pradesh

Answer: C

Explanation

The Kurubas of Karnataka are a traditional sheep rearing community.

Presently, the Kurubas constitute 9.3% of the state's population and come under the backward classes category.

Why in the news?

A massive rally was organised by the Kuruba community to urge the state government of Karnataka to recommend the Centre inclusion of the community in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) list.

40. Which of the following soil, water and crop management practices can help reduce carbon emissions?

1. Micro irrigation practices
2. Use of slow release nitrogen fertilizers

3. Zero tillage farming

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

(a) 1 and 3 only

(b) 3 only

(C) 1, 2 and 3

(d) 1 and 2 only

Answer: C

Explanation

- Initiatives have been taken to **make agriculture more adaptive and resilient to climate variability** and in the process **to reduce carbon emission**.
- Important initiatives in this regard include **crop diversification programme** under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), **National Food Security Mission (NFSM)** and Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI)
- Other supporting programmes viz. **Soil Health Card (SHC)**, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) which is one of the eight Mission under the National Action Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) etc
- ❖ Soil, water and crop management practices that reduce carbon emission include
 - ❑ **Increasing the area under System of Rice Intensification (SRI)** as an alternative to transplanted paddy
 - ❑ **Deployment of zero tillage** drill machines and other residue management equipment which **enable planting of rabi crop in the standing residue** of rice crop to **avoid its burning**
 - ❑ Alternate wetting and drying, direct seeded rice system of rice cultivation, **use of slow release nitrogen fertilizers**, integrated nutrient management practices etc
 - ❑ Mandatory **Neem coating of urea**
 - ❑ **Promotion of micro irrigation** under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY)-Per Drop More Crop
 - ❑ **Planting of trees under National Food Security Mission (NFSM)**, Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI), Sub-Mission on AgroForestry (SMAF) and National Bamboo Mission (NBM)

- 45 models of **Integrated Farming System (IFS)** have been developed for replication in Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and in the States for enabling climate resilient agriculture
- **Climate resilient villages have been developed** by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), one in each of 151 districts.
- **Climate Vulnerability Atlas** has been prepared under National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA). District Agriculture Contingency Plans have been developed for 633 districts in order to give **real time agro advisories for overcoming climate risks**

41. Consider the following statements about Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP)

- 1) The aim of the project is to improve the safety and operational performance of all the dams across the whole country.
- 2) It is financially aided by the World Bank (WB), and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

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: B

Explanation:

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) Phase II & Phase III with the **financial assistance of the World Bank (WB), and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).**
- The aim of the project is to **improve the safety and operational performance of selected dams** (not all the dams) across the whole country, along with institutional strengthening with a system wide management approach.
- The Project will be implemented over a **period of 10 years** duration in two Phases, each of six years duration with two years overlapping from April, 2021 to March, 2031.
- DRIP Phase II & Phase III envisages the following **objectives:-**

- To **improve the safety and performance of selected existing dams** and associated appurtenances in a sustainable manner.
- To **strengthen the dam safety institutional setup** in participating states as well as at central level, and
- To explore the alternative incidental means at few of selected dams to **generate the incidental revenue** for sustainable operation and maintenance of dams
- To achieve the above objectives, DRIP Phase II & Phase III has following **components**
- Rehabilitation and improvement of dams and associated appurtenances,
- Dam safety institutional strengthening in participating States and Central agencies,
- Exploration of alternative incidental means at few of selected dams to generate the incidental revenue for sustainable operation and maintenance of dams, and
- Project management.

The Scheme envisages comprehensive rehabilitation of 736 existing dams located across 19 states of the country.

42. Consider the following pairs

Wetland	Location
(A) Ropar	Haryana
(B) Rudrasagar	Tripura
(C) Pong Dam	Himachal Pradesh

Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched?

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

Ans: (b)

Explanation:

All of the above wetlands are Ramsar wetlands known as a wetland of International importance

Wetland	Location
	Punjab
sagar	Tripura
Pong Dam	Himachal Pradesh

Why in the news?

A lakh of migratory water birds arrived at the Pong Dam Lake Wildlife Sanctuary in Himachal Pradesh in winter 2020-21.

43. Consider the following statements with respect to National policy for treatment of rare diseases

1. The policy intends to kick-start a registry of rare diseases that will be maintained by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)
2. In India, only Haemophilia and Thalassemia are included in the rare diseases 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:

What is a Rare Disease?

- A rare disease is a health condition of particularly low prevalence that affects a small number of people compared with other prevalent diseases in the general population.
- There is no universally accepted definition of rare diseases and the definitions usually vary across jurisdictions.
- However, the common considerations in the disease prevalence and to varying extent - severity therapeutic options.
- It is estimated that globally around 6000 to 8000 rare diseases exist with new rare diseases being reported regularly in the medical literature.

About National policy for treatment of rare diseases

Statement 1 is correct: The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare published a national policy for treatment of rare diseases, listing **450 diseases** as rare but not providing a detailed roadmap on treatment. The policy intends to **kick-start a registry of rare diseases** that Indian Council of Medical Research will maintain.

Statement 2 is incorrect:

- In India, **Haemophilia, Thalassemia, Sickle cell anaemia and Primary ImmunoDeficiency** in children, auto-immune diseases, Lysosomal storage disorders such as Pompe disease and Gaucher's disease are in the **rare diseases list**.
- The latest policy creates **three categories of rare diseases** — diseases requiring one-time curative treatment, diseases which need long-term treatment but the cost is low and diseases that require life-long treatment and the cost is high.
- The policy states that the Centre will **provide assistance of Rs 15 lakh to patients** suffering from rare diseases that require one-time curative treatment under the Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi scheme.
- The treatment is **limited to beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana**. It also recommends **crowdfunding** as a source to fund treatment of rare diseases.

Why in the news?

The two children, who are two and three years old respectively, suffering from Mucopolysaccharidosis II or MPS II (Hunter Syndrome, Attenuated Type) which is a rare disease have approached Supreme Court seeking direction to the Centre and AIIMS to provide them uninterrupted treatment free of cost.

About Mucopolysaccharidosis II

- It is a rare disease that is passed on in families.
- It mostly affects boys and their bodies cannot break down a kind of sugar that builds bones, skin, tendons and other tissues.
- The gene responsible for MPS II is known as the iduronate 2-sulfatase (IDS) gene.
- The IDS gene is responsible for production of the lysosomal enzyme iduronate 2-sulfatase.
- The deficiency of the enzyme results in an abnormal accumulation of certain complex carbohydrates (glycosaminoglycans also known as mucopolysaccharides) within the cells of various tissues of the body.
- MPS II usually become apparent in children from two to four years of age.

- Manifestations of MPS II may include inflammatory joint stiffness, with associated restriction of movements; and coarsening of facial features, including thickening of the lips, tongue (macroglossia), and nostrils.
- Affected children may also have an abnormally large head (macrocephaly), a short neck and broad chest, delayed tooth eruption, progressive hearing loss, enlargement of the liver and spleen (hepatosplenomegaly), cardiac valve disease and progressive growth delays resulting in short stature.
- An enzyme replacement therapy can be considered as a treatment for MPS II. Other treatments of MPS II are symptomatic and supportive.

44. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Lokpal' in India

1. It is a multi-member body, of which 50 percent of the members will be from specific judicial background
2. It inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries and its jurisdiction also extends to Prime Minister of India

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: C

Explanation

- The **Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013** provided for the **establishment of Lokpal for the Union and Lokayukta for States.**
- These institutions **are statutory bodies** without any constitutional status. They perform the function of an "ombudsman" and **inquire into allegations of corruption against certain public functionaries** and for related matters.
- Lokpal is a **multi-member body, that consists of one chairperson and a maximum of 8 members.**
- Chairperson of the Lokpal should be either the **former Chief Justice of India or the former Judge of Supreme Court** or an eminent person with impeccable integrity and

outstanding ability, having special knowledge and expertise of **minimum 25 years in the matters relating to anti-corruption policy, public administration, vigilance**, finance including insurance and banking, law and management.

- Out of the maximum eight members, **half will be judicial members** and minimum 50% of the Members will be from SC/ ST/ OBC/ Minorities and women.
- The judicial member of the Lokpal either a **former Judge of the Supreme Court or a former Chief Justice of a High Court**.
- The term of office for Lokpal Chairman and Members is **5 years or till the age of 70 years**.
- The members are **appointed by the president** on the recommendation of a Selection Committee.
- **Jurisdiction of Lokpal includes Prime Minister, Ministers, members of Parliament, Groups A, B, C and D officers and officials of Central Government.**
- Jurisdiction of the Lokpal **included the Prime Minister except on allegations of corruption relating to international relations**, security, the public order, atomic energy and space
- It has the powers to **superintendence over, and to give direction to CBI**. If Lokpal has referred a case to CBI, the investigating officer in such case cannot be transferred without the approval of Lokpal.
- Lokpal has **powers of confiscation of assets, proceeds, receipts** and benefits arisen or procured by means of corruption in special circumstances.

45. Consider the following statements about International Energy Agency (IEA)

- 1) It is an autonomous body within the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) framework
- 2) Members of IEA must have crude oil or product reserves equivalent to 90 days of the previous year's net imports.
- 3) India is a permanent member of IEA.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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

Answer: A

Explanation

Statement 1 is correct: The International Energy Agency is a Paris-based **autonomous intergovernmental organization** established in the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1974 in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis. The IEA was initially dedicated to responding to physical disruptions in the supply of oil, as well as serving as an information source on statistics about the international oil market and other energy sectors.

The IEA has four main areas of focus, i.e. 4Es:

- Energy security,
- Economic development,
- Environmental awareness and
- Engagement worldwide.

Membership:

The IEA is made up of 30 member countries.

Criteria for membership

A candidate country to the **IEA must be a member country of the OECD**. In addition, it must demonstrate several requirements. These are:

- Crude oil and/or product reserves equivalent to **90 days of the previous year's net imports**, to which the government has immediate access (even if it does not own them directly) and could be used to address disruptions to global oil supply; **So, statement 2 is correct.**
- A demand restraint programme to reduce national oil consumption by up to 10%;
- Legislation and organisation to operate the Coordinated Emergency Response Measures (CERM) on a national basis;
- Legislation and measures to ensure that all oil companies under its jurisdiction report information upon request;
- Measures in place to ensure the capability of contributing its share of an IEA collective action.

Statement 3 is incorrect: India became an **associate member** (not a permanent member) of the International Energy Agency in 2017.

46. Consider the following statements about Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019

- 1) It empowers both the central and state government to designate an individual a “terrorist” if they are found committing an act of terror.
- 2) It requires any investigating officer to take prior permission of the Director General of Police of a state for conducting raids.

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

- The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019 is an **anti-terror legislation** that seeks to **designate an individual as a “terrorist”**
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The act **empowers the central government** (state government does not have such powers) to designate an **individual a “terrorist”** if they are found committing, preparing for, **promoting, or involved in an act of terror**. Earlier, the Central Government was having powers only to designate organisation as terrorist organisation.
- Under the amendment act, the **central government will set up the review committee** consisting of a chairperson (a retired or sitting judge of a High Court) and three other members. The review committee will be **empowered to order the government** to delete the name of the individual from the **schedule that lists “terrorists”**, if it considers the order to be flawed.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The UAPA law of 1967 requires an **investigating officer to take prior permission** of the Director General of Police of a state for conducting raids, and seizing properties that are suspected to be linked to terrorist activities. The **amendment act of 2019 however, removes this requirement** if the **investigation is conducted by an officer**

of the National Investigation Agency (NIA). The investigating officer, under the Bill, **only requires sanction from the Director General of NIA.**

- Central agencies such as the **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** are required to obtain **prior permission** from the state government since law and order is a state subject under the Constitution.
- The UAPA law of 1967 specifies that only officers of the rank of Deputy Superintendent or Assistant Commissioner of Police of the NIA shall have the **power to investigate offences** under the UAPA law. The amendment act seeks to allow **NIA officers of Inspector rank to carry out investigations.**

47. Consider the following statements about Input Tax Credit (ITC).

1. ITC offsets the taxes paid for inputs from the tax payable on the final output produced
2. ITC cannot be claimed for inputs used in manufacturing of goods exempted from GST

Which among 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:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Input Tax Credit means reducing the taxes paid on inputs from taxes to be paid on output.
- ITC is only available for business purposes. A taxpayer is not allowed to claim any input credit for GST paid on personal expenses.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Goods exempted under GST enjoy 0% GST. ITC cannot be claimed for inputs used in such exempted goods as it will lead to negative taxation.

Why in the news?

The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) Gurugram arrests man for fraudulently availing input tax credit of Rs 376 crore through 7 fake firms.

48. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Objectives of Special Economic Zone

- 1) to boost exports
- 2) to develop backward regions

3) Contribute towards exchange rate stability

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

- **India was one of the first in Asia to recognize the effectiveness of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) model in promoting exports, with Asia's first EPZ set up in Kandla in 1965.**
- **With a view to attract larger foreign investments in India, the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) Policy was announced in April 2000.**

What are SEZs?

- SEZ is a specifically **delineated duty-free enclave and deemed to be foreign territory for the purposes of trade operations and duties and tariffs.**
- SEZs' economic laws are more liberal than a country's typical economic laws. India's SEZ policy offers various fiscal and regulatory incentives to the developers within the zone like exemption from customs duties, central excise duties.
- The idea was to create a level playing field to the domestic enterprises and manufacturers to be competitive globally.
- The functioning of the SEZs is governed by a three tier administrative set up.
- SEZs are zones intended to facilitate rapid economic growth by leveraging tax incentives to attract foreign dollars and technological advancement.

The main objectives of the SEZ Act are:

- Generation of additional economic activity
- **Promotion of exports of goods and services. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **To develop backward regions. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Contribute towards exchange rate stability. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- Promotion of investment from domestic and foreign sources
- Creation of employment opportunities
- Development of infrastructure facilities

49. Which of the following statements is incorrect regarding Fuel cells ?

- a) Fuel cells produce electricity through chemical reactions, with combustion.
- b) The byproducts produced from the cells are heat and water.
- c) Fuel cells operate much like a battery, except they don't require electrical recharging.
- d) A fuel cell, receives the chemicals it uses from the outside; therefore, it won't run out, unlike a battery.**

Answer: A

Explanation:

What is a fuel cell?

- A Fuel cell produces electricity through a chemical reaction, **but without combustion**. So, Fuel cell electric vehicles, use clean fuels and are therefore more eco-friendly than internal combustion engine-based vehicles.
- It converts hydrogen and oxygen into water, and in the process also creates electricity. It's an electro-chemical energy conversion device that produces electricity, **water, and heat**.
- Fuel cells operate much like a battery, except **they don't require electrical recharging**.

Difference between a battery and a fuel cell

- A battery stores all of its chemicals inside and converts the chemicals into electricity. Once those chemicals run out, the battery dies.
- A fuel cell, on the other hand, receives the chemicals it uses from the outside; therefore, it won't run out. Fuel cells can generate power almost indefinitely, as long as they have fuel to use.

Why in the news?

Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Shri Nitin Gadkari has called for adopting an integrated approach for developing indigenous fuel cells in the field of electric vehicles.

50. Which of the following statements about the PRAKASH portal is incorrect?

- a) It aims to improve coordination between the power, coal and railway ministries to ensure coal supplies to power plants.
- b) It has been developed by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)
- c) The portal is accessible to the general public
- d) The Prakash portal replaces the present mechanism to review the coal supply situation consisting of an inter-ministerial group.

Answer: C

Explanation

- **Option A is correct:** PRAKASH (Power Rail Koyla Availability through Supply Harmony) portal **aims at bringing better coordination** for coal supplies among all stakeholders viz - **Ministry of Power, Ministry of Coal, Coal India, Railways** and power utilities.
 - This is an important step in **ensuring adequate availability** and optimum utilization of **coal at thermal power plants.**
 - The Portal is designed to help in **mapping and monitoring entire coal supply chain** for power plants
- **Option B is correct:** PRAKASH Portal is **developed by** National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and **sources data from different stakeholders** such as Central Electricity Authority (CEA), Centre for Railway Information System (CRIS) and coal companies.
- **Present mechanism** to review coal supply situation consists of an **inter-ministerial group** which has officials from Ministries of Power, Coal, Railways, Central Electricity Authority (CEA), power utilities and coal companies.
 - This group holds weekly meetings to **review coal supply situations** as well as railway logistics.
 - It was observed that this **mechanism faced several issues** such as scattered information, correctness of data from different organizations, timely availability of data etc. This often **led to difficulties in decision making**
 - To address such situations, the Ministry of Power asked CEA for **establishment of a transparent mechanism to monitor the coal availability** at loading site, placement of rakes by Railways and availability of coal at power stations and also directed NTPC to facilitate CEA for portal development.

- **Option D is correct:** So the Prakash portal **replaces the present mechanism** to review the coal supply situation consisting of an inter-ministerial group
- The portal is expected to **help coal companies to track stocks** and requirements at power stations for effective production planning as coal cannot be stockpiled beyond a certain quantity without the risk of catching fire.
 - **Option C is incorrect:**Power stations would also take **more informed decisions** as they would have more clarity on the exact number of rakes in pipeline and their expected time of arrival. However, the portal, unlike the power ministry's other recently launched websites, **is not accessible to the general public.**

Benefits of Portal to the Stakeholders

The portal makes available following information on a single platform

- **Coal company** will be able to **track stocks and the coal requirement** at power stations for effective production planning
- **Indian Railways** will plan to place the rakes as per actual coal available at siding and stock available at power stations.
- **Power stations** can plan future schedules by knowing rakes in the pipe line and expected time to Reach.
- Stock at power generating station

51. Consider the following statements with respect to MGNREGA

1. Under this scheme, the local government will have to legally provide at least 100 days of wage employment in rural India
2. In order to claim benefits under the scheme, an applicant must volunteer for unskilled labour
3. Social Audit of MGNREGA works is mandatory

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: D

Explanation

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

- The scheme was introduced as a social measure that guarantees “**the right to work**”. The key tenet of this social measure and labour law is that the **local government will have to legally provide at least 100 days of wage employment in rural India** to enhance their quality of life.

Key objectives

- Generation of **paid rural employment of not less than 100 days** for each worker who volunteers for unskilled labour.
- Proactively ensuring **social inclusion by strengthening livelihood** base of rural poor.
- **Creation of durable assets** in rural areas such as wells, ponds, roads and canals.
- **Reduce urban migration** from rural areas

The following are the **eligibility criteria** for receiving the benefits under MGNREGA scheme

- Must be **Citizen of India to seek NREGA benefits**.
- Job seeker has completed 18 years of age at the time of application.
- The applicant must be part of a local household (i.e. application must be made with local Gram Panchayat)
- Applicant **must volunteer for unskilled labour**

Key facts

- The **Ministry of Rural Development** is **monitoring the entire implementation** of this scheme in association with state governments.
- Within 15 days of submitting the application or from the day work is demanded, **wage employment will be provided to the applicant**.
- **Right to get unemployment allowance** in case employment is not provided within fifteen days of submitting the application or from the date when work is sought
- **Social Audit of MGNREGA works is mandatory**, which lends to accountability and transparency.
- The **Gram Sabha is the principal forum for wage seekers to raise their voices** and make demands
- It is the Gram Sabha and the Gram Panchayat which approves the shelf of works under MGNREGA and fix their priority

Why in the news?

The Standing Committee on Labour said that there is no better Scheme than the MGNREGS to provide sustainable livelihood to the unskilled workers including the inter-state migrant labourers.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/no-better-scheme-than-nregs-for-sustainable-livelihood-of-unskilled-workers-house-panel-7184983/>

52. The Miyawaki method recently seen in news is related to

- a) Dense plantation of very young seedlings
- b) Growing of plants without soil
- c) Dripping of water directly to the roots
- d) Climate controlled growth of plants

Answer: A

Explanation:

Miyawaki Method

Miyawaki is a Japanese technique of growing dense plantations in a short time. This method originated in Japan and is now increasingly adopted in other parts of the world. It is named after the Japanese botanist and plant ecologist Akira Miyawaki. This method includes planting trees, only native species, as close as possible in the same area. The approach ensures that plant growth is 10 times faster and the resulting plantation is 30 times denser than usual.

Miyawaki Process:

- The native trees of the region are identified and divided into four layers namely shrub, sub-tree, tree, and canopy.
- The quality of soil is analysed water retention capacity, and nutrients in it, is mixed with it.
- A mound is built with the soil and the seeds are planted at a very high density of three to five saplings per square meter.
- The ground should be covered with a thick layer of mulch. These trees lack some qualities of natural forests, such as medicinal properties and the ability to bring rain.

- Such fast-growing plantations can be used for wood lots, recreational uses like bird watching, bushwalking, and wildflower appreciation.

Statement b refers to Hydroponics Method

- It is a method of growing plants without soil in which plants get their nutrients from a mineral solution.
- The method is suitable for growing greens and herbs as they don't have deep roots. Tomatoes and strawberries are other popular items.

Statement c refers to Drip Irrigation

- It is a type of micro-irrigation system that has the potential to save water and nutrients by allowing water to drip slowly to the roots of plants, either from above the soil surface or buried below the surface.

Statement d refers to GreenHouse and PolyHouse Method

- **Green houses** are climate controlled with cooling and heating system. It is mainly used to grow exotic vegetables, off-season growing of vegetables, floriculture, planting material acclimatization and plant breeding and varieties improvement under adverse agro-climatic conditions.
- Poly house is a less sophisticated version of green house with naturally ventilated climate controlled as against the fully climate controlled greenhouses.

53. Consider the following statement about Block-chain technology

1. It is a digitized, public ledger of all transactions, using Cryptography.
2. It is a highly centralised system which allows for safety and integrity of all information stored, hence, data is incorruptible.
3. This technology has been exploited by the crypto currencies such as Bitcoin, Ripple, Litecoin etc

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:** Blockchain, sometimes referred to as **Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT)**, makes the history of any **digital asset** unalterable and **transparent through the use of decentralization and cryptographic** hashing.
- A simple analogy for understanding blockchain technology is a **Google Doc**. When we create a document and share it with a group of people, the **document is distributed instead of copied or transferred**.
- This creates a **decentralized distribution** chain that gives everyone access to the document at the same time. No one is locked out awaiting changes from another party, while **all modifications to the doc are being recorded in real-time**, making changes completely transparent. But blockchain is more complicated than a Google Doc
- Blockchain is an especially promising and revolutionary technology because it helps **reduce risk, stamps out fraud and brings transparency** in a scalable way for myriad uses.
- Blockchain consists of three important concepts: **blocks, nodes and miners**
- **Blocks:** Every chain consists of **multiple blocks** in which data is entered
- **Miners:** Miners **create new blocks on the chain** through a process called mining.
- **Nodes:** One of the most important concepts in blockchain technology is **decentralization**. **No one computer or organization can own the chain.**
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** It is a distributed ledger via the nodes connected to the chain. **Nodes can be any kind of electronic device** that maintains copies of the blockchain and keeps the network functioning. Therefore, Blockchain technology is a highly **decentralised** (not centralised) **system** which allows for **safety and integrity of all information** stored hence, data is incorruptible.

Cryptocurrency

- A **cryptocurrency** is a **digital asset designed to work as a medium of exchange** that uses strong cryptography to **secure financial transactions**, control the creation of additional units and verify the transfer of assets.
- It is a **digital representation of value** that can be digitally traded and functions as a medium of exchange but, unlike fiat currency like the rupee, **it is not legal tender** and does **not have the backing of a government**.

- **Statement 3 is correct:** Blockchain technology enables the existence of **cryptocurrencies** (among other things). This technology has been **exploited by the cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin, Ripple, Litecoin** etc as blockchain data is secured using cryptography.
- Bitcoin is the name of the best-known cryptocurrency, **the one for which blockchain technology was invented.**

54. Consider the following lakes

1. Kolleru
2. Sambhar
3. Pangong Tso
4. Bhimtal

Which of the above is/are Salt water lakes found in India?

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

Ans : D

Explanation

- Kolleru Lake is one of the **largest freshwater lakes in India** located in state of Andhra Pradesh and forms the largest shallow freshwater lake in Asia. Kolleru is **located between Krishna and Godavari deltas**
- The **Sambhar Salt Lake**, India's **largest inland salt lake**, is located in the state of Rajasthan . It surrounds the historical Sambhar Lake Town. Lake has 5700 square km catchment area. The lake is an **extensive saline wetland**
- **Pangong Tso lake is a salt water lake** in Changthang region of Ladakh is an endorheic lake (that normally retains water and allows no outflow to other external bodies of water) in the Himalayas situated at a height of about 4,350 m. During **winter the lake freezes completely, despite being saline water.**
- **Bhimtal Lake** is a **freshwater lake** in the town of Bhimtal, in the Indian state of **Uttarakhand** with a masonry dam built in 1883 creating the storage facility. It is the

largest lake in Kumaon region, known as the "**lake district of India**". The lake provides **drinking water supply** and supports aquaculture with variety of fish species.

55. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

1. Under the scheme, Jan aushadhi medical stores have been set up to provide generic drugs
2. It was launched by the Ministry of Health and family welfare to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses

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: A

Explanation

- It is a campaign **launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers** to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses
- Jan Aushadhi medical stores have been set up to **provide generic drugs**, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.
- It was launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals in November 2008 under the name **Jan Aushadi Campaign. Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI)** is the implementation agency for PMBJP
- The Main objective of the scheme includes making quality medicines available at affordable prices for all, particularly the poor and disadvantaged, **through exclusive outlets "Jan Aushadhi Medical Store"**, so as to **reduce out of pocket expenses** in healthcare.

56. Which of the following is/are the objectives of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana?

- 1) Creation of modern infrastructure for food processing mega food parks/ clusters and individual units

- 2) To create effective backward and forward linkages - linking farmers, processors and markets
- 3) To create robust supply chain infrastructure for perishables

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: D

Explanation

- The **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** has been implementing the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) since 2017.
- PMKSY is a comprehensive package which aims to create modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet.
- It aims to provide a big boost to the growth of the **food processing sector** in the country and also help in providing better returns to farmers, reducing wastage of agricultural produce, increasing the processing level and enhancing the export of the processed foods.

Objectives of PMKSY

- Creation of modern infrastructure for food processing **mega food parks/ clusters** and individual units
- To create effective backward and forward linkages - linking farmers, processors and markets
- To create robust supply chain infrastructure for perishables

Why in the news?

- Number of projects approved for assistance under the component scheme Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana is as follows

Mega Food Park Scheme	Integrated Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure Scheme	Cold Storage	Scheme for Creation of Backward & Forward Linkages	Operation Greens scheme	Scheme for Creation/Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities	Scheme for Creation of Infrastructure for Agro Processing Clusters
-----------------------	---	--------------	--	-------------------------	--	--

57. A Soil Health Card (SHC) is meant to give each farmer soil nutrient status of his/her holding and advise him/her on the dosage of fertilizers that s/he should apply to maintain soil health in the long run. Consider the following statements about SHC:

1. It will contain the status of soil with respect to Macro-nutrients, Micro - nutrients and Secondary- nutrients.
2. The drawback of SHC is that it does not cover physical parameters of the soil like pH, EC (electrical conductivity) and OC (organic carbon).

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:

Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme

- Soil Health Card (SHC) is a Government of India's scheme promoted by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- It is being implemented through the Department of Agriculture of all the State and Union Territory Governments.
- A SHC is meant to give each farmer soil nutrient status of his/her holding and advise him/her on the dosage of fertilizers and also the needed soil amendments, that s/he should apply to maintain soil health in the long run.

Statement 1 is correct:

What is a Soil Health Card?

SHC is a printed report that a farmer will be handed over for each of his holdings.

It will contain the status of his soil with respect to 12 parameters, namely N, P, K (Macronutrients) ; S (Secondary- nutrient) ; Zn, Fe, Cu, Mn, Bo (Micro - nutrients) ;

N - Nitrogen , P - Phosphorus, K - Potassium, S - Sulphur, Zn - Zinc, Fe - Iron, Cu - Copper, Mn - Manganese, Bo - Boron

and pH, EC, OC (Physical parameters) so, **Statement 2 is incorrect: The SHC does cover physical parameters of the soil like pH, EC and OC.**

Based on this, the SHC will also indicate fertilizer recommendations and soil amendment required for the farm.

Periodical Assessment

- It will be made available once in a cycle of 3 years, which will indicate the status of soil health of a farmer's holding for that particular period.
- The SHC given in the next cycle of 3 years will be able to record the changes in the soil health for that subsequent period.

Why in the news?

- A study by **National Productivity Council (NPC)** on '**Soil Testing Infrastructure for Faster Delivery of Soil Health Card in India**' found that
- Application of fertilizer and micronutrients based on Soil Health Card (SHC) recommendations resulted in **8-10 % of savings.**
- Overall **increase in the yield of crops** to the tune of 5-6% reported by adopting the SHC recommendations.
- An Impact study carried out by MANAGE, Hyderabad on Soil Health Card scheme found that overall, paddy farmers reduced use of urea by 9% but increased use of Potassium by 20% which is a **healthy sign of moving towards balanced use of fertilizers.**

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1697516>

58. Which of the following initiatives target food security for the population?

1. Mid-Day meals
2. Fair Price Shops
3. Antyodaya Anna Yojana
4. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer: **D**

Explanation:

- According to the United Nations' Committee on World Food Security, food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.
- All the given initiatives target food security for the population.
- The Mid-day Meal Scheme is a school meal programme of the Government of India designed to improve the nutritional status of school-age children nationwide.
- Fair Price Shops are shops which are licensed to distribute essential commodities to the ration card holders under the Targeted Public Distribution System.
- Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) is one of the public distribution system schemes in India. All beneficiaries under AAY scheme will get food and other important commodities for daily needs in the subsidized process. Distribution of food grains to beneficiaries will be done through a public distribution system.
- Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is the world's largest community based programme. The scheme is targeted at children upto the age of 6 years, pregnant and lactating mothers and women 16–44 years of age. The scheme is aimed to improve the health, nutrition and education of the target community.

59. The 'World Sustainable Development Summit' is the annual flagship event which provides a platform to discuss and deliberate over climatic issues of universal importance is being organized under which of the following?

- a) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- b) UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)
- c) The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
- d) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Answer: C

Explanation

- It is the annual flagship event of **The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)**. It is the sole Summit on global issues **taking place in the developing world**
- Started in 2001, the Summit has become a focal point for leaders and stakeholders across the world to **bridge thought and action for sustainable development**
- It provides a **platform for global leaders** and practitioners to **discuss and deliberate over climatic issues** of universal importance.
- Post the adoption of the **Sustainable Development Goals** and the signing of the **Paris Agreement**, the World Sustainable Development Summit aims to provide long-term solutions for the **benefit of the global community** by assembling the various stakeholders on a single platform and initiating a step in the direction of **achieving constructive action** in combating issues pertinent to the future of humanity
- It is continuing the **legacy of Delhi Sustainable Development Summit (DSDS)** which was initiated in 2001 with the aim of making 'sustainable development' a globally shared goal.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

- TERI is a **leading think tank** that conducts **research work in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable development**
- Established in 1974 as **Tata Energy Research Institute** and was renamed The Energy and Resources Institute in 2003.
- It aims to **focus on formulating local and national level strategies** for shaping global solutions to critical issues.
- Its key focus lies in **promoting clean energy, water management, pollution management**, sustainable agriculture and climate resilience.

Objectives

- Enhancing conservation, utilization of and access to water, including **watershed management**
- Enabling the planning and **governance of environmentally sustainable cities** through green buildings and through management of solid waste, sewage, sanitation, mobility and air quality

- **Building resilience to adverse impacts of climate change** due to cyclones and variations in hydrology and temperature
- Enhancing **ecosystem services** especially in forestry and biodiversity
- Enabling sustainable food production and **nutritional security** through quality planting material, **bio-based agricultural inputs** and crop diversification

Why in the news?

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the World Sustainable Development Summit 2021 via video conferencing.

The theme of the Summit is 'Redefining our common future: Safe and secure environment for all'.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1696905>

60. Arrange the various forms of coal in the increasing order of the carbon content they possess

1. Lignite
2. Anthracite
3. Peat
4. Bituminous

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

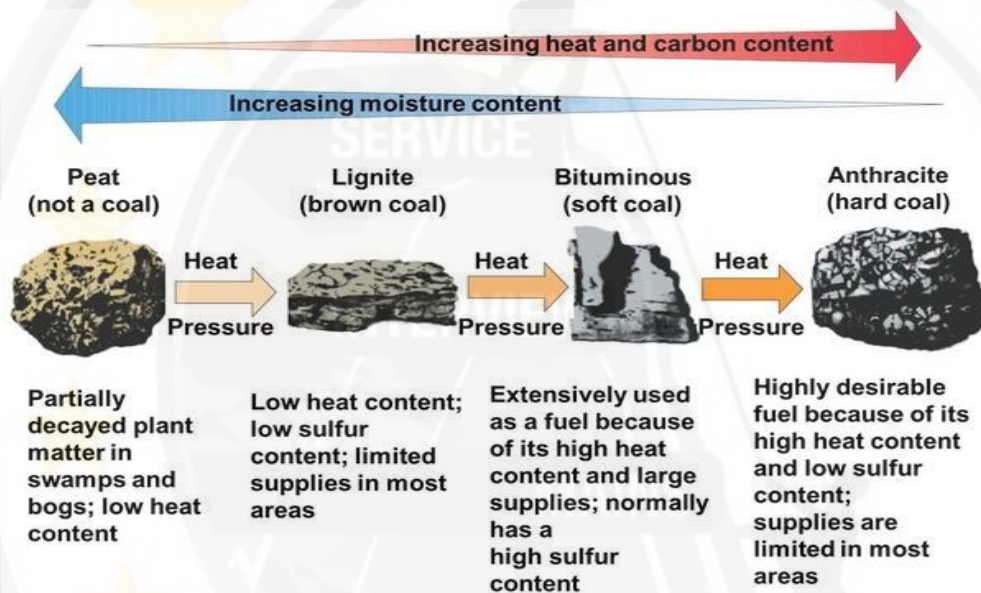
- a) 2-4-1-3
- b) 3-4-1-2
- c) 3-1-4-2
- d) 2-3-1-4

Answer: C

Explanation

- Coal is formed due to the **compression of plant material over millions of years**. Coal, therefore is found in a **variety of forms** depending on the **degrees of compression and the depth** and time of burial.
- **Decaying plants** in swamps **produce peat**. Which has a **low carbon and high moisture contents** and low heating capacity.

- Lignite is a **low grade brown coal**, which is soft with high moisture content. The principal lignite **reserves are in Neyveli** in Tamil Nadu and are used for generation of electricity.
- Coal that has been buried deep and **subjected to increased temperatures is bituminous coal**. It is the most popular coal in commercial use. Metallurgical coal is high grade bituminous coal which has a special value for smelting iron in blast furnaces. **Anthracite is the highest quality hard coal**.
- In the process of transformation (**coalification**), peat is altered to lignite, lignite is altered to sub-bituminous, sub-bituminous coal is altered to bituminous coal, and bituminous coal is altered to anthracite.



61. Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav, which was recently in news, is related to which of the following

- It is an attempt to move from a sectoral and segmented approach of health service delivery to a comprehensive need-based health care service.
- A programme to provide strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions.
- A festival to showcase India's cultural heritage through performances of Arts, Folk Music, Dance, Handicrafts and Cuisines.
- It is to provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crop as a result of natural calamities, pests & diseases.

Ans : C

Explanation

Option (c) is correct.

- RashtriyaSanskritiMahotsav was conceived in the year 2015
- The RashtriyaSanskritiMahotsav 2019 would showcase all facets of **Indian Culture** in different areas and aspects including Artists and Artisans from States/UT's.
- It will showcase India's cultural heritage through performances of Arts, Folk Music, Dance, Handicrafts and Cuisines.
- The RashtriyaSanskritiMahotsav will cover a profusion of folk art forms from 22 States and it would offer the chance to experience the best in established and emerging virtuosity.
- The RSM will reconnect the people-especially the youth- with their indigenous culture, its multifaceted nature, magnificence, opulence and historical importance in the context of India as a Nation over the millennia.

Option (a) is incorrect :It is an attempt to move from sectoral and segmented approach of health service delivery to a comprehensive need-based health care service. **It is related to Ayushman Bharat program.**

Option (b) is incorrect : It is providing strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions. **It is related to RashtriyaUchchatarShikshaAbhiyan (RUSA).**

Option (d) is incorrect :It is to provide insurance coverage and financial support to the farmers in the event of failure of any of the notified crop as a result of natural calamities, pests & diseases. **It is related to Pradhan MantriFasalBimaYojana.**

Why in the news?

- The eleventh edition of Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav is being held between 14th to 28th February, 2021 in West Bengal.

62. Catalonia a semi-autonomous region, often seen in news is located in which among the following country:

- a) France
- b) Portugal
- c) Spain
- d) Ireland

Answer: C

Explanation:

Catalonia is a semi-autonomous region in **Iberian Peninsula** in the north-eastern Spain with a distinct history dating back almost 1,000 years. The wealthy region has about 7.5 million people, with their own language, parliament, flag and anthem.

Catalonia also has its own police force and controls some of its public services.

Catalan nationalists have long complained that their region sends too much money to poorer parts of Spain, as taxes are controlled by Madrid and receives much less from Spain. In a referendum on 1 October 2017, declared illegal by Spain's Constitutional Court, about 90% of Catalan voters backed independence. But turnout was only 43%.

The ruling separatists in the Catalan parliament then declared independence on 27 October. Angered by that, Madrid imposed direct rule by invoking Article 155 of the constitution - a first for Spain. The Spanish government sacked the Catalan leaders, dissolved parliament and called a snap regional election on 21 December 2017, which nationalist parties won.

Since then the region has been witnessing numerous protests from the separatists.

63. Consider the following pairs

Regions/cities		Located in
1. Ramadi	-	Iraq
2. Al-Hudaydah	-	Saudi Arabia
3. Idlib	-	Yemen

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

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

Ans: A

Explanation

All the above given places are recently in news with reasons ranging from civil war, international conflicts , COVID-19 outbreak etc

Al-Hudaydah: It is the **fourth-largest city in Yemen** and its principal port on the Red Sea.

Ramadi: It is a city in **central Iraq**, about 110 kilometers west of Baghdad

Idlib: It is a **city in northwestern Syria**

64. Consider the following statements about Mega food parks

- 1) The primary objective of the Scheme is to provide modern infrastructure facilities for the food processing along the value chain from farm to market.
- 2) Functioning of Mega Food Parks is closely monitored by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers 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

Answer: A

Explanation

- The Mega Food Parks scheme aims to provide a **mechanism to bring together farmers, processors and retailers** and link agricultural production to the market so as to ensure **maximization of value addition, minimization of wastages** and improving farmers' income
- **Statement 1 is correct:** The primary objective of the Scheme is to **provide modern infrastructure facilities for the food processing** along the value chain from farm to market with a **cluster based approach** based on a hub and spokes model
- It includes creation of infrastructure for **primary processing and storage near the farm** in the form of **Primary Processing Centres (PPCs)** and **Collection Centres (CCs)** and common facilities and enabling infrastructure like roads, electricity, water, ETP facilities etc. at **Central Processing Centre (CPC)**
 - These PPCs and CCs act as **aggregation and storage points** to feed raw material to the food processing units located in the CPC

- Food Processing being capital incentive activity, **common facilities are created at CPC** to be used by the processing units on hire basis. This helps in **reducing the cost of individual units** significantly and makes them more viable
- The scheme envisages a **one-time capital grant of 50% of the project cost** (excluding land cost) subject to a maximum of Rs 50 crore in **general areas** and **75% of the project cost** (excluding land cost) subject to a ceiling of Rs. 50 crore in **difficult and hilly areas** i.e. North East Region including Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) and notified areas of the states
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Functioning of Mega Food Parks is closely monitored by the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** (not Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare) through a well-established mechanism that includes **detailed scrutiny of the periodical progress reports** of the project by the Programme Management Agency (PMA). The Mega Food Park project is **implemented by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** which is a **Body Corporate** registered under the Companies Act
- **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)**
- SPV is an entity which is formed for a **single, well-defined and narrow purpose**
- Also called a special purpose entity (SPE), it is a **subsidiary created by a parent company** to **isolate financial risk**. Its legal status as a separate company makes its obligations secure even if the parent company goes bankrupt

65. Recently e-baalnidan is in the news regarding?

- Online Complaint System for violations and deprivation of child rights
- Online trading platform for agricultural commodities in India
- Online platform where parents can view updates on their child's progress.
- The portal will enable in principle approval for MSME loans up to Rs. 1 crore.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Option A is correct: Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO), Act, 2012 provides for a dedicated '**Online Complaint System (e-baalnidan)**' to ensure timely/speedy redressal of complaints of various violations and deprivation of child right. Through

eBaalNidan , any individual or organisation can file a complaint relating to violation of child rights through internet facility. Complainant can view the status of his or her complaint. It does not require the complainant to come to the office of the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) for just filing a complaint

Option B is incorrect: 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.

Option C is incorrect: Shaala Darpan is an ICT programme of Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India that to provide mobile access to parents of students of Government and Government aided schools. Using Shaala Darpan parents can view updates on their child's progress. They can view records of attendance, assignments and achievements of their child. The ministry aims to launch the service by 2015 academic session.

Option D is incorrect: PSBloani 59minutes- The initiative reimagines and simplifies the overall process of fund raising and has been designed to ease access of credit to Individuals and MSMEs. This is a unique platform that ensures seamless In-principle loan approval

66. With reference to the Wholesale Price Index, consider the following statements :

1. It measures and tracks the changes in the price of goods and services in the stages before the retail level
2. WPI is used as deflator for many sectors of the economy

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: **B**

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** WPI measures and tracks the changes in the price of goods in

the stages before the retail level. It provides estimates of inflation at the wholesale transaction level for the economy as a whole. **WPI does not cover services.**

- Manufactured products, Primary Articles and Fuel and Power are components of the Wholesale Price Index.
- It is released by the Office of Economic Adviser, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The base year is 2011-2012.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** WPI is used as deflator for many sectors of the economy including for estimating GDP by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO).

67. Which one of the following conditions is most appropriate for the cultivation of Jute?

- a) Laterite soils in eastern coastal regions of India with moderate temperature conditions
- b) Sandy soils in arid and semi-arid regions with hot and dry climate
- c) Well-drained fertile soils in the flood plains and high temperature during the time of growth.
- d) Water retaining soils in hilly areas where the mean annual temperature is generally lower than plains

Answer: C

Explanation

- Jute is known as the **golden fibre**.
- Jute **grows well on well-drained fertile soils in the flood plains** where soils are renewed every year.
- **High temperature** is required during the time of growth.
- West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Odisha and Meghalaya are the **major jute producing states**.
- It is used in **making gunny bags, mats, ropes, yarn, carpets** and other artefacts. Due to its high cost, it is losing market to synthetic fibres and packing materials, particularly the nylon.
- **Option A is incorrect:** After adopting appropriate soil conservation techniques particularly in the hilly areas of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, laterite soil is **very useful for growing tea and coffee**. Red laterite soils in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala are more suitable for crops like **cashew nut**

- **Option B is incorrect:** Sandy soils in arid and semi arid zones are suitable for cultivation of dryland crops

□ **Example:** Jowar, Bajra etc

Why in the news?

Union Textiles Minister Inaugurated Certified Jute Seeds Distribution Program And Awareness Workshop For Jute Farmers recently.

68. Consider the following statements regarding the Ports in India

1. The major ports are under the direct administrative control of the central government and Ports other than the major ones are under the jurisdiction of the respective state government
2. Mormugao, Paradip and Kandla are the ports located along the western coast of India

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation

Ports

There are **12 major ports and about 200 non-major ports** along India's coastline which is about 7517 km.

Statement 1 is correct: The **major ports** are under the direct administrative control of the central government and **fall in Union List 7th Schedule of Constitution**. Ports **other than the major ones** are under the jurisdiction of the respective maritime state government and **fall in the Concurrent List**. Of the total traffic handled by all Indian ports, 57 per cent is handled by major ports and 43 by others.

Statement 2 is incorrect: The 6 major ports- Kolkata, **Paradip**, Visakhapatnam, Kamarajar (Ennore), Chennai and V.O. Chidambaranar are on the **east coast** and the other major ports viz., Cochin, New Mangalore, **Mormugao**, Mumbai, Jawaharlal Nehru Port (Sheva, Navi Mumbai) and Deendayal (also known as **Kandla**) are on the west coast.

Paradip

Paradip is the only Major Port in the State of **Odisha** situated 210 nautical miles south of Kolkata and 260 nautical miles north of Visakhapatnam on the east coast on the shore of Bay of Bengal

Mormugao

Mormugao Port is located in the town of Mormugao, **Goa**, India. It has a naturally protected open-type harbour, that lies on the southern part of the mouth of the river Zuari

Kandla

Kandla, also known as the Deendayal Port Trust is a seaport in Kutch District of **Gujarat** state in western India, near the city of Gandhidham. Located on the Gulf of Kutch, it is one of major ports on west coast

Why in the news?

Recently, the Parliament has passed the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020 which seeks to provide greater autonomy in decision-making to 12 major ports in the country and professionalise their governance by setting up boards.

69. Which of the following statements about leatherback turtle is correct?

- a) They are the largest sea turtle species and also one of the most migratory, crossing both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
- b) According to IUCN it is listed as Least concerned species.
- c) The vast expanse of the Gahirmatha beach is the best place to witness mass nesting of leatherback turtles, a phenomenon often termed as 'Arribadas'.
- d) None of the above

Answer: A

Explanation:

- Leatherback turtles are named for their shell, which is leather-like rather than hard, like other turtles.
- **They are the largest sea turtle species and also one of the most migratory, crossing both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.**
- Although their distribution is wide, numbers of leatherback turtles have seriously declined during the last century as a result of intense egg collection and fisheries bycatch.

- Globally, leatherback status according to IUCN is listed as **Vulnerable**, but many subpopulations (such as in the Pacific and Southwest Atlantic) are Critically Endangered.
- They are also listed in Schedule I of India's Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, according to the highest legal protection.
- The vast expanse of the Gahirmatha beach is the best place to witness mass nesting of **olive Ridley turtles**, a phenomenon often termed as 'Arribadas'.

Why in the news ?

Key nesting beaches of leatherback turtle- two on Little Andaman Island and one on Great Nicobar Island are under threat due to mega "development" plans announced recently.

70. Galathea National Park and the Campbell Bay National Park are located in this biosphere reserve. It has been declared as one of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves by UNESCO.

Identify the biosphere reserve.

- Great Nicobar Biosphere reserve
- Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve
- Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve
- Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve

Answer: A

Explanation

- Great Nicobar is the **southernmost island of the Nicobar Islands** Archipelago. The Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve harbours a wide spectrum of ecosystems comprising **tropical wet evergreen forests, mountain ranges** reaching a height of 642 m above sea level, and coastal plains.
- It incorporates two National parks of India, the larger **Campbell Bay National Park** on the northern part of the island, and **Galathea National Park** in the southern interior
- The region is noted for its rich biodiversity. It houses 650 species of angiosperms, ferns, gymnosperms, bryophytes and lichens among others. The tract is **rich in plant diversity** and fosters a number of **rare and endemic species**
- The region also harbours a large number of **endemic and endangered species** of fauna. Of these, the well-known **Crab-eating Macaque, Nicobar Tree Shrew, Dugong**, Nicobar

Megapode, Serpent Eagle, saltwater crocodile, marine turtles and Reticulated Python are endemic and/or endangered.

- In year 2013 it was **included in the list of Man and Biosphere program of UNESCO** to promote sustainable development based on local community effort and sound science
- The **Mongoloid Shompen Tribe**, about 200 in number live in the forests of the biosphere reserve particularly along the rivers and streams. They are **hunters and food gatherers**, dependent on forest and marine resources for sustenance.
- Another Mongoloid Tribe, **Nicobarese** about 300 in number used to live in settlements along the west coast. After the tsunami in 2004, which devastated their settlement on the western coast, they were **relocated to Afra Bay in the North Coast** and Campbell Bay. They survive on fish caught from the sea.

Man and Biosphere program (MAB)

- Launched in 1971, **UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)** is an Intergovernmental Scientific Programme that aims to establish a **scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between people and their environments**.
- MAB combines the **natural and social sciences**, economics and education to improve human livelihoods and the equitable sharing of benefits, and to safeguard natural and managed ecosystems, thus promoting **innovative approaches to economic development** that are socially and culturally appropriate, and environmentally sustainable.
- Its World Network of Biosphere Reserves currently counts **701 sites in 124 countries** all over the world, including **21 transboundary sites**.

71.E-Chhawani recently 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) Providing online civic services to residents of Cantonment Boards across the country

Answer: D

Explanation:

- **E-Chhawani portal and mobile app** was launched by the **Ministry of Defence** in New Delhi recently.

- The portal has been created to provide **online civic services** to over 20 lakh **residents of 62 Cantonment Boards** across the country.
- The portal was jointly developed by eGov Foundation, Bharat Electronics Limited (**BEL**), Directorate General Defence Estates (**DGDE**) and National Informatics Centre (**NIC**).

Working of the Portal

- Through the portal, the residents of cantonment areas will be able to **avail basic services** like renewal of leases, application for birth & death certificates, water & sewerage connections, trade licences, mobile toilet locators and payment of different types of taxes and fees, with just a click of a button.
- It provides a platform to the residents to avail these services **from the comfort of their home**.

Significance of the E-Chhawani portal

- E-Chhawani portal is an innovative effort to transform the functioning of Cantonment Boards, in line with the **vision of 'New India'**.
- The portal will **ensure effectiveness and transparency of the services distribution system** of the Cantonment Boards and provide time-bound solutions to the residents.

72. Consider the following pairs

Island		Owned/ controlled by
(1) New Caledonia	-	France
(2) Hawaii	-	USA
(3) Tasmania	-	Australia
(4) Cook Islands	-	Spain

Which of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

The Cook Islands is a self-governing island country in the South Pacific Ocean in free association with **New Zealand** (not Spain). New Zealand is responsible for the Cook Islands' defence and foreign affairs, but these responsibilities are exercised in consultation with the Cook Islands. All the other options are correctly matched.

73. What is the correct sequence of occurrence of the following protected areas as one proceeds from North to South?

1. Mukurthi
2. Bhitarkanika
3. Hemis
4. Ntangki

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- | | |
|-----|---------|
| (a) | 4-2-1-3 |
| (b) | 3-2-4-1 |
| (c) | 3-4-2-1 |
| (d) | 4-3-2-1 |

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

National Park	State
Hemis	Leh
Ntangki	Nagaland
Mukurthi	Tamil Nadu
Bhitarkanika	Odisha

74. Consider the following Statements

- 1) According to the Constitution, the Office of Governor works under the Office of President, and is a representative of the centre, in the State.
- 2) The term of office of a Governor is regulated by the State Legislature.
- 3) Same Governor can be appointed for two or more states..

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-C

Explanation

There shall be a Governor for each State. However, nothing in this article prevents the appointment of the same person as Governor for two or more States. Such a practice is seen widely, as 2 states have the same person as Governor. **Statement 3 is correct.**

The executive power of the State shall be vested in the Governor and shall be exercised by him either directly or through officers subordinate to him in accordance with this Constitution. The Office does not fall under the President's office, though he can act as a representative of the centre, in the state. The Office of Governor is the head of the State executive, like the President is the head of the Union executive. **Statement 1 is incorrect.**

The Governor of a State shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal. The Governor shall hold office during the pleasure of the President and is usually in office for 5 years. Hence, State Legislature does not regulate the terms of his office. **Statement 2 is incorrect.**

75. Corruption perception Index is released by which of the following organisations?

- a) Transparency International
- b) Economic Intelligence Unit
- c) World Population Balance
- d) United Nations Population Fund

Answer: A

Explanation:

- Corruption Perception Index is released by the international non-governmental organisation **Transparency International.**
- The index, which **ranks 180 countries** and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale of 0 to 100, **where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.**

- A country with a higher score has a higher rank.
- **India's rank is 86 out of 180 nations with a score of 40.**
- India was ranked at 80th position out of 180 countries in 2019.
- The CPI score for India is almost constant this year as well as the previous year score.

Why in the news?

For 2020, Transparency International (TI)'s Corruption Perception Index (CPI) was released recently.

76. Consider the following about Financial Action Task Force (FATF):

1. No country from the Arabian peninsula is a member of FATF.
2. India is a founding member of FATF.
3. Member countries failing to curb money laundering and terror financing can be directly put under the 'black list' without being warned (grey listed).

Which of the statements given above are *INCORRECT*?

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

Answer: D

About FATF

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an **inter-governmental** body of **39 members** established in **1989**, headquartered in **Paris**, France.

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.

FATF has 2 types of lists:

1. **Grey List:** Countries having deficiencies in their **anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regimes** but are committed to an action plan to address these loopholes are put in the FATF grey list. This inclusion serves as a **warning** to the country that it may enter the blacklist.

2. **Black List:** Countries that are not doing enough to curb the loopholes in their AML/CFT regimes are termed as **Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs)** and are put in the blacklist (also known as **call for action**). These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities. Only **Iran** and **North Korea** are put under blacklist.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** FATF doesn't differentiate between member and non-member countries who violate the policy guidelines to curb terror financing. There is no provision to directly blacklist countries having deficiencies in their anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regimes.
 - **Saudi Arabia** has become the **first Arab country** to be granted **full membership** of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The Kingdom had obtained observer status in the Group in June **2015**. Hence, **Statement 1 is incorrect**.

India and FATF

India became an Observer at FATF in the year **2006**. India became the **34th country member** of FATF in **2010**. India is not a founding member. Hence, **Statement 2 is incorrect**.

Why in the news?

- **Pakistan is unlikely to exit the Financial Action Task Force's 'grey' list until June**, despite its efforts to garner support from the member nations ahead of the plenary meeting.

Background:

- Pakistan was placed on the FATF 'grey' list in June 2018 and given a timeline to address global concerns by implementing **27 action points**.
- The FATF, during its virtual plenary in October last year, concluded that Pakistan will **continue in its 'grey' list till February 2021** as it has failed to fulfil six key obligations of the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog that include failure to take action against two of India's most wanted terrorists — Maulana Masood Azhar and Hafiz Saeed.
- The FATF's Plenary and Working Group meetings, scheduled to be held from February 21 to 26 in Paris, is all set to decide on Pakistan's grey list status.
- Pakistan needs **12 votes out of 39 to exit the 'grey' list** and move to the 'white' list. To avoid 'black' list, it needs support of three countries. China, Turkey and Malaysia are its consistent supporters.

77. Consider the following statements regarding the International Space Station (ISS)

1. It is a habitable artificial satellite located in the medium earth orbit
2. It serves as a microgravity and space environment research laboratory in which crew members conduct experiments
3. The ISS programme is a joint project between P5 countries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation

Statement 1 is incorrect: The International Space Station (ISS) is a space station, or a habitable artificial satellite, in low Earth orbit (not medium earth orbit)

- **Low Earth orbit (LEO)** is a geocentric orbits with altitudes below 2,000 km
- **Medium Earth orbit (MEO)** is a geocentric orbits ranging in altitude from 2,000 km to just below geosynchronous orbit at 35,786 kilometers (22,236 miles)

Its first component launched into orbit in 1998 and the **ISS is now the largest human-made body in low Earth orbit.**

Statement 2 is correct: The ISS serves as a **microgravity and space environment research laboratory** in which crew members conduct experiments in biology, human biology, physics, astronomy, meteorology, and other fields.

Statement 3 is incorrect: The ISS programme is a **joint project between five participating space agencies: NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe) and CSA (Canada). (not P5 countries)**

The ownership and use of the space station is established by intergovernmental treaties and agreements.

Why in the news?

- An unmanned Russian cargo ship docked at the International Space Station recently with a load of supplies.

78. Consider the following statements about WTO

- 1) The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations.
- 2) WTO officially commenced under the Marrakesh Agreement.

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:

World Trade Organisation (WTO) :

- **The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The secretariat of WTO is located at **Geneva**.
- The primary purpose of the WTO is **to open trade for the benefit of all**.
- All major decisions are made by the WTO's member governments: either by ministers (who usually meet at least every two years) or by their ambassadors or delegates (who meet regularly in Geneva).
- From 1948 to 1994, the **GATT** provided the rules for much of world trade and presided over periods that saw some of the highest growth rates in international commerce **which came into force via Havana Agreement**.
- It seemed to be well-established but throughout those 47 years, it was a provisional agreement and organization.
- **The Marrakesh Agreement of 1994 led to the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Why in the news?

Nigeria's Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed as Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

79. It is the best quality of coal which carries 80 to 95% carbon content. It has the highest calorific value. It is found in small quantity in Jammu and Kashmir.

The above description refers to which of the following types of coal?

- a) Anthracite
- b) Bituminous
- c) Lignite
- d) Peat

Answer: A

Explanation:

The above description refers to Anthracite

Coal is the main source of energy in India as it fulfils almost 67 per cent of the total commercial energy consumed in the country. This fossil fuel is found in a form of sedimentary rocks and is often known as '**Black Gold**'. It originated from organic matter, wood. When large tracts of forests are buried under sediments, wood is burnt and decomposed due to heat from below and pressure from above. The phenomenon makes coal but takes centuries to complete.

Classification of Coal

Coal can be classified **on the basis of carbon content and time period.**

Types of coal on the basis of carbon content

- **Anthracite** is the best quality of coal which carries 80 to 95 percent carbon content. It ignites slowly with a blue flame. It has the highest calorific value. It is found in small quantity in Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Bituminous** carries 60 to 80 percent of carbon content and a low level of moisture content. It is widely used and has high calorific value. It is found in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.
- **Lignite is often brown in colour.** It carries 40 to 55 percent carbon content. It is an intermediate stage which happens during the alteration of woody matter into coal. It has high moisture content so it gives smoke when burnt. It is found in Rajasthan, Lakhimpur (Assam), and Tamil Nadu.
- **Peat** has less than 40 percent carbon content. It is in the first stage of transformation from wood to coal. It has low calorific value and burns like wood.

Types of coal on the basis of a time period

- **Gondwana coal:** Around 98 per cent of India's total coal reserves are from Gondwana times. This coal was formed about 250 million years ago.
- **Tertiary coal** is of younger age. It was formed from 15 to 60 million years ago.

80. Which among the following are UNESCO world heritage sites found in India?

- 1) Kaziranga National Park
- 2) Keoladeo National Park
- 3) Manas Wildlife Sanctuary
- 4) Khangchendzonga National Park
- 5) Sundarbans National Park

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: D

Explanation

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris, France which was formed in 1946
- Its declared purpose is to contribute to **promoting international collaboration** in education, science, and culture in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law and human rights along with fundamental freedom proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

World Heritage Site

A World Heritage Site is a **landmark or area**, selected by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for having cultural, historical, scientific or other form of significance, which is legally protected by international treaties.

UNESCO's World Heritage Convention, 1972

- The Convention defines the kind of **natural or cultural sites** which can be considered for inscription on the World Heritage list
- The Convention sets out the duties of **State Parties** in **identifying potential sites and their role in protecting and preserving them.**
- By signing the Convention, each country pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage sites situated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage.
- It explains how the World Heritage Fund is to be used and managed and under what conditions **international financial assistance** may be provided.

Strategic Objectives were five C's

- Credibility
- Conservation
- Capacity building
- Communication
- Communities

World Heritage Sites in India:

- There are 37 **UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India**. The **sites** are broken down into the following categories
- **Cultural Sites (30)**
 - Agra Fort (1983)
 - Ajanta Caves (1983)
 - Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar (2016)
 - Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi (1989)
 - Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park (2004)
 - Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) (2004)
 - Churches and Convents of Goa (1986)
 - Elephanta Caves (1987)
 - Ellora Caves (1983)
 - Fatehpur Sikri (1986)
 - Great Living Chola Temples (1987,2004)
 - Group of Monuments at Hampi (1986)

- Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram (1984)
- Group of Monuments at Pattadakal (1987)
- Hill Forts of Rajasthan (2013)
- Historic City of Ahmedabad (2017)
- Humayun's Tomb, Delhi (1993)
- Jaipur City, Rajasthan (2019)
- Khajuraho Group of Monuments (1986)
- Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya (2002)
- Mountain Railways of India (1999,2005,2008)
- Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi (1993)
- Rani-ki-Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat (2014)
- Red Fort Complex (2007)
- Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (2003)
- Sun Temple, Konârak (1984)
- Taj Mahal (1983)
- The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement (2016)
- The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur (2010)
- Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai (2018)

Natural Sites (7)

- Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (2014)
- **Kaziranga National Park (1985)**
- **Keoladeo National Park (1985)**
- **Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985)**
- Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988,2005)
- **Sundarbans National Park (1987)**
- Western Ghats (2012)

Mixed Site (1)

- **Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)**

81. 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

82. Consider the following statements about Quad

1. Regional coalition known as the 'Quad', the quadrilateral formation, includes Japan, India, the United States and Australia.

2. The QUAD partners share a commitment towards a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region based on shared values and principles and respect for international law.

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:

- Regional coalition known as the '**Quad**', the quadrilateral formation includes **Japan, India, United States and Australia**.
- All four nations find a common ground of being the democratic nations and common interests of unhindered maritime trade and security.
- The QUAD partners share a commitment towards a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region based on shared values and principles and respect for international law.
- The **US believes the Quad, as one of the elements of its larger Indo-Pacific strategy for "a free, open and rules-based order" in face of an aggressive and expansionist China in the region**, should eventually evolve into a ministerial-level dialogue imbued with a strong military dimension.

Why in the news?

Foreign Ministers of Quad countries - India, Australia, Japan and US - discussed the necessity to promote freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific region.

83. 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

84. For which of the following Public Health Emergency of International Concern has been declared by the World Health Organisation so far?

- 1) H5N1 (Bird Flu)
- 2) H1N1 (Swine Flu)

- 3) H5N8 (Avian influenza)
4) Ebola

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

- **Public Health Emergency of International Concern** is defined as an extraordinary event which is determined to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response.
- A PHEIC is meant to **mobilize international response to an outbreak**. It's an opportunity for the **World Health Organization**, with guidance from its **International Health Regulations Emergency Committee**, to implement "**non-binding but practically & politically significant measures that can address travel, trade, quarantine, screening, treatment**."
- The procedures to declare a PHEIC **were implemented in 2005**, as a **response to the outbreaks of SARS and H5N1 (bird flu) in the early 2000s**.
- Recently **WHO declared the Novel Coronavirus outbreak as PHEIC**.

The International Health Regulations (2005)

- IHR (2005), represents a binding international legal agreement involving 196 countries across the globe, including all the Member States of the WHO.
- Their aim is to help the international community prevent and respond to acute public health risks that have the potential to cross borders and threaten people worldwide.

Six emergencies have been declared since then:

- H1N1 virus (better known as a strain of "swine flu") that caused an influenza pandemic (2009),
- West Africa's Ebola outbreak (2014-2016),
- Polio (2014),

- Zika virus (2016),
- Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2019), and the
- current new coronavirus outbreak (starting at the end of 2019).

The coronavirus outbreak is the sixth time an emergency has been declared.

Why in the news?

Bihar health authorities have sounded alert after pathogenic avian influenza (H5N8) viruses were detected in crows in the state.

85. Which of the following is related to Jeevan Kaushal initiative ?

- Initiative for providing Life Skills to students enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education.
- Initiative aimed at improving safety for workers in the country's garment industry.
- Initiative to promote schemes such as Make in India, Startup India, MUDRA, etc.
- Initiative for providing financial support to Integrated Bioethanol Projects.

Answer: A

Explanation

- **Curriculum for Life Skills (Jeevan Kaushal)** is a **University Grants Commission (UGC) initiative** for providing **Life Skills (including soft skills)** to students enrolled in Institutions of Higher Education especially at **under-graduate level**
- **The objectives of the course are**
 - To **increase one's knowledge and awareness of emotional competency** and emotional intelligence at the place of study/work.
 - To provide an opportunity for **realising one's potential** through practical experience.
 - To develop **interpersonal skills and adopt good leadership behaviour** for empowerment of self and others
- In India, there is an **unprecedented demand for quality higher education** for producing employable, exceptionally performing graduates qualified with skills, knowledge and ethics essential for leading a rewarding life and it is with this aim **University Grants Commission issued Quality Mandate** and its objectives
- UGC constituted Expert Committee **prepared a Curriculum for Life Skills (JeevanKaushal)** for Under Graduate Programme.

- The curriculum is designed to **impart and strengthen the knowledge, skills and dispositions** believed to be the best requisites of the current Industry and thereby empower the talent inherent in each learner.
- Life Skills like **communication skill, interpersonal skill, time management**, problem solving ability, decision making capacity, leadership ability and integrity play a **crucial role in boosting the employability** of the students.
- Life skills (JeevanKaushal) curriculum cover the set of human talents acquired by an individual via classroom learning or life experience that can help them to deal with problems encountered in day to day life. This includes the **core skills each individual must possess internally as well as externally** for the betterment of self and the society as a whole. Adoption of life skills is the key to success and quality in life.

86. Which of the following pairs of fire and forget missiles and the country to which they belong to is/are correctly matched?

List I - List II

- 1) Nag - India
- 2) Spike - Israel
- 3) Javelin - U.S.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

Nag-India

- Nag is a third-generation, **fire-and-forget, anti-tank guided missile** developed by India's state-owned **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** to support both mechanised infantry and airborne forces of the Indian Army.

- The missile incorporates an advanced passive homing guidance system and possesses high single-shot kill probability. It is designed to destroy modern main battle tanks and other heavily armoured targets.
- Nag can be launched from **land and air-based platforms**.
- The Nag missile was indigenously developed under the Indian Ministry of Defence's **integrated guided missile development programme (IGMDP)**, which also involved the development of four other missiles, that are **Agni, Akash, Trishul and Prithvi**.

Nag variants

- **Prospina (500m- 4km)** the land version meant for infantry, can be launched from a tracking-cum-launch vehicle known as NAMICA (Nag Missile Carrier)
- **HeliNa (7- 10km)** is a helicopter-launched version of NAG with an extended range. The launch system is mounted on HAL "Rudra" helicopter using "Rudrastra" twin-launcher system, Dhruv advanced light helicopter (ALH) (a variant called Dhruvastra) and HAL Light Combat Helicopters. The launch system is used by both Indian Army and Air Force.
- **Man Portable Anti-tank Guided Missile (MPATGM)**: This version is lighter in comparison to other variants and can be launched from the shoulder. It has a strike range of 2.5 km.

Spike - Israel

- Spike is an **Israeli fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile** and anti-personnel missile with a tandem-charge HEAT warhead, currently in its **fourth-generation**.
- It was developed and designed by the Israeli company **Rafael Advanced Defense Systems**.
- The Spike missile can also be used on ships.

Javelin - US

- The Javelin is a **portable anti-tank weapon**, supplied by the Raytheon / Lockheed Martin Javelin joint venture.
- It is **shoulder-fired** but can also be installed on **tracked, wheeled or amphibious vehicles**.
- With a range of between 2,500 and 4,000 meters the missile is designed to strike at a tank from above where the armor is thinnest.

Why in the news?

- Joint User Trials for Helina (Army Version) and Dhruvastra (Air Force Version) Missile Systems have been carried out from Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) platform in desert ranges.

87. Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 provides vaccination for which of the following diseases?

1. Tetanus
2. Meningitis
3. Rabies
4. Measles

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer : B

Explanation

- Mission Indradhanush 2.0 is the government's flagship scheme which is **aimed at immunizing children under the age of 2 years and pregnant women.**
- The program aims to escalate efforts to achieve the goal of attaining **90% national immunization coverage across India.**
- The Intensified Mission Indradhanush immunization drive will consist of four rounds of immunization. The program will be completed by March 2020.
- The Government of India launched a nationwide vaccination drive to prevent eight diseases under Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 .
- The Intensified Mission Indradhanush 2.0 has been launched to focus on 272 districts of 27 states and 652 blocks of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar among hard-to-reach and tribal populations.

Mission Indradhanush 2.0 Highlights:

- Immunization activity will be in 4 rounds
- Enhanced immunization session with flexible timing, mobile session & mobilization by other departments
- Enhanced focus on left outs, dropouts, and resistant families & hard to reach areas
- Focus on urban, underserved population and tribal areas

- Intensified Mission Indradhanush to be conducted till March 2020

The IMI covers vaccines for

Diphtheria

Whooping Cough

Tetanus

Poliomyelitis

Tuberculosis

Measles

Meningitis and

Hepatitis B

Vaccines for Japanese encephalitis and hemophilus influenza are also being provided in selected areas

Why in the news?

- Health Minister Harsh Vardhan launched **Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) 3.0** with a focus on children and pregnant women who missed their vaccine doses during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- IMI 3.0 will have two rounds starting from February 22 and March 22 and will be conducted in 250 pre-identified districts and urban areas across 29 states and Union territories.

88. Which of the following are regarded as the major ports ?

- 1) Paradip
- 2) Mormoguo
- 3) Ennore
- 4) Deenadayal

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

- Ports provide an **interface between ocean transport and land based transport** and play a vital role in the overall economic development. There are **12 major ports** and about **200 non-major ports along India's coastline** which is about 7517 km.
- The 6 major ports- Kolkata, **Paradip**, Visakhapatnam, Kamarajar (**Ennore**), Chennai and V.O. Chidambaranar are **on the east coast** and the other major ports viz., Cochin, New Mangalore, **Mormugao**, Mumbai, Jawaharlal Nehru Port (Sheva, Navi Mumbai) and **Deendayal** (also known as **Kandla**) are **on the west coast**.
- The **major ports** are under the **direct administrative control of the central government** and fall in Union List 7th Schedule of Constitution. **Ports other than the major ones** are under the **jurisdiction of the respective maritime state government** and fall in the Concurrent List. Of the total traffic handled by all Indian ports, 57 per cent is handled by major ports and 43 by others.
- Seaports in India are responsible for a varied range of economic activity. They **account for about 95% by volume and 70 percent by value of the country's international trade**. The ports play a vital role in the overall economic development of the country.

Paradip

- Paradip is the only Major Port in the **State of Odisha** situated 210 nautical miles south of Kolkata and 260 nautical miles north of Visakhapatnam **on the east coast on the shore of Bay of Bengal**

Mormugao

- Mormugao Port is **located in the town of Mormugao, Goa**, India. It has a naturally protected open-type harbour, that lies on the southern part of the mouth of the river Zuari

Kandla

- Kandla, also known as the Deendayal Port Trust is a **seaport in Kutch District of Gujarat** state in western India, near the city of Gandhidham. Located on the Gulf of Kutch, it is one of **major ports on west coast**

Ennore

- **Kamarajar Port** formerly **Ennore Port** is located on the **Coromandel Coast** about 18 km north of Chennai Port, **Chennai**, it is the 12th major port of India, and the first port in India which is a public company.

89. Which of the following countries is/ are members of G7?

1. Japan
2. Russia
3. U.S
4. Canada

Select the correct answer using the given code below.

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

Answer: A

Explanation :

The G7, originally G8, was set up in 1975 as an **informal forum** bringing together the leaders of the world's leading industrial nations. The annual G7 summits have over the years developed into a platform for determining the course of multilateral discourse and shaping political responses to global challenges. It complements the role of the G20, which is widely regarded as the framework for ongoing global economic coordination.

The following countries are the members:

- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Japan
- the United Kingdom
- the United States.

Note:

It used to be known as the G8 (Group of Eight) until 2014 when Russia was excluded because of its annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.



90. Consider the following statements.

1. G7 countries are the seven major advanced economies and represent over 46% of the gross domestic product globally.
2. The European Union is a Sovereign Member State in the G7 grouping.
3. The decisions taken at the G7 are not legally binding,

Which of the above statements is/ are correct?

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

Answer: C

Explanation :

Statement 1 is correct:

The G7, originally G8, was set up in 1975 as an informal forum bringing together the leaders of the world's leading industrial nations. The G7 countries represent over 46% of the gross domestic product globally based on nominal values. These countries represent over 32% of the GDP based on purchasing power parity. The countries in this group have more than 62% of the global net wealth – or a total of \$280 trillion.

Statement 2 is incorrect:

The European Union is a unique supranational organisation – not a sovereign Member State – hence the name G7 “Group of Seven”. The EU is therefore a ‘non-enumerated’ member and does not assume the rotating G7 presidency.

In 1977, representatives of the then European Community began participating in the London summit. The role has expanded over time, with the EU gradually included in all political discussions

Statement 3 is correct:

The following countries are the members:

- Canada
- France
- Germany
- Italy
- Japan
- the United Kingdom
- the United States.

G7 is capable of setting the global agenda because decisions taken by these major economic powers have a real impact. Thus the **decisions taken at the G7 are not legally binding**, but exert strong political influence.

91. Consider the following statements regarding Sambhar lake:

1. It is India’s largest coastal salt water lake.
2. It is recognised as a ‘Wetland of International Importance’ under the Ramsar Convention.
3. The wetland is a key wintering area for Pink Flamingos.

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

Ans: B

Explanation:

- Sambhar Lake is **India’s largest inland saltwater lake** at 230 sq km, spread mostly across Jaipur and Nagaur districts and also a part of Ajmer district of **Rajasthan**.

- **Chilka lake** is the **largest coastal salt water lake** and also called the largest brackish water lagoon in India. Hence statement 1 is incorrect.
- It is a **key wintering area for pink flamingos** and other birds that migrate from northern Asia and Siberia.
- It was designated as a **Ramsar Site in 1990** ('Wetland of International Importance' under the Ramsar Convention)
- It is also an **Important Bird Area (IBA)** due to migratory avifaunal population, especially flamingo and waterfowl.

Why in the news?

New tourist points for witnessing the flora and fauna and having a glimpse of salt harvesting will be identified shortly at the world-famous Sambhar Salt Lake.

92. Consider the following statements about Smart Cities Mission

- 1) It is a Mission of building 100 smart cities that intends to promote adoption of smart solutions for efficient use of available assets, resources and infrastructure.
- 2) It was launched by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

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

To recast the urban landscape of the country, to make urban areas more livable and inclusive besides driving the economic growth, the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs** has launched a **centrally sponsored scheme, the Smart Cities Mission**

About Smart cities mission

- Under the Smart Cities Mission, each selected city would get **central assistance of Rs.100 crore** per year for five years.

- This Mission of building 100 smart cities intends to promote adoption of smart solutions for efficient use of available assets, resources and infrastructure with the objective of enhancing the quality of urban life and providing a clean and sustainable environment.
- Special emphasis will be given to participation of citizens in prioritizing and planning urban interventions.

Approach

- It will be implemented through an **'area based' approach** consisting of retrofitting, redevelopment, pan-city initiatives and development of new cities.
- Under **retrofitting**, deficiencies in an identified area will be addressed through necessary interventions
- **Redevelopment** enables reconstruction of already built-up area that is not amenable for any interventions, to make it smart
- **Pan-city components** could be interventions like Intelligent Transport Solutions that benefits all residents by reducing commuting time.

Focus

- Smart cities initiative, focus will be on core infrastructure services like:
 - Adequate and clean Water supply,
 - Sanitation and Solid Waste Management,
 - Efficient Urban Mobility and Public Transportation,
 - Affordable housing for the poor, power supply,
 - robust IT connectivity,
 - Governance, especially e-governance and citizen participation,
 - safety and security of citizens,
 - health and education and
 - sustainable urban environment.

Implementation

- Smart City Action Plans will be implemented by **Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV)** to be created for each city and state governments will ensure a steady stream of resources for SPVs.

Why in the news?

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has announced the names of the 25 cities selected for the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge under the Smart Cities Mission.

About the Challenge

- Under its prime objective of inclusive development, the Government of India is committed to **enhancing opportunities in urban areas for all vulnerable citizens**, especially young children. The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge, launched on November 4th, 2020, invited **participation from all Smart Cities**, capitals of States and UTs, and other cities with population above 5 lakhs were eligible to participate.
- Over the 3-year initiative, selected cities based on their proposal, readiness, and commitment – will receive **technical support and capacity-building** to develop, pilot and scale solutions that enhance the quality of life of young children.
- Over time, the programme will enable city leaders, managers, staff, engineers, urban planners, and architects to **incorporate a focus on early childhood development** into the planning and management of Indian cities.

93. Consider the following pairs regarding the mountain passes and the states in which they are located

LIST I

1. Shipki La
2. Nathu La
3. Zoji La

LIST II

- Sikkim
- Himachal Pradesh
- Jammu and Kashmir

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

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

Ans: D

Explanation

Zoji La (Pass): It is in the **Zaskar range of Jammu & Kashmir**. The road route from Srinagar to Leh goes through this pass. It has been created by the Indus River.

Shipki La (Pass): It is in **Himachal Pradesh**. The road from Shimla to Tibet goes through this pass. The Satluj River flows through this pass.

Nathu La is a mountain pass in the **Himalayas connecting Sikkim with Chumbi Valley** of the Tibetan Plateau in China. It is one of the three open trading border posts between China and India; the others being Shipkila in Himachal Pradesh and Lipulekh at the trisection point of Uttarakhand–India, Nepal and China.

Nathu La pass was re-opened in 2006 to shorten the travel distance to important Hindu and Buddhist pilgrimage sites in the region and give a boost to Indo-China trade. It is also one of the five officially agreed Border Personnel Meeting points between the Indian Army and the People's Liberation Army of China for regular consultations and interactions between the two armies to improve relations

Why in the news?

Recently, the Indian Army rescued several tourists caught in a snowstorm at Nathu La on the India-China border in Sikkim.

94. Consider the following statements regarding the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)

1. It is a statutory Board constituted under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972
2. It serves as an apex body for the approval of projects in and around national parks and wildlife sanctuaries
3. The NBWL is chaired by the Minister for environment, forest and climate change and is responsible for promotion of conservation and development of wildlife and forests.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Answer: D

Explanation

- **National Board for Wildlife** is a **statutory Board** constituted officially in 2003 under the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**.

- The NBWL is **chaired by the Prime Minister** and is responsible for promotion of conservation and development of wildlife and forests.
- The board is 'advisory' in nature and **can only advise the Government on policy making** for conservation of wildlife.
- It is an **important body because it serves as an apex body for the review of all wildlife-related matters** and for the approval of projects in and around national parks and sanctuaries.
- The **standing committee of NBWL is chaired by the Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change**
- The **standing committee approves all the projects falling within protected wildlife areas** or within 10 km of them.

95. Consider the following statements with respect to 'AarogyaSetu'

1. It is a web platform providing information about the nutritious and balanced diet
2. It was launched under the 'Eat Right India Movement' by the Ministry of health and family 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

Answer: D

Explanation

- The **Ministry of Electronics and Information and Technology (MeitY)** has launched a **mobile app called 'AarogyaSetu'** to bring the people of India together in a **resolute fight against COVID-19**
- The app built through **public private partnership** helps the people to assess themselves the risk of contracting the Corona Virus infection
- It will calculate this based on their interaction with others using cutting edge Bluetooth technology, **algorithms and artificial intelligence**

- Once installed in a smartphone, **the app detects other nearby devices** with AarogyaSetu installed. The app can then calculate the risk of infection based on **sophisticated parameters** if any of these contacts is tested positive.
- The personal data collected by the App is **encrypted using state-of-the-art technology** and stays secure on the phone till it is needed for facilitating medical intervention

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

1. Nigeria
2. Ecuador
3. Azerbaijan
4. Sudan

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer : 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 2020, **OPEC has a total of 13 Member Countries** viz. Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), **Saudi Arabia**, Algeria, Libya, **Nigeria**, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Angola, and Venezuela are members of OPEC.
- Ecuador had left OPEC from January 2020.
- 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.

97. The main objective of the SFURTI initiative is

- To provide Interest subsidy on educational loans for overseas studies for the students belonging to minority communities.
- To provide better socio-economic infrastructure facilities to the minority communities.
- To provide a mechanism to link agricultural production to the market by bringing together farmers, processors and retailers.
- To organize the traditional industries and artisans into clusters to make them competitive and provide support for their long term sustainability.

Answer: **D**

Explanation:

- SFURTI (Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries) was launched by the **Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)** in 2005 with the view to promote Cluster development.

Objective of the Scheme

- **To organize the traditional industries and artisans into clusters to make them competitive and provide support for their long term sustainability**
- To provide sustained employment for traditional Industry artisans and rural entrepreneurs
- To enhance marketability of products of clusters by providing support for new products, design intervention and improved packaging, and also the improvement of marketing Infrastructure

- To equip traditional artisans of the associated clusters with improved skills and capabilities through training and exposure visits
- To make provision for common facilities and improved tools and equipment for artisans
- To strengthen the cluster governance systems with the active participation of the stakeholders, so that they are able to gauge the emerging challenges and opportunities and respond to them in a coherent manner
- To build innovative and traditional skills, improved technologies, advanced processes, market intelligence and new models of public-private partnerships, so as to gradually replicate similar models of cluster- based regenerated traditional Industries

Who Can Apply

- Non-Government organizations (NGOs)
- Institutions of the Central and State Governments
- Semi-Government institutions
- Field functionaries of State and Central Govt.
- Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs)

98. "Find the Incredible You" campaign sometimes seen in news in the context of which of the following?

- Women empowerment
- Promotion of tourism
- Fostering the Leadership spirit among school students
- Development of sports

Ans: B

Explanation

About the Campaign

- The Campaign focuses on the **promotion of niche tourism products** of the Country on digital and social media.
- Find the Incredible You campaign brings the focus towards the **internal experience of travellers themselves** rather than the external features of the **tourist destinations**.
- It was part of the **Incredible India Campaign of Ministry of Tourism**.

- It focuses on **transformative experiences** brought alive through **unique storytelling in the format of autobiographies of travellers**, with the tagline 'Find the Incredible you'.

99. Consider the following pairs with respect to methods of soil conservation

1. Contour barriers - Ploughing parallel to the contours of a hill slope to form a natural barrier for water to flow down the slope.
2. Terrace Farming - Broad flat steps are made on the steep slopes to reduce surface Run-off and soil erosion
3. Mulching - Covering the surface of soil with a layer of organic matter to help the soil retain soil moisture

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

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

Answer : D

Explanation

Soil erosion and depletion are the major threats to soil as a resource. Both human and natural factors can lead to degradation of soils. Factors which lead to soil degradation are **deforestation, overgrazing, overuse of chemical fertilisers** or pesticides, rain wash, landslides and floods.

Some methods of soil conservation are listed below

- **Mulching:** The bare ground between plants **is covered with a layer of organic matter** like straw. It helps to **retain soil moisture**.
- **Contour barriers:** Stones, grass, soil are used to **build barriers along contours**. **Trenches are made** in front of the barriers to collect water.
- **Terrace farming:** Broad flat **steps or terraces are made on the steep slopes** so that flat surfaces are available to grow crops. They reduce surface run-off and soil erosion
- **Contour ploughing:** **Ploughing parallel to the contours of a hill slope** to form a natural barrier for water to flow down the slope.

100. Which of the following languages were added through amendments to the eighth schedule?

- 1) Sindhi
- 2) Sanskrit
- 3) Tulu
- 4) Maithili

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

- The **Eighth Schedule to the Constitution consists of the following 22 languages:-**
(1) Assamese, (2) Bengali, (3) Gujarati, (4) Hindi, (5) Kannada, (6) Kashmiri, (7) Konkani, (8) Malayalam, (9) Manipuri, (10) Marathi, (11) Nepali, (12) Oriya, (13) Punjabi, (14) Sanskrit, (15) Sindhi, (16) Tamil, (17) Telugu, (18) Urdu (19) Bodo, (20) Santhali, (21) Maithili and (22) Dogri.
- Of these languages, **14 were initially included in the Constitution.**
- **Sindhi** language was added by the 21st Amendment Act of 1967.
- **Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali** were included by the 71st Amendment Act of 1992.
- **Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali** were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

The Constitutional provisions related to the **Eighth Schedule** are:

- **Article 344:** Article 344(1) provides for the constitution of a Commission by the President on expiration of five years from the commencement of the Constitution.
- **Article 351:** It provides for the spread of the Hindi language to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.

101. Consider the following statements regarding the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)

1. It will provide or facilitate financing to any entity or enterprise operating in the territory of a member country
2. For each member country, the voting share is based on their authorised capital share to the 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

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a **multilateral development bank** with a mission to **improve social and economic outcomes in Asia**.
- **Headquartered in Beijing**, it began operations in January 2016 and has now grown to 102 approved members worldwide.
- By investing in **sustainable infrastructure** and other productive sectors in Asia and beyond, it will better connect people, services and markets that over time will impact the lives of billions and build a better future
- AIIB was officially **established in December 2015** and opened for business in January 2016. **India is among 57 founding members of AIIB**, among these 37 are regional and 20 are non-regional.
- It has an authorised initial capital of US \$100 billion and subscribed capital of US \$ 50 billion
- **Statement 1 is correct:** According to the **Articles of Agreement (AOA)** of AIIB, the Bank will “provide or facilitate financing to any member, or any agency, instrumentality or political subdivision thereof, or any **entity or enterprise operating in the territory of a member**, as well as to international or regional agencies or entities concerned with economic development of the Asia region.”
- Furthermore, the AOA permits the Bank to provide financing in a variety of ways, including, inter alia, making **loans, investing in the equity capital of an enterprise**, and

guaranteeing, whether as primary or secondary obligor, in whole or in part, loans for economic development.

- **China, India and Russia are the three largest shareholders** of AIIB, taking 30.34%, 8.52%, 6.66% stake respectively. Their voting shares are 26.6%, 7.6% and 6% respectively. China's voting shares in **AIIB gives Beijing effective veto power**, as major bank decisions require at least 75% support
- **Asian countries account for 75 percent of AIIB's shares** and non-Asian countries altogether account for 25 percent, which translate to voting power, but three out of the bank's five vice presidents are European
- Two features make AIIB a distinct entity
- **Regional character of the Bank:** Its regional members (Asian) will be the holding around 75 percent of shares i.e. they will be **majority shareholders**. They have been **allocated their capital share on quota basis i.e. based on their economic size**
- **Statement 2 is incorrect: Voting share: For each member country is based on the size of their economy** and not on authorised capital share to the Bank

Why in the news?

The Government of India and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) today signed a loan agreement for a \$304 million Assam Intra-State Transmission System Enhancement Project to improve reliability, capacity and security of the power transmission network in the State of Assam.

102. Consider the following statements

- 1) The National Animal Disease Control Programme was launched to eradicate the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis in the livestock.
- 2) Brucellosis is a zoonotic disease.

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:

About National Animal Disease Control Programme:

- The National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP) aims for **eradicating the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis in the livestock.**

Hence statement 1 is correct.

- It is a **central sector scheme** (100% funding from the Central Government).
- The program aims at vaccinating over 500 Million Livestock including cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats and pigs against the FMD.
- It also aims at vaccinating 36 Million Female Bovine Calves annually in its fight against the Brucellosis disease.
- The Programme has **two components** – to **control the diseases by 2025 and eradication by 2030.**

About Brucellosis:

Brucellosis is a highly **contagious zoonosis** caused by ingestion of **unpasteurized milk or undercooked meat** from **infected animals**, or close contact with their secretions.

It is also known as undulant fever, Malta fever, and Mediterranean fever. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

103. Which of the following organisation is widely known as the world's "Atoms for Peace and Development" organization within the United Nations family?

- a)IAEA
- b)SCO
- c)NATO
- d)ASEAN

Answer: A

Explanation:

- IAEA(International Atomic Energy Agency) is widely known as the world's "Atoms for Peace and Development" organization within the United Nations family.
- It is the world's central intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical co-operation in the nuclear field. It works for the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

- Though established as an autonomous organisation, independently of the United Nations through its own international treaty, the IAEA Statute, the IAEA reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.

104. The National park stretches in the north upto an altitude of 3,200m. The highest point of this park is Rachela Pass, where it forms a boundary with Sikkim in the North and Bhutan in the North East. This links this national park with the Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary in Sikkim and Toorsa district Reserve in Bhutan. The forests of Jalpaiguri forms its southern boundary connecting it with Chapramari Wildlife Sanctuary and the Gorumara National Park.

The above description refers to which of the following National parks?

- (a) Balphakram National Park
- (b) Nokrek National Park
- (c) Jaldapara National Park
- (d) Neora valley National Park

Answer :D

Explanation

- Covering an area of 88sq kms, **Neora Valley National Park** is located in **Kalimpong district of West Bengal**. It stretches in the north upto an altitude of 3,200m. The highest point of this park is Rachela Pass, where it forms a **boundary with Sikkim in the North and Bhutan in the North East**
- This links Neora Valley National Park with the **Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary in Sikkim** and Toorsa district Reserve in Bhutan. The altitude at its southern limit is 183m and the forests of Jalpaiguri forms its southern boundary connecting it with Chapramari Wildlife Sanctuary and the Gorumara National Park.
- It is a compact patch of virgin forest, **rich in biodiversity located in the Eastern Himalayas**, a global 'biodiversity hotspot'. It is also an **integral part of the Kanchenjunga Landscape**.
- The complex physical environment is a result of different geomorphic processes, each of which has developed into the characteristic assemblage of landforms.

Balpakram National Park

- Balpakram National Park is a national park in the **south of Garo Hills in Meghalaya** located at an altitude of about 910 m close to the international border with Bangladesh.

Nokrek National Park

- **Nokrek National Park**, the core area of **Nokrek Biosphere Reserve**, is a national park located approximately 2 km from Tura Peak in West **Garo Hills district of Meghalaya**. UNESCO added this National park to its **list of Biosphere Reserves** in May 2009. Along with Balpakram national park, Nokrek is a **hotspot of biodiversity in Meghalaya**

Jaldapara National Park

- **Jaldapara National Park** is a national park situated at the **foothills of the Eastern Himalayas** in Alipurduar District of **northern West Bengal** and on the banks of the Torsa River. Jaldapara is situated at an altitude of 61 m and is spread across 216.51 km² of vast grassland with patches of riverine forests

105. Consider the following statements about FAME India scheme

- 1) It is an incentive scheme for the production of pest resistant genetically modified crop varieties in the country.
- 2) It was launched by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

Statement 1 and 2 are incorrect :

- The **National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020** is a National Mission document providing the vision and the roadmap for the faster adoption of electric vehicles and their manufacturing in the country. As part of the NEMMP 2020, the **Department of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises** formulated a Scheme viz. **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India)** Scheme in the year

2015 to **promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth** of the same.

The Scheme operates in **two phases**.

Phase I: started in 2015 and was completed on March 31st, 2019.

Phase II: started from April 1st, 2019, will be completed by March 31st, 2022.

- The 1st Phase of FAME India Scheme was implemented through four focus areas namely (i) Demand Creation, (ii) Technology Platform, (iii) Pilot Project and (iv) Charging Infrastructure.
- Market creation through demand incentives was aimed at incentivizing all vehicle segments i.e. 2-Wheelers, 3-Wheelers Auto, Passenger 4-Wheeler vehicles, Light Commercial Vehicles and Buses.

Salient features of FAME 2 scheme

- The outlay of 10,000 crore has been made for three years till 2022 for FAME 2 scheme.
- The centre has sanctioned investment in **setting up charging stations** for electric vehicles in India
- The government will offer the incentives for electric buses, three-wheelers and four-wheelers to be used for commercial purposes.
- Plug-in hybrid vehicles and those with a sizeable lithium-ion battery and electric motor will also be included in the scheme and fiscal support offered depending on the size of the battery.

106. Consider the following statements with respect to Nidhi companies

1. It is a type of Non- Banking Financial Company (NBFC) recognized under the Companies Act, 2013
2. Their core business is borrowing and lending money between their members
3. Currently it is not under the regulatory ambit of any ministry or regulatory body

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer : A

Explanation

- In order to make the regulatory regime for **Nidhi companies, which are kind of NBFCs**, the government recently **amended the provisions related to Nidhi firms under the Companies Act**.
- Under the rules, a company is incorporated as Nidhi with the **object of cultivating the habit of thrift and saving amongst its members**, receiving deposits from and lending to its members only, for their mutual benefit.

Nidhi company

- A Nidhi company is a type of company in the Indian non-banking finance sector, recognized **under section 406 of the Companies Act, 2013**. Their **core business is borrowing and lending money between their members**.
- They are **regulated by Ministry of Corporate Affairs**. They have to comply with two set of norms, one of Public limited company as per Companies Act, 2013 and another is for Nidhi rules, 2014.
- Nidhis are also **included in the definition of Non- Banking Financial companies** or (NBFCs) which operate mainly in the unorganized money market. However, since 1997, NBFCs have been brought increasingly under the **regulatory ambit of the Indian Central Bank, RBI**.

107. The main objective of the World Trade Organisation is to

- A. Foster global monetary cooperation
- B. Liberalise international trade
- C. Work towards global poverty alleviation
- D. Helping developing countries to balance their payments.

Answer: B

Explanation:

- The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. The main objective of the WTO is to ensure that global trade flows as smoothly, predictably and freely as possible.

- Foster global monetary cooperation is a major objective of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

108. Consider the following statements

- 1) National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA) is a constitutional body.
- 2) Input tax credit is given to the end consumers purchasing a product under GST regime.

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 National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) is the **statutory mechanism**
- (Not constitutional body) under GST law to check the unfair profiteering activities by the registered suppliers under GST law. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- The National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA) has been **constituted under Section 171 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 under Ministry of Finance.**
- The core function is to ensure that the commensurate benefits of the reduction in GST rates on goods and services done by the GST Council and of the Input tax credit are passed on to the recipients by way of commensurate reduction in the prices by the suppliers.
- It aims to ensure that the registered suppliers under GST law are not profiteering by charging higher prices from recipients in the name of GST. The legal mandate of NAA is to examine and check such profiteering activities and recommend punitive actions including cancellation of Registration.

The following steps have been taken by the NAA to ensure that customers get the full benefit of tax cuts:

- i. Holding regular meetings with the Zonal Screening Committees and the Chief Commissioners of Central Tax to stress upon consumer awareness programmes;

- ii. Launching a helpline to resolve the queries of citizens regarding registration of complaints against profiteering.
- iii. Receiving complaints through email and NAA portal.
- iv. Working with consumer welfare organizations in order to facilitate outreach activities.

Input Tax Credit:

- Input Tax Credit means the credit of input tax on the supplies of goods or services or both received by a registered person.
 - A person registered under composition scheme in GST cannot claim ITC.
 - Input tax credit is not given to the end consumers purchasing a product under GST regime.
- Hence **statement 2 is incorrect.**

109. With reference to the UN Human Rights Council, consider the following statements.

- 1) It is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system made up of all members of the UN.
- 2) It is responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe.

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 Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Council's mandate is to promote "**universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all**" and "address situations of violations of human rights, including gross and systematic violations, and make recommendations thereon."

- It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year.
- The Council was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Membership

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Council is made of **47 Member States**, which are elected by the majority of members of the General Assembly of the United Nations through direct and secret ballot.
- The Council's Membership is based on equitable geographical distribution.
- Members of the Council serve for a period of three years and are not eligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms.

Why in the news?

- US pulled out of the world body's main human rights agency in 2018.
- Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced recently that the U.S. will seek re-election to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and he asked for the support of UN member states.

110. Consider the following statements with reference to microplastics.

1. It is a small plastic piece less than 5 millimeter.
2. Bioaccumulation refers to increasing concentration of a substance, such as a toxic chemical, in the tissues of organisms at successively higher trophic levels.

Which of the following statements given above is/are INCORRECT?

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

Answer- B

Explanation:

- Micro plastics are the small plastic piece less than 5 millimeter
- Researchers have pointed out that every person consumes 5g of plastics (equivalent to credit card) every week.

- **Bioaccumulation** refers to the accumulation of a toxic chemical in the **tissue of a particular organism. (not at successively higher levels)** Bioaccumulation occurs when an organism absorbs a toxic substance from all sources at a rate greater than that at which the substance is lost.
- **Biomagnification** refers to increasing concentration of a substance, such as a toxic chemical, in the tissues of organisms at **successively higher levels** in a food chain. **Hence Statement 2 is incorrect.**

111. Consider the following statements with respect to Asset reconstruction companies (ARCs)

1. ARCs are registered under the SEBI and regulated under the SARFAESI Act, 2002
2. It is a special type of financial institution that buys the bad assets or NPAs from banks at a mutually agreed value and attempts to recover the debts or associated securities by itself.

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: A

Explanation

What is asset reconstruction?

It is the acquisition of any right or interest of any bank or financial institution in loans, advances granted, debentures, bonds, guarantees or any other credit facility extended by banks for the purpose of its realisation. Such loans, advances, bonds, guarantees and other credit facilities are together known by a term – ‘financial assistance’.

What is securitisation?

It is the acquisition of financial assets either by way of issuing security receipts to Qualified Buyers or any other means. Such security receipts would represent an undivided interest in the financial assets.

Statement 2 is correct : Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) is a special type of financial institution that buys the bad debts of the bank at a mutually agreed value and

attempts to recover the debts or associated securities by itself. The ARCs take over a portion of the debts of the bank that qualify to be recognised as Non-Performing Assets.

Statement 1 is incorrect : ARCs are registered under the RBI (not under SEBI) and regulated under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act, 2002).

112. Consider the following statements regarding the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)

1. It is coordinated by the Ministry of Jal Shakti under the Swachh Bharat Mission
2. It aims to develop theme-based tourist circuits in the country on the principles of competitiveness and sustainability in an integrated manner

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

Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)

- It is **coordinated by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti** under the Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Aims to **take iconic places and their surroundings to higher standards of Swachhata**, so that all visitors benefit and also take away home the **message of cleanliness**.
- The initiative aims at enhancing the experience of both domestic and foreign visitors by improving the sanitation and cleanliness standards at and around the sites.
- The objective of SIP is to achieve a distinctly higher level of Sanitation/Cleanliness at these places, especially on the peripheries and in approach areas.
- Implementation of the project: It is a **collaborative project with three other central Ministries: Urban Development, Culture, Tourism**

Initiatives under Swachh Iconic Places

- Improved **sewage infrastructure, installation of Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)**, drainage facilities, improved sanitation facilities, water vending machines, solid and liquid

waste management (SLWM), structure restoration, lighting arrangements, **beautification of parks**, roads maintenance, better transport facilities in approach and access areas besides at the main sites.

Statement 2 refers to Swadesh Darshan Initiative.

Why in the news?

The Ministry of Jal Shakti has announced the selection of the following Twelve (12) iconic sites under Phase IV of Swachh Iconic Places.

- Ajanta Caves, Maharashtra
- Sanchi Stupa, Madhya Pradesh
- Kumbhalgarh Fort, Rajasthan
- Jaisalmer Fort, Rajasthan
- Ramdevra, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan
- Golconda Fort, Hyderabad, Telangana
- Sun Temple, Konark, Odisha
- Rock Garden, Chandigarh
- Dal Lake, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir
- Banke Bihari Temple, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh
- Agra Fort, Agra, Uttar Pradesh
- Kalighat Temple, West Bengal

113. Consider the following statements

1. India is the largest cultivator of bamboo.
2. One of the objectives of the National Bamboo Mission is to increase the area under bamboo plantation in non forest Government and private lands.

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:

India is the world's second largest cultivator of bamboo after China, with 136 species spread over nearly 14 million hectares. Hence, **statement 1 is incorrect.**

About National Bamboo Mission:

- In October 2006, the Government of India (GOI) had launched the National Bamboo Mission (NBM) on the basis of the National Mission on Bamboo Technology and Trade Development Report, 2003.
- The NBM's key objective was to address issues relating to the development of the bamboo industry in the country, provide a new impetus and direction and enable the realisation of India's considerable potential in bamboo production.
- Other objectives include
- To increase the area under bamboo plantation in non forest Government and private lands to supplement farm income and contribute towards resilience to climate change as well as availability of quality raw material for industries. Hence **statement 2 is correct.**
- To improve post-harvest management through establishment of innovative primary processing units near the source of production, primary treatment and seasoning plants, preservation technologies and market infrastructure
- To promote product development keeping in view market demand, by assisting R&D, entrepreneurship & business models at micro, small and medium levels and feed bigger industry
- To rejuvenate the underdeveloped bamboo industry in India
- To promote skill development, capacity building, awareness generation for development of bamboo sector from production to market demand
- To realign efforts so as to reduce dependency on import of bamboo and bamboo products by way of improved productivity and suitability of domestic raw material for industry, so as to enhance income of the primary producers

114. Consider the following statements about shell companies

1. In India, they are officially defined under the Companies Act, 2013, as companies conducting almost no economic activity
2. All Shell companies are considered illegal according to the Companies Act.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: **D**

Explanation:

What is a shell company?

- Shell companies are typically corporate entities which do not have any active business operations or significant assets in their possession.
- Most shell companies **do not manufacture any product** or deal in any product or render any service.
- They are mostly used to make financial transactions.
- Generally, these companies **hold assets only on paper and not in reality**. These companies conduct almost **no economic activity**.

Statement 1 is incorrect:

- In India, there is **no clear definition** of what constitutes a shell company in either **Companies Act, 2013 or in any other Act**.

Statement 2 is incorrect.

- These companies can be **legal or illegal depending on a country's law**.
- These types of corporations are not all necessarily illegal, but they are sometimes used illegitimately, such as **to disguise business ownership from law enforcement or the public**.
- Legitimate reasons for a shell corporation include such things as a startup using the business entity as a vehicle to raise funds, conduct a hostile takeover or to go public.
- In India, Shell companies come under the radar once they are found eligible to be prosecuted under any one of these three laws:
 - **Benami Transaction (Prohibition) Amendment Act 2016,**
 - **The Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002, and**
 - **The Companies Act, 2013**

How can the name of a shell company be removed?

- Under **Section 248 of the Companies Act**: “Registrar of Companies has **powers to remove name of a company from register of companies** where a company fails to commence its business within one year of its incorporation or the subscribers to the memorandum have failed to pay their subscription within a period of 180 days or where a company is not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two years.”

115. “Senkaku Islands dispute” sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of?

- a) Philippines and China
- b) Indonesia and Papua new guinea
- c) China and Japan
- d) Malaysia and Singapore

Answer: C

Explanation:

- The **Diaoyu archipelago (known as the Senkakus in Japanese)** is an uninhabited chain of islands in the **East China Sea** claimed by **China and Japan**.
- In recent years, the increased presence of Japanese and Chinese vessels in nearby waters has heightened concerns about possible clashes between the two countries.
- The archipelago has been controlled by Japan since 1895.
- It is also claimed by Taiwan as its territory.



116. E-Daakhil portal sometimes seen in the news is related to

- Facilitate reporting of labour inspections and submission of Returns.
- Aviation Jobs Portal for Aspirants and prospective Employers
- Platform for farmers to seek any information related to agriculture.
- Online redressal of consumer grievances.

Answer: D

Explanation:

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019, which has come into force from 20th July, 2020, has provision for e-filing of consumer complaints in the Consumer Commissions and online payment of the fees for filing a complaint.
- A web application for E-filing of consumer complaints named “edaakhil.nic.in” has been developed by NIC for the purpose.
- The e-daakhil portal empowers the consumer and their advocates to file the consumer complaints along with payment of requisite fees online from anywhere for the redressal of their complaints.

- It also facilitates the consumer commissions to scrutinize the complaints online to accept, reject or forward the complaint to the concerned commission for further processing.

Why in the news?

- E-Daakhil portal for Consumer grievance redressal is now operational in 15 States/UTs.

117. The 'Sir Creek dispute' sometimes mentioned in the news is related to which of the following?

- Territorial claims by china over the Indian himalayan glacier located in Ladakh region
- A strip of water (estuary) disputed between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch marshlands
- It is territorial dispute between India and Nepal with respect to a transboundary wetland
- An uninhabited island disputed between India and Sri Lanka in the Gulf of Mannar region

Answer: B

Explanation

- **Sir Creek is a 96-km strip of water disputed between India and Pakistan** in the Rann of Kutch marshlands. Originally named Ban Ganga, Sir Creek is named after a British representative.
- The Creek **opens up in the Arabian Sea** and roughly divides the **Kutch region of Gujarat** from the Sindh Province of Pakistan.
- The dispute lies in the interpretation of the maritime boundary line between Kutch and Sindh. Before India's independence, the provincial region was a **part of the Bombay Presidency of British India**.
- But after India's independence in 1947, Sindh became a part of Pakistan while Kutch remained a part of India. **Pakistan claims the entire creek** as per paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Bombay Government Resolution of 1914 signed between then the Government of Sindh and Rao Maharaj of Kutch
- The resolution, which demarcated the boundaries between the two territories, **included the creek as part of Sindh**, thus setting the boundary as the eastern flank of the creek popularly known as Green Line
- But **India claims that the boundary lies mid-channel as depicted in another map drawn in 1925**, and implemented by the installation of mid-channel pillars back in 1924.

- According to international law and the **Thalweg principle**, a boundary can only be fixed in the **middle of the navigable channel**, which meant that it has be divided between Sindh and Kutch, and thereby India and Pakistan.
- India has used this para to **consistently argue that the boundary needs to be fixed** in the middle of the creek.
- Pakistan, however, claims that Sir Creek isn't navigable but India claims that since it's navigable in high tide, the boundary should be drawn from the mid channel.
- Apart from the strategic location, Sir Creek's **core importance is fishing resources**. Sir Creek is considered to be **among the largest fishing grounds in Asia**.
- Another vital reason for two countries locking horns over this creek is the **possible presence of great oil and gas concentration under the sea**, which are currently unexploited thanks to the impending deadlock on the issue.

118. Consider the following statements regarding the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)

1. It is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament
2. It is an apex organization under the Ministry of Textiles with regard to khadi and village industries within India
3. The wider objective of KVIC includes creating self-reliance amongst the poor and building up of a strong rural community spirit.

Which of the statements given above is/are INCORRECT?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 2 only
- d) None of the above

Answer: C

Explanation

Statement 1 is correct :The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a **statutory body established by an Act of Parliament**It is an apex organization under the **Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises** with regard to khadi and village industries within India. **Statement 2 is incorrect.**

Statement 3 is correct:

The broad objectives of KVIC

- The social objective of providing employment
- The economic objective of producing saleable articles
- The wider objective of creating self-reliance amongst the poor and building up of a strong rural community spirit

Functions :

- The KVIC is charged with the planning, promotion, organisation and implementation of programs for the development of Khadi and other village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.
- To promote the sale and marketing of khadi and/or products of village industries or handicrafts, the KVIC may forge linkages with established marketing agencies wherever feasible and necessary.
- The KVIC is also charged with the responsibility of encouraging and promoting research in the production techniques and equipment employed in the Khadi and Village Industries sector.
- The KVIC is entrusted with the task of providing financial assistance to institutions and individuals for development and operation of Khadi and village industries and guiding them through supply of designs, prototypes and other technical information.

119. Consider the following statements:

- 1) If the Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) of a waterbody increases, the dissolved oxygen decreases.
- 2) Greater the Biological Oxygen demand, greater the polluting potential.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

- BOD is defined as the amount of dissolved oxygen needed by aerobic biological organisms in a body of water to break down the organic material present in a water sample, at a specific temperature and specified period.
- If the Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) of a waterbody increases, the dissolved oxygen decreases.
- The greater the BOD of waste water, more is its polluting potential. **Hence both the statements are correct.**

120. Consider the following statements.

1. Bt cotton is India's first genetically modified crop, to be approved for commercialization.
2. India has the world's 2nd largest GM crop acreage after the USA.

Which of the following statements is/ are incorrect?

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

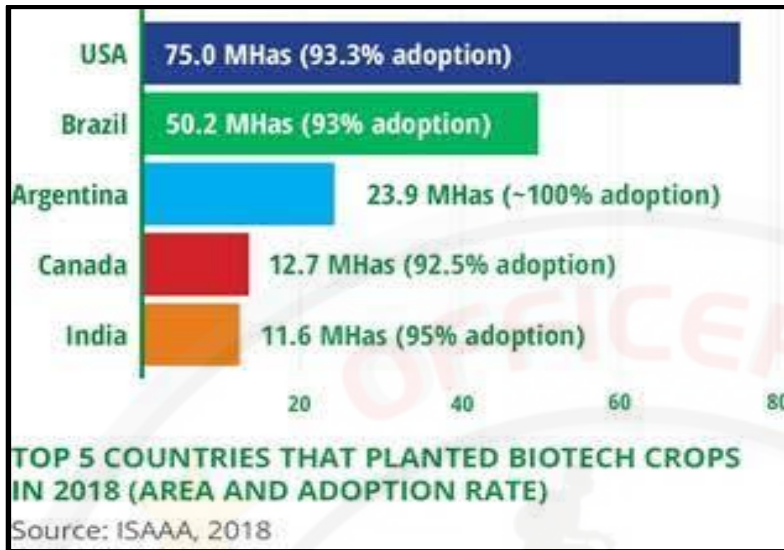
Answer: B

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct.

- Plant genetic engineering methods were developed over 30 years ago, and since then, genetically modified (GM) crops or transgenic crops have become commercially available and widely adopted in many countries.
- In India, Bt cotton was approved by the Government of India in March 2002 as the first transgenic crop for commercial cultivation.

Statement 2 is incorrect

India has the world's 5th largest GM crop acreage after the USA, Brazil, Argentina, and Canada.



What is a GM Crop?

- A GM or transgenic crop is a plant that has a novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology.
- For example, a GM crop can contain a gene(s) that has been artificially inserted instead of the plant acquiring it through pollination.
- The resulting plant is said to be “genetically modified” although in reality all crops have been “genetically modified” from their original wild state by domestication, selection, and controlled breeding over long periods of time.