



DATE: 16.10.2026

- 1) Consider the following statements regarding the National Commission for Women (NCW):
1. The Central Government is legally required to consult the NCW on all major policy matters affecting women.
 2. At least one member of the Commission must belong to the Scheduled Castes (SC) and at least one to the Scheduled Tribes (ST).
 3. The Commission submits its annual reports directly to the Supreme Court of India for judicial review.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

- 2) With reference to Kazakhstan, consider the following statements:
1. Kazakhstan is a landlocked country.
 2. Kazakhstan is bordered by the Caspian Sea in the west.
 3. Kazakhstan shares its borders with China and Mongolia.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

- 3) Consider the following statements with reference to Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
1. SIOFA covers fish, molluscs, crustaceans and all sedentary species within its area, including those subject to the fishery jurisdiction of coastal States.
 2. The Meeting of the Parties is the governing body of SIOFA, comprises all Contracting Parties and meets at least annually.
 3. India became a full Contracting Party to SIOFA in 2022.
 4. SIOFA's objectives include promoting the sustainable development of fisheries while considering the needs of developing States bordering its area.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

- 4) Which of the following statements best describes 'Exercise Cambrian Patrol', often seen in the news?
- (a) A bilateral maritime security exercise between the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy aimed at improving anti-submarine warfare capabilities.
 - (b) An annual international military patrolling exercise hosted by the British Army in Wales.
 - (c) A multi-nation counter-terrorism exercise conducted by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.



- (d) A multilateral air combat exercise organized by NATO member countries in Northern Europe.
- 5) With reference to the newly designated Pradhan Mantri Samajik Sahayata Yojana (restructured from the National Social Assistance Programme), consider the following statements:
1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 2. Under the restructured provisions for the disability pension component, the qualifying benchmark disability threshold has been lowered from 80% to 40%.
 3. The minimum entry-age restriction for availing the disability pension has been completely removed, making assistance applicable right from birth.
 4. The Annapurna Scheme, which supplies free monthly food grains to eligible elderly persons not covered under pension support, functions as one of its sub-schemes.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Explanation

1) Answer: (A)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Central Government is legally required to consult the NCW on all major policy matters affecting women under Section 16 of the NCW Act, 1990.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The law mandates that at least one member must be from the Scheduled Castes (SC) and one from the Scheduled Tribes (ST).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The NCW submits its annual reports to the **Central Government** (which lays them before Parliament), not to the Supreme Court.
- **Therefore, option A is the correct answer.**

2) Answer: (A)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Kazakhstan is universally classified as a landlocked country (in fact, it is the world's largest landlocked country) because it does not have direct access to the world ocean.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Kazakhstan is bounded by the Caspian Sea to its west.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Kazakhstan **does not** share a border with Mongolia. Although they are geographically very close, they are separated by a narrow stretch of land where the borders of Russia and China meet in the Altai region.
- **Therefore, option A is the correct answer.**

3) Answer: (C)

- **Statement 1 is Incorrect:** SIOFA covers fish, molluscs, crustaceans and other sedentary species within its designated area. However, it excludes highly migratory species listed in Annex I of UNCLOS and sedentary species subject to the fishery jurisdiction of coastal States under Article 77(4) of UNCLOS.



- **Statement 2 is Correct:** The Meeting of the Parties (MoP) is the governing body of SIOFA. It comprises representatives of all Contracting Parties and meets at least annually to review the implementation of the Agreement and make decisions concerning fisheries conservation and management.
- **Statement 3 is Incorrect:** India became a Cooperating Non-Contracting Party (CNCPP) in 2022, not a full Contracting Party. On 14 October 2026, the Union Cabinet approved India's accession to SIOFA. Cabinet approval should not, by itself, be interpreted as confirmation that the formal accession process has been completed.
- **Statement 4 is Correct:** SIOFA aims to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of fishery resources and promote sustainable fisheries development, while considering the needs of developing States bordering its agreement area, particularly least-developed and small-island developing States.
- **Therefore, option C is the correct answer.**

4) Answer: (B)

- **Option (b) is correct: Exercise Cambrian Patrol** is an **annual** international military exercise organized and hosted by the British Army (specifically the 160th Welsh Brigade) in Wales, United Kingdom. Often dubbed the "**Olympics of Military Patrolling**", it tests small-unit tactical skills, leadership, navigation, fieldcraft, and combat endurance across harsh terrain. In the **2026 edition**, the Indian Army's **Assam Regiment** represented India and secured the coveted **Gold Medal** competing against over 100 international military teams.
- **Option (a) is incorrect:** The bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the UK's Royal Navy is named **Exercise Konkan**, not Exercise Cambrian Patrol.
- **Option (c) is incorrect:** Multilateral counter-terrorism exercises involving SCO member states are generally held under the **PEACE MISSION** exercise framework.
- **Option (d) is incorrect:** Exercise Cambrian Patrol is a ground-based military patrol competition, not a NATO air combat exercise.
- **Therefore, option B is the correct answer.**

5) Answer: (B)

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)—now renamed and continued as the **Pradhan Mantri Samajik Sahayata Yojana**—is managed and implemented by the **Ministry of Rural Development**, not the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** In the structural updates approved by the Union Cabinet, the criteria for benchmark disability under the restructured disability pension component has been significantly relaxed, lowering the required disability percentage from **80% to 40%**.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The previous minimum age criterion of 18 years for the disability pension has been eliminated, enabling eligible individuals to receive support **since birth**.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The overarching framework of the scheme encompasses sub-components, including the old-age pension, widow pension, disability pension, National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS), and the **Annapurna Scheme** (which provides 10 kg of free food grains per month to uncovered eligible senior citizens).
- **Therefore, option B is the correct answer.**