

# **DAILY MCQs COMPILATION** *with* **EXPLANATIONS**

**OCTOBER 2025**

**NEXT IAS**

# ***Table of Contents***

---

• HISTORY, ART & CULTURE.....	1
• ECONOMY.....	7
• INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION .....	19
• GEOGRAPHY .....	29
• GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/INITIATIVES.....	45
• DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY .....	54
• INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS .....	64
• SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY .....	78
• ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY.....	94
• MISCELLANEOUS .....	111

# HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. Consider the following statements:

1. Lord Cornwallis founded the College of Fort William in Calcutta in 1800 to educate young recruits for the Civil Services.
2. The first competitive exams for the Indian Civil Services (ICS) were held in London in 1855.
3. Satyendranath Tagore was the first Indian to clear ICS in 1864.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

2. With reference to the Bathukamma Festival, consider the following statements:

1. The Bathukamma festival is celebrated predominantly in Tamil Nadu.
2. The term "Bathukamma" translates to "Mother Goddess Come Alive", reflecting the divine feminine energy and protection.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

3. He founded the Indian Statistical Institute in 1932 and the National Sample Survey in 1950, which played a key role in shaping India's data-driven planning, especially during the Second Five Year Plan focused on industrial growth.

Which of the following personalities has been described above?

- (a) M. Visvesvaraya
- (b) P.C. Mahalanobis
- (c) Muthulakshmi Reddy
- (d) D.R. Gadgil

4. Pandit Chhannulal Mishra recently seen in the news, and conferred the Padma Vibhushan in 2020, is renowned for which of the following?

- (a) Hindustani classical music
- (b) Kathak dance
- (c) Madhubani Paintings
- (d) Theatre and drama

5. With reference to the 'National Culture Fund (NCF)', consider the following statements:

1. It aims to preserve and promote tribal art forms, folklore, and heritage.
2. It facilitates public-private partnerships in heritage conservation.
3. It allows corporate bodies to act as monument mitras.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

6. With reference to Vande Mataram, consider the following statements:

1. It was composed in Sanskrit by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and first appeared in his novel Anandamath.
2. It was first sung at the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress by Rabindranath Tagore.
3. On 24th January 1950, it was declared to have equal status with the National Anthem, Jana Gana Mana.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

7. Consider the following pairs:

Buddhist Texts Focused Areas

1. Vinaya Pitaka Ethical monastic rules
2. Sutta Pitaka Compilation of the Buddha's discourses
3. Abhidhamma Pitaka Intricate analysis of mind and reality

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

8. Bathouism is the indigenous religion of the Bodo community, primarily concentrated in:

- (a) Assam and parts of North Bengal
- (b) Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim
- (c) Manipur and Meghalaya
- (d) Odisha and Chhattisgarh

9. The Kanheri Caves, located inside the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, are significant because:

- (a) They were the site of the first Jain Council under King Chandragupta Maurya.
- (b) They contain early examples of Buddhist rock-cut architecture dating back to the 1st century BCE.
- (c) They served as the royal residence of the Satavahana kings.
- (d) They are natural caves known for prehistoric rock art and petroglyphs.

10. Which of the following statements regarding the Classical Languages of India is/are correct?

1. A total of 11 Indian languages have been accorded the status of Classical Language.
2. All Classical Languages are listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
3. Hindi was among the first six languages to receive the Classical Language status.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

11. With reference to Vande Mataram, consider the following statements:

1. It was composed in Sanskrit by Bankimchandra Chatterjee.
2. It was included in his novel Anand Math published in 1882.
3. It was first sung at the 1896 Calcutta Session of the Indian National Congress by Rabindranath Tagore.
4. It was adopted as the National Song of India on 26 January 1950.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

12. With reference to the Vallabh Bhai Patel, consider the following statements:

1. Mahatma Gandhi conferred the title of 'Sardar' on him after the success of the Kheda Satyagraha.
2. He was awarded the Bharat Ratna in 2001.

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

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Lord Cornwallis is considered as 'Father of Civil Services in India'.

- **Lord Wellesley** founded the College of **Fort William in Calcutta in 1800** to educate young recruits for the Civil Services.
  - But the directors of the Company, in 1806, replaced it with their own **East Indian College at Haileybury in England**.

**Statement 2 and 3 are correct:** The first competitive exams for the Indian Civil Services (ICS) were held in London in **1855**.

- **Satyendranath Tagore** was the first Indian to clear ICS in **1864**.
- **From 1922 onwards** the Indian Civil Service Examination began to be held in India.

## 2. (a)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The Bathukamma was built by around **300 workers with metal, bamboo, and flowers, and the structure took 72 hours to complete.**

- The Bathukamma festival is celebrated predominantly in **Telangana.**

**Statement 2 is correct:** The term “Bathukamma” translates to “**Mother Goddess Come Alive**”, reflecting the divine feminine energy and protection.

- Folklore connects the festival to legends of **Goddess Gauri as well as King Dhramangada and Queen Satyavati of the Chola dynasty.**
- Bathukamma’s timing coincides with **Navratri, celebrating life, devotion and the triumph of good over evil.**

## 3. (b)

**Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis**

- Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, initially a science student in England, became a pioneer in applying statistics for India’s economic development.
- He founded the **Indian Statistical Institute in 1932** and the **National Sample Survey in 1950**, which played a key role in shaping India’s data-driven planning, especially during the **Second Five Year Plan focused on industrial growth.**
- His surveys provided critical insights into poverty, employment, and consumption across India.

## 4. (a)

The Prime Minister has expressed deep sorrow at the passing away of **Padma Vibhushan Pandit Chhannulal Mishra ji.**

**Pandit Chhannulal Mishra (1936–2025)**

- **Born:** He was born on August 3, 1936, in Azamgarh U.P.
- He was a renowned **Indian Hindustani classical music singer.**
- He learned not only **khayal but also absorbed nuances of the Kirana gharana**, making him versatile in **multiple classical styles.**
  - Known for his mastery in **thumri, dadra, and bhajans as well.**
- **Major Honours:** Padma Bhushan (2010), Padma Vibhushan (2020), Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship
- **Legacy:** He is known for rigorous discipline in riyaaz and deep devotion to accuracy.

## 5. (c)

**In News:** The Indian government is set to open up the conservation of protected monuments to private entities for the first time, marking the beginning of a public-private partnership model in heritage management.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- **The ‘Adi Sanskriti’ Platform** of the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs aims to preserve and promote tribal art forms, folklore, and heritage.
- It includes immersive courses, a socio-cultural repository, and a digital marketplace for tribal artisans.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- **National Culture Fund (NCF)** was established in 1996 to facilitate public-private partnerships in heritage conservation.
- It enables corporates and individuals to contribute to specific projects under ASI’s supervision.

**Statement 3 is not correct**

- **'Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan' Scheme** was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and ASI.
- It allows **private and public entities (called 'Monument Mitras')** to adopt heritage sites and improve amenities such as signage, lighting, sanitation, and accessibility.

**6. (d)**

**In News:** The 150 years of the national song, 'Vande Mataram', across India was observed.

**Statement 1 is correct:** Vande Mataram was composed in Sanskrit by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and first appeared in his novel Anandamath (1882).

**Statement 2 is correct:** It was first sung by Rabindranath Tagore at the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress.

**Statement 3 is correct:** On 24th January 1950, the Constituent Assembly declared Vande Mataram to have equal status with the National Anthem, Jana Gana Mana.

**7. (c)**

**In News:** The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), in collaboration with Gautam Buddha University (GBU), Antarrashtriya Baudh Shodh Sansthan (Lucknow), and the Ministry of Culture celebrated International Abhidhamma Day.

**All the pairs are correctly matched :** The entire body of Buddhist canonical literature is written in Pali, with the Tipitaka or "Threefold Basket" being its most notable collection. This includes the Vinaya Pitaka, which outlines ethical monastic rules, the Sutta Pitaka, a rich compilation of the Buddha's discourses, and the Abhidhamma Pitaka, which delves into ethics, psychology, and the intricate analysis of mind and reality.

**8. (a)**

**In News:** The Bathou religion of the Bodo community in Assam has been officially granted a separate code in the upcoming national census.

**About**

- Bathouism is the indigenous religion of the Bodo community, primarily concentrated in Assam and parts of North Bengal, where it serves as a core marker of cultural identity and community life.
- The term "Bathou" denotes "Five Principles," a cosmology wherein the universe is constituted by five elements—Ha (Earth), Dwi (Water), Or (Fire), Bar (Air), and Okhrang (Sky)—a framework often explained as five deep principles or thoughts in Bodo tradition.
- Rooted in nature-veneration, Bathouism emphasizes reverence for the environment and maintaining equilibrium in human–nature relations through household and community rituals centered on sacred plants (Sijou plant) and elemental symbolism.

**9. (b)**

**Option (b) is correct:** The Kanheri Caves, located within Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Mumbai, are a significant group of Buddhist rock-cut monuments and caves. They date from roughly the 1st century BCE to the 10th century CE and showcase early and later Buddhist architectural styles. The complex served as a monastic center where Buddhist monks lived, studied, and meditated. The caves also feature intricate sculptures, relief carvings, stupas, and meditation halls, making them an important site for Buddhist art and cultural heritage. They are not related to Jain councils, Satavahana royal residences, or prehistoric rock art.

**10. (a)**

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** As of 2025, a total of **11 Indian languages hold the status of Classical Language.**

- The Government of India conferred the 'Classical Language' status to **Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali languages in 2024.**
- **Six Indian languages** —Tamil, Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, and Odia—were earlier accorded the status of classical languages between 2004 to 2024.
- All the Classical Languages are **listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.**

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Hindi has not been declared a Classical Language.

11. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Vande Mataram was composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and is primarily written in a mix of Sanskrit and Bengali.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Vande Mataram was part of the novel Anandamath, which dramatizes the Sannyasi Rebellion. The poem gained popularity as a nationalist hymn through this publication.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The first public rendition of Vande Mataram at a Congress session was indeed by Rabindranath Tagore at the 1896 Calcutta Session, helping elevate its status as a symbol of the freedom movement.

**Statement 4 is not correct:** Vande Mataram was adopted as the National Song on 24 January 1950 by the Constituent Assembly, not on 26 January 1950 (which is the date India became a republic).

12. (d)

**In News:** On October 31st, the Prime Minister of India led the nation in commemorating **Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day)** at Ekta Nagar, Kevadia, Gujarat, marking the **150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.**

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The success of the **Bardoli Satyagraha (1928)** earned Vallabhbhai Patel the title '**Sardar**', conferred upon him **by Mahatma Gandhi**, not the Kheda Satyagraha of 1918.

- The Bardoli victory elevated him as a key leader in India's **Civil Disobedience Movement** and a symbol of organized resistance.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Sardar Patel was awarded **Bharat Ratna**, India's highest civilian honor, **in 1991, 41 years after his death in 1950.**

■ ■ ■ ■



# ECONOMY

1. What is the primary objective of Basel III capital regulations?
  - (a) To eliminate the need for central banks
  - (b) To make banking systems more resilient to financial stress
  - (c) To regulate insurance companies
  - (d) To reduce tax evasion in international trade
2. With reference to Minimum Support Price, which of the following statements is/are correct?
  1. MSPs have no statutory backing and it can not be demanded as a matter of right.
  2. The Centre announces the MSP for 20 mandated crops.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. Which among the following best describes the Stablecoins?
  - (a) A type of cryptocurrency whose value is pegged to a stable asset such as the US dollar or gold.
  - (b) A cryptocurrency used exclusively for cross-border remittances.
  - (c) A blockchain-based token used only by central banks for interbank settlements.
  - (d) A government-issued digital identity token for online transactions.
4. With reference to the dairy sector in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?
  1. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) was established in 1965 to replicate the Amul cooperative model.
  2. NDDB was declared an Institution of National Importance through an Act of Parliament in 1987.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. With reference to Securities Transaction Tax (STT), consider the following statements:
  1. It is an indirect tax levied on securities transactions through a listed stock exchange imposed under the Finance Act, 2004.
  2. It is levied on every sale of securities, whether it is shares, derivatives, or equity-oriented mutual funds.

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

6. With reference to the 'Shivalik, India's third Very Large Gas Carrier (VLGC)', consider the following statements:

- 1. It is jointly built by India and Russia.
- 2. It joins the two existing Sahyadri and Anandamayi VLGCs.

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

7. With reference to the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan, consider the following statements:

- 1. It was launched in 2021 for providing multimodal connectivity infrastructure to various economic zones and improving logistics efficiency across India.
- 2. PM GatiShakti is driven by connecting Railways and Roads only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

8. With reference to the GIFT City (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is India's first special economic zone (SEZ) designed to host institutions dealing in global finance, insurance, fintech, and capital markets.
- 2. The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), established in 2020, regulates all financial activities within GIFT City.
- 3. The regulatory framework inside GIFT City is identical to that of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

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

9. With reference to the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), consider the following statements:

- 1. NPCI is an umbrella organization for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India.
- 2. It was established in 2008 under the guidance of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA).

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

**10.** With reference to the Unified Markets Interface (UMI), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is an initiative of the Reserve Bank of India to enable asset tokenization and settlement using wholesale Central Bank Digital Currency.
- 2. It aims to integrate India's capital markets with blockchain-based financial infrastructure.
- 3. It is implemented under the Ministry of Finance.

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

**11.** With reference to Electronic Bank Guarantee (e-BG), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a digital form of bank guarantee issued by banks on behalf of their customers.
- 2. The e-BG system has been developed and managed by the National e-Governance Services Limited (NeSL).
- 3. It ensures paperless processing, faster turnaround, and tamper-proof documentation.

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

**12.** With reference to the Minimum Support Price (MSP) in India, consider the following statements:

- 1. MSP is declared by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).
- 2. MSP aims to ensure remunerative prices to farmers and acts as a safety net against price fluctuations.
- 3. Procurement at MSP is mandatory for all crops notified under the system.

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

**13.** Consider the following statements regarding the Index of Industrial Production (IIP):

- 1. It is compiled as a weighted arithmetic mean of production relatives using Laspeyre's formula.
- 2. It is released by the Reserve Bank of India on a monthly basis.

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

**14.** With reference to India's Bioeconomy, consider the following statements:

1. The bioeconomy is the use of renewable biological resources to produce food, energy and industrial goods.
2. India has a target of achieving a \$300 billion bioeconomy by 2045.

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

**15.** With reference to the UPOV 1991 Convention (Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants), consider the following statements:

1. The Convention was originally signed in 1961 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. It grants plant breeders or seed corporations exclusive monopoly rights over new crop varieties for a period of 20–25 years.
3. It allows farmers unrestricted rights to save, share, and reuse protected seeds.

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

**16.** Which of the following is not included in Gross FDI inflows?

- (a) Setting up new factories by foreign companies in India.
- (b) Acquisition of Indian companies by foreign firms.
- (c) Outward investment by Indian companies in foreign countries.
- (d) Expansion of operations of foreign firms within India.

**17.** With reference to Tapioca (Cassava) cultivation in India, consider the following statements:

1. It is a tropical tuber crop mainly cultivated in the southern states of India, especially Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
2. Tapioca requires a warm humid climate with annual rainfall exceeding 100 cm and grows best in well-drained red lateritic loam soils.
3. It is primarily used as a raw material for starch extraction in textile, paper and sago industries.
4. India is the world's largest producer and exporter of tapioca.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**18.** Consider the following statements about cassava (tapioca):

1. Cassava, scientifically known as *Manihot esculenta*, is a woody perennial shrub.
2. In India, Tamil Nadu and Kerala together contribute over 90% of cassava production.
3. Cassava originated in Southeast Asia and was introduced to Latin America by Portuguese traders.
4. Nigeria is the largest producer of cassava globally, while Thailand is the largest exporter of cassava starch.
5. Tapioca is a gluten-free starch extracted from cassava roots.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1, 2, 4, and 5 only
- (b) 1, 2, 3, and 5 only
- (c) 2, 3, 4, and 5 only
- (d) All of the above

**19.** With reference to Makhana (*Euryale ferox*), consider the following statements:

1. Makhana is the dried edible seed of the prickly water lily, a plant species that grows in freshwater ponds.
2. It is native to South and East Asia and is known for its large, round, and prickly leaves.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**20.** With reference to Coffee production in India, consider the following statements:

1. India is the second-largest coffee producer in the world, only after China.
2. Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu are the major coffee-producing states in India.
3. Nearly two-third of India's coffee is exported.

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

**21.** Which of the following best defines a cess?

- (a) A direct tax levied on individuals and businesses for general expenditure
- (b) A tax collected only by state governments
- (c) A special-purpose levy imposed over and above existing taxes for a specific objective
- (d) A voluntary contribution to the government for development projects

**22.** With reference to the National Seeds Corporation (NSC), consider the following statements:

1. It is a Schedule 'B' Central Public Sector Enterprise under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
2. It was established in 1963 to ensure the production and supply of certified quality seeds in India.
3. The headquarters of the Corporation is located in Hyderabad.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

23. With reference to the Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER), consider the following statements:

1. It compares a nation's currency value against the weighted average of a basket of other major currencies.
2. The decrease and increase in the index denote depreciation and appreciation of the Rupee respectively.
3. It takes into account inflation as well.

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

24. With reference to post-harvest losses in India, consider the following statements:

1. India ranks second in global agricultural production but eighth in agricultural exports.
2. The biggest losses occur in perishable commodities such as livestock produce, fruits, and vegetables.

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

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

#### Context

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced major reforms to ensure faster policy transmission, ease gold and silver-backed lending, and enhance banking sector flexibility with effect from October 1, 2025.
- **Basel III capital** regulations were introduced primarily in response to the 2008 global financial crisis to strengthen individual banks and the entire banking system, making them more **resilient to economic and financial shocks** by improving capital quality and quantity, implementing stricter leverage and liquidity requirements, and addressing systemic risk.
- The goal was to prevent future financial crises and the negative impact they have on the real economy.

2. (a)

#### Context

- The Union Cabinet, approved a **6.59%** increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for wheat to **Rs 2,585** per quintal for 2026-27 marketing year.

**What is MSP?**

- **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** is a form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices. MSP protects the producer-farmers against distress sale during bumper production years.
- **MSPs have no statutory backing** — a farmer cannot demand MSP as a matter of right.

**Crops Covered**

- The Centre announces the **MSP for 22** mandated crops. These include:
  - **14 kharif crops** (paddy, jowar, bajra, maize, ragi, tur/arhar, moong, urad, groundnut, soyabean, sunflower, sesamum, niger seed, cotton),
  - **6 rabi crops** (wheat, barley, gram, masur/lentil, rapeseed and mustard, and safflower) and
  - **2 commercial crops** (jute and copra).
- In addition, **MSP for Toria and de-husked coconut** is also fixed on the basis of MSPs of rapeseed & mustard and copra respectively.

**3. (a)**

Stablecoins are **cryptocurrencies designed to maintain price stability** by pegging their value to underlying assets such as:

- Fiat currencies (e.g., USD, Euro),
- Commodities (e.g., gold),
- Other cryptocurrencies, or
- Algorithm-based systems.
- Stablecoins are **different from or Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs)**, which are digital currencies officially issued and controlled by a government's central bank.
  - Meanwhile, stablecoins can be privately issued and can also be pegged to foreign currencies.

**4. (c)****Context**

- India's dairy sector has expanded by **70%** in the past 11 years, with milk production rising from 146 million tonnes in 2014-15 to **239 million tonnes in 2023-24**.

**Key Enablers of India's Dairy Success**

- **Institutional Support:**
  - **The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)** was established in **1965** at Anand to replicate the Amul cooperative model across India.
  - **The launch of Operation Flood in 1970** transformed India into the world's largest milk producer by creating a nationwide cooperative structure for procurement and distribution.
  - In recognition of its contribution, NDDB was declared an **Institution of National Importance in 1987** by an Act of Parliament.
- **Growth in Bovine Productivity:**
  - India possesses **303.76 million** bovines, which form the backbone of dairy production.
  - Between **2014 and 2022**, bovine productivity in India increased by **27.39%**, the highest globally, surpassing countries such as **China, Germany, and Denmark**.
- **Cooperative Network:** India's dairy cooperatives are supported by a strong network consisting of 22 milk federations, 241 district cooperative unions, 28 marketing dairies, and 25 Milk Producer Organisations (MPOs).
- **Contribution of Women:** Nearly **70%** of the workforce in dairy farming consists of women, and about **35%** are active in dairy cooperatives.



5. (b)

The Supreme Court of India decided to examine a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the **Securities Transaction Tax (STT)**

**Statement 1 is not correct: Securities Transaction Tax (STT)** is a **direct tax** levied on securities transactions through a listed stock exchange, as imposed under the **Finance Act, 2004**.

**Statement 2 is correct: Securities Transaction Tax (STT)** aims to combat tax evasion in the stock market.

- It is charged on the transaction value of securities traded on the Indian stock exchange.
  - It includes - derivatives, shares, and equity-oriented mutual funds.
- It is applied on the buying and selling of securities irrespective of the profit or loss made in the transaction.

6. (b)

**Context**

- The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) received **India's third Very Large Gas Carrier (VLGC)**, Shivalik, under the Indian flag, marking a significant milestone in the country's maritime resurgence and energy security.

**About**

- *Shivalik*, built in **South Korea** and named after the **Himalayan range**, is an **82,000 cubic metre (CBM)** state-of-the-art **LPG carrier** equipped with advanced safety, temperature control, and operational systems.
- The vessel joins the **Shipping Corporation of India Limited's (SCI)** two existing VLGCs — Sahyadri and Anandamayi.
- The arrival of *Shivalik* symbolizes India's march toward **maritime self-reliance** and aligns with the government's vision to make India one of the **top five maritime nations by 2047** under the **Maritime India Vision** framework.

7. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (PMGS-NMP) was launched in **2021** for providing multimodal connectivity infrastructure to various economic zones and improving logistics efficiency across India.

**Statement 2 is not correct: PM GatiShakti is driven by seven engines:** Railways, Roads, Ports, Waterways, Airports, Mass Transport and Logistics Infrastructure.

- 57 Central Ministries/Departments including 8 Infrastructure, 22 Social and 27 Economic & other Ministries/Departments have been onboarded on PMGS NMP.

8. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct: GIFT City is India's first special economic zone**, which is designed to host institutions dealing in global finance, insurance, fintech, and capital markets.

- The project was first conceived in **2007** and was **established in 2015**.
- The idea was to create a city-within-a-city where companies could transact in **foreign currencies, follow global regulations, and attract international players**.
- **The IFSCA**, which was set up in **2020**, regulates all activities inside the GIFT City.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** IFSCA provides a unified regulatory framework for GIFT City, which is not identical to RBI or SEBI.

9. (c)

**Both the statements are correct: The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**



- NPCI is an **umbrella organization** for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India.
- It was established in **2008** under the guidance of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA).
- It is a **not-for-profit company** that aims to create **robust payment and settlement infrastructure in India**.
- **Key Functions:**
  - Develops and manages digital payment systems across the country.
  - Facilitates interbank transactions and promotes cashless payments.
  - Ensures standardization, efficiency, and security in payment systems.

10. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Unified Markets Interface (UMI) is a next-generation infrastructure conceptualized and developed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). It is specifically designed to enable asset tokenization and settlement in financial markets using wholesale Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). This initiative is part of RBI's efforts to modernize India's financial market infrastructure, making settlements faster, more efficient, and secure through blockchain technology and digital tokens

**Statement 2 is correct:** The UMI seeks to integrate India's capital markets with blockchain-based digital infrastructure, thereby improving transparency, interoperability, and transaction speed.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The UMI is not implemented under the Ministry of Finance; it is directly being developed and managed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

11. (d)

**All three statements are correct: The National e-Governance Division (NeGD), and the National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL) have signed a MoU to integrate digital document execution for electronic bank guarantees (e-BGs).**

**Electronic Bank Guarantee (e-BG)**

- **Electronic Bank Guarantee (e-BG)** is the Guarantee issued by the banks on behalf of their customers in digital form.
  - The issuance of electronic bank guarantees completely eliminates papers in the process.
- **Benefits of NeSL's e-BG include:**
  - Fully secure and tamper proof document.
  - Faster turnaround of a few minutes compared to a few days in respect of physical BGs.
  - Issuance and all life cycle events like renewal, invocation etc happen through digital mode.
  - Paperless and hence environment friendly.
  - Easily verifiable through a central repository.

12. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Minimum Support Price (MSP) is recommended by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), and the final MSP is approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

**Statement 2 is correct:** MSP aims to ensure remunerative prices for farmers and acts as a safety net against price fluctuations, supporting farmers from distress due to market volatility.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** However, procurement at MSP is not mandatory for all crops notified under the system. The government procures mainly for certain crops like paddy and wheat, while for many others, procurement happens only in limited states or is not guaranteed.

## 13. (a)

**Context**

- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) is set to revise the base year of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) to 2022–23, aligning it with the new base year proposed for GDP estimation.

**Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**

- The IIP is an index which shows the **growth rates in different industry groups of the economy** in a stipulated period of time.
- The IIP is compiled as a simple weighted arithmetic mean of production relatives by using **Laspeyre's formula**.
- It is a composite indicator that **measures the growth rate of industry groups** classified under:
  - **Broad sectors:** Mining, Manufacturing, and Electricity.
  - **Use-based sectors:** Basic Goods, Capital Goods, and Intermediate Goods.
- **Released by:** The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- **Base year:** 2011-2012
- **Periodicity:** Monthly basis

## 14. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The bioeconomy is the use of **renewable biological resources** to produce food, energy and industrial goods, which supports sustainability and economic growth.

- Innovations like **gene editing and bioprinting** are driving progress, while integration across sectors strengthens long-term impact.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** India is among the **Top 12 destinations** for biotechnology worldwide and **3rd largest destination** for biotechnology in Asia Pacific.

- **Future Goals:** Target of achieving a **\$300 billion bioeconomy by 2030**.
  - India also seeks to lead globally in bio-pharma, including vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics.

## 15. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** It was first signed in **1961**.

- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **The 1991 Act of the Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV)** grants seed corporations monopoly rights over new crop varieties for **20–25 years**. **Statement 2 is correct.**
- **Statement 3 is not correct:** **Farmers are prohibited** from saving, sharing, or reusing these seeds, undermining traditional agricultural practices, indigenous knowledge, and food sovereignty.

## 16. (c)

**Net FDI** is gross FDI, which is the total money coming in, minus the money being repatriated out by foreign companies doing business in India and the outward FDI by Indian companies.

- **Net FDI** = Gross FDI Inflows – (Repatriation by foreign firms + Outward FDI by Indian firms).
- **Key Components:**
  - **Gross FDI Inflows:** Total new investments made by foreign entities into the country. It includes setting up factories, acquiring local companies, or expanding operations.
  - **Repatriation & Disinvestment:** Profits or capital that foreign companies send back to their home countries. Includes sale of assets or shares in domestic firms.
  - **Outward FDI:** Investments made by domestic companies in foreign countries (e.g., acquisitions, setting up subsidiaries).

17. (b)

**Statements 1 & 2 are Correct:** Tapioca (cassava) thrives in a tropical, warm humid climate with >100 cm rainfall and well-drained lateritic loam soil. Major producing states — Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh, with Kerala and Tamil Nadu contributing nearly 80% of total acreage.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Tapioca serves as a raw material for starch extraction, used in textile, paper, and sago industries.

**Statement 4 is not correct:** India is not the largest producer or exporter. The global leaders are Nigeria, Thailand, and Indonesia.

18. (a)

Cassava, popularly known as tapioca, is a woody perennial shrub.

- **Scientific Name:** *Manihot esculenta*.
- **Production:** It is grown over approximately 1.73 lakh hectares in India, with Tamil Nadu and Kerala contributing over 90% of production.
- **Origin:** It is believed to have originated in Latin America, particularly in Brazil and the Amazon basin. **Hence, Statement 3 is not correct.**
- **Largest Producer and Exporter:** **Nigeria** stands as the world's largest cassava producer and **Thailand** is the largest exporter of cassava starch globally.
- Tapioca is a **starch extracted from cassava root** that serves as a versatile ingredient in cooking, baking, and beverage production worldwide.

19. (c)

**In News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the newly launched **National Makhana Board** as a transformative “revolution” for the sector.

#### Makhana

- It is the dried edible seed of the prickly water lily or **gorgon plant (*Euryale ferox*)**, a species which grows in freshwater ponds across South and East Asia.
- It is known for its violet and white flowers, and massive, round and prickly leaves — often stretching more than a meter across.
- Makhana, traditionally consumed in ritual settings, has recently gained recognition as a nutrient-rich, low-fat “superfood” and healthy snack.

20. (b)

**In News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted the growing **international popularity of Indian coffee**.

#### About Coffee

- India is the **seventh-largest coffee producer globally**, contributing around 3% of global output.
- **Nearly 70% of India's coffee is exported**, earning approximately USD 1.80 billion during 2024–25, making it an important foreign exchange earner in India's agri-export basket.
- **Major export destinations** are Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Russia.
- **Major Coffee-Producing States in India** are Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu & Others (Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, NE States).
- Coorg, Chikmagalur, Wayanad, Araku Valley are known for **GI-tagged varieties**.
- **Types of Coffee** are Arabica (*Coffea arabica*) & Robusta (*Coffea canephora*).

21. (c)

**Context**

- Uttarakhand has announced the introduction of a '**Green Cess**' on vehicles entering the state from other parts of India.

**What is Cess?**

- A cess is a **special-purpose levy** imposed over and above the existing taxes (such as income tax, GST, or excise duty).
- It is collected to raise funds for a particular objective or sector, such as **education, health, environment, or infrastructure**.
- Unlike general taxes, which go into the **Consolidated Fund of India or State**, the proceeds from a cess are usually earmarked for a designated fund to be used only for that purpose.

22. (b)

**About National Seeds Corporation**

- It is a Schedule 'B' Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India.
- Established in 1963, it plays a key role in the production, processing, and distribution of certified quality seeds across India and maintenance of genetic purity and quality of foundation and breeder seeds.
- It is headquartered in New Delhi

23. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Reserve Bank of India tabulates the rupee's Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) in relation to the currencies of 36 trading partner countries. Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) is a weighted index that is, countries with which India trades more are given greater weight in the index.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The decrease in this index denotes depreciation in rupee's value; an increase reflects appreciation.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Nominal effective exchange rate (NEER) doesn't take into account inflation but Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER) is the weighted average of nominal exchange rates, adjusted for inflation.

24. (c)

**Context**

- **Post-harvest losses** remain a significant challenge in India, particularly for **perishable commodities** and there is a need for integrated cold chain and value addition infrastructure.

**Scale of Post Harvest Loss**

- India ranks **second** in global agriculture production, but its share in global **agricultural exports is only 2.4%**, placing it eighth in the world.
- **India's post-harvest losses** amount to approximately ₹1,52,790 crore annually, according to a Ministry of Food Processing Industries 2022 study.
- The biggest loss is from perishable commodities, which include **livestock produce such as eggs, fish and meat (22%), fruits (19%) and vegetables (18%)**.



# INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. With reference to the 'Lok Adalat in India', consider the following statements:
  1. It has jurisdiction over non-compoundable offenses like murder, rape, or robbery.
  2. It follows strict procedural laws and evidence rules like regular courts.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
2. With reference to the 'Euthanasia in India', consider the following statements:
  1. It refers to the intentional ending of a person's life to relieve suffering.
  2. It is similar to prayopavesa in Hinduism and Sallekhana in Jainism.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
3. With reference to the 'Draft Shram Shakti Niti 2025', consider the following statements:
  1. It aims to establish universal and portable social security for all formal and informal workers in India.
  2. It replaces all existing labour laws with a single code.
  3. It focuses on two tier implementation structures at national and state levels.Which of the statements given above are not correct?
  - (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
4. Article 233 of the Indian Constitution is related to which of the following?
  - (a) Appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners.
  - (b) Appointment of District Judges in the states.
  - (c) Appointment of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
  - (d) Appointment of the Attorney General of India.
5. With reference to the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, consider the following statements:
  1. The Act bans altruistic surrogacy and regulates commercial surrogacy in India.
  2. The child born through surrogacy is legally recognised as the biological child of the surrogate mother.

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

6. With reference to the Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2025, consider the following statements:

- 1. The Bill mandates establishment of Mobility Resource Centres to train and counsel emigrants before departure.
- 2. It prescribes a minimum penalty of ₹5 lakh for each violation by an Overseas Placement Agency contravening Competent Authority orders.

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

7. With reference to the 'Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005', consider the following statements:

- 1. It was enacted in 2005 by replacing the earlier Freedom of Information Act, 2002.
- 2. Central Information Commission (CIC) and State Information Commissions (SICs) are quasi-judicial bodies established under the 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

8. The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Which of the following is/are among its objectives?

- 1. To ensure financial security and social welfare of employees post-retirement.
- 2. To promote voluntary savings among employees.
- 3. To regulate and supervise provident fund, pension, and insurance schemes.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

9. With reference to the 'Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)', consider the following statements:

- 1. It operates under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.
- 2. It is designated as India's National Central Bureau for INTERPOL.
- 3. BHARATPOL is an Indian crime monitoring portal under the CBI.

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

**10.** With reference to the political systems of India and Japan, consider the following statements:

- 1. Both countries follow a parliamentary form of government.
- 2. The head of state in both countries exercises real executive powers.
- 3. Japan has a federal structure similar to India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**11.** Consider the following statements about the Lokpal:

- 1. The Lokpal is an independent anti-corruption authority established under the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013.
- 2. It can investigate corruption complaints against central government officials from Groups A and B only.
- 3. The Lokpal operates at the national level, while Lokayuktas handle corruption matters at the state level.

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

**12.** Article 371 of the Indian Constitution is related to which of the following?

- (a) Distribution of legislative powers between the Union and the States.
- (b) Special provisions for certain States of India.
- (c) Administration of Union Territories.
- (d) Financial relations between the Centre and the States.

**13.** With reference to the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is provided under Article 244 of the Constitution.
- 2. It deals with the administration of tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.
- 3. The Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) formed under it have no power to levy or collect taxes within their areas.

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



- 14.** With reference to the '74th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992', consider the following statements:
1. It mandates the formation of Nagar Panchayat, Municipal Council and Municipal Corporation.
  2. It established State Election Commissions (SECs) to conduct panchayat elections independently.
  3. It has the provision of formation of Ward Committees for municipalities with a population of 3 lakhs or more.

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 and 2 and 3

- 15.** With reference to the 'execution petitions in India', consider the following statements:
1. These are automatic after a judgment.
  2. These are part of the justice delivery system.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

- 16.** With reference to the 'constitutional morality', consider the following statements:
1. It allows the government to override constitutional provisions if deemed necessary.
  2. Judiciary in India have increasingly invoked constitutional morality to interpret laws, protect rights, and guide governance.

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

- 17.** With reference to the 8th Central Pay Commission (CPC), consider the following statements:
1. It has been constituted to examine and recommend changes in the salaries and other benefits of Central Government employees.
  2. The Commission will be a permanent statutory body to review pay structures periodically.
  3. Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai has been appointed as its Chairperson.

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



18. The subject of urban planning is included in which of the following Schedules of the Constitution of India?
- 7th Schedule
  - 11th Schedule
  - 10th Schedule
  - 12th Schedule
19. With reference to the 'Constitutional Amendment Bills in India', consider the following statements:
- These bills require approval from at least half of states in India.
  - Constitutional amendments can be passed through an executive order.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
20. Consider the following provisions related to the appointment of the Chief Justice of India (CJI):
- The CJI holds office until the age of 65 years.
  - The consultation process for appointing the CJI is defined in the Constitution.
  - The President cannot ignore the recommendation of the outgoing CJI while making the appointment.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 1 and 2 only
  - 1 only
  - 1, 2 and 3

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

**In News:** India's judicial system is grappling with an unprecedented backlog underscoring the urgent need for alternative mechanisms to ensure timely delivery of justice.

**Statement 1 is not correct:**

- Lok Adalats can only take up **civil cases and compoundable criminal cases**. They **do not have jurisdiction** over **non-compoundable offenses** like murder, rape, or robbery.
- Awards passed by Lok Adalats are **final and binding**, with the status of a civil court decree.
- There is **no provision for appeal**, except through litigation initiated afresh if parties are dissatisfied and no settlement was reached.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- Lok Adalats operate in an **informal and conciliatory manner**. They **do not follow rigid procedural laws** or the Evidence Act, focusing instead on mutual agreement and compromise.

2. (c)

**In News:** Despite the legal validity of passive euthanasia, its implementation remains mired in **procedural complexity, institutional gaps, and ethical ambiguity**.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- Euthanasia — often termed ‘mercy killing’ — refers to the intentional ending of a person’s life to relieve suffering, usually from terminal illness or irreversible conditions.
- **Passive Euthanasia** involves withholding or withdrawing life-sustaining treatment (e.g., ventilators, feeding tubes) when recovery is medically impossible. It is legal under specific safeguards.
- **Active Euthanasia** involves administering a lethal substance to end life. It remains **illegal under Section 103, 105 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)**, and physician-assisted suicide is punishable under **Section 108 of the BNS**.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- **Hinduism** emphasizes *ahimsa* (non-violence) but also accepts prayopavesa—a **form of fasting unto death** under spiritual discipline.
- **Jainism** permits *Sallekhana*, a voluntary death through fasting, under specific religious conditions.

**3. (b)**

**In News:** Recently, the Union Ministry of Labour & Employment has unveiled the **Draft National Labour and Employment Policy**, titled as **Shram Shakti Niti 2025**, aimed at reshaping India’s labour landscape.

**Statement 1 is correct:**

- The policy explicitly aims to include all categories of workers—formal, informal, migrant, gig, and platform workers—under a unified labour framework.
- It envisions the creation of a **Universal Social Security Account (USSA)**, achieved by integrating key welfare and insurance systems.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- Shram Shakti Niti 2025 is a policy framework, **not a legislation**. It **complements existing labour codes** and seeks to integrate social security schemes, not replace them.

**Statement 3 is not correct**

- **Implementation Structure (Three-tier):**
  - **National Level:** The National Labour and Employment Policy Implementation Council (NLPI), chaired by the Labour Minister.
  - **State Level:** State Labour Missions to ensure contextual implementation.
  - **District Level:** District Labour Resource Centres (DLRCs) as single-window hubs for registration, skilling, job matching, and grievance redressal.

**4. (b)**

**Article 233** vests the appointment of district judges in the Governor of the state.

- The appointment is made in consultation with the High Court of the respective state.
- It ensures that judicial officers and members of the bar with adequate experience can be appointed to the subordinate judiciary, maintaining independence and competence.

**5. (d)**

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 permits only altruistic surrogacy — where no monetary compensation is involved except for medical expenses and insurance — and bans commercial surrogacy, which involves payment beyond permitted **expenses**. **The objective is to prevent exploitation and ensure ethical practices.**

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The child born through surrogacy is legally recognised as the biological and legitimate child of the intending couple, with all rights of a natural-born child. The surrogate mother has no parental rights over the child.

6. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2025 mandates the establishment of **Mobility Resource Centres** managed by Regional Overseas Mobility Officers to provide information, training, and counseling to emigrants before departure.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The Bill prescribes penalties for Overseas Placement Agencies violating orders of the Competent Authority, with a minimum penalty of ₹5 lakh for each violation and a maximum of ₹20 lakh.

7. (c)

**In News:** The **Right to Information (RTI) Act**, which once empowered the ordinary Indian to challenge the extraordinary opacity of governance, facing the challenges of erosion of its power, governance and others.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- **The Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005** was enacted by the Parliament of India on June 15, 2005, and enforced from October 12, 2005, by **replacing** the earlier **Freedom of Information Act, 2002**.
- Its primary objective is **to empower citizens, promote transparency and accountability** in government functioning, and curb corruption.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- **Central Information Commission (CIC)** and **State Information Commissions (SICs)** are **quasi-judicial bodies** established under the Act **to hear appeals and complaints**.
- These commissions ensure compliance and can impose penalties on officials for non-disclosure or delays.

8. (d)

**Context**

- **The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** and the **Post Office Savings Bank (POSB)** — may soon come under the **Reserve Bank of India's (RBI)** supervision.

About: EPFO

- EPFO is a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**.
- It administers the **Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952**.
- **Objectives:** To ensure financial security and social welfare of employees post-retirement.
  - To promote voluntary savings among employees.
  - To regulate and supervise provident fund, pension, and insurance schemes.

9. (b)

**In News:** The Supreme Court's recent decision to transfer the investigation of the Karur stampede to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has sparked debate over judicial standards for such takeovers.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- The CBI was created through **an executive resolution** and derives its powers from the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**.
- The CBI functions under the **Department of Personnel and Training**, which is part of the **Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions**.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- CBI is designated as **India's National Central Bureau for INTERPOL**, facilitating cross-border investigations and extradition of fugitives.

**Statement 3 is correct**

- In 2025, the CBI launched **BHARATPOL**, a digital portal to enhance international investigations. It **connects Indian agencies with INTERPOL's network** across 195 countries, enabling real-time access to databases on:
  - Drug trafficking
  - Human trafficking
  - Arms smuggling
  - Financial crimes.

**10. (a)**

**Statement 1 is correct:** India and Japan both have parliamentary systems where the Prime Minister is the head of government and the legislature plays a central role in executive accountability.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** In India, the President is the ceremonial head of state, while real executive powers are exercised by the Prime Minister. In Japan, the Emperor is a purely symbolic head of state with no executive powers; the Prime Minister holds real executive authority.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** India is a federal country with powers divided between the central and state governments. Japan is a unitary state, with most powers concentrated at the national level and only limited autonomy for local governments.

**11. (c)****Context**

- The Lokpal, India's top **anti-corruption body**, is facing outrage after floating a tender to buy **7 luxury BMWs** worth ₹5 crore for its current 7 members, including the Chairperson.

**About**

- Lokpal is an independent **anti-corruption authority** set up under the **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013**, after the Anna Hazare-led Jan Lokpal movement.
- The Lokpal can investigate corruption complaints against the **Prime Minister, Union Ministers, MPs**, and central government officials from **Groups A, B, C, and D**, as well as institutions funded by the government or receiving foreign contributions above ₹10 lakh.
- While the Lokpal functions at the national level, similar bodies known as **Lokayuktas** handle corruption matters at the **state level**.

**12. (b)**

**Articles 371 and 371-A through J** provide "special provisions" for specific states, often to give representation to certain religious and social groups and to allow these groups to exercise autonomy over their affairs without interference from the state and central governments.

**13. (a)**

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** The Sixth Schedule under **Article 244** provides for the formation of autonomous administrative divisions — **Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)** — that have some legislative, judicial, and administrative autonomy within a state.

- This Schedule contains provisions regarding the administration of tribal areas in the states of **Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram**.
- **Statement 3 is not correct:** The Schedule also gives ARCs and ADCs the power to **collect land revenue, impose taxes**, regulate money lending and trading, collect royalties from licenses or leases for the extraction of minerals in their areas, and establish public facilities such as schools, markets, and roads.

**14. (d)**

**In News:** Urban India is buckling under the weight of rapid, unplanned growth, with dysfunctions ranging from clogged drains and toxic air to flooded streets and crumbling infrastructure —

highlighting the urgent need for empowered city-level governance, often stifled by state control.

**Statement 1 is correct:** The **74th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992** introduced **Part IXA (Articles 243P to 243ZG)** into the Constitution and gave constitutional status to municipalities, making them legally enforceable entities.

- As per Article 243Q, the Act mandates the formation of three types of municipalities:
  - **Nagar Panchayat:** For transitional areas (rural to urban)
  - **Municipal Council:** For smaller urban areas
  - **Municipal Corporation:** For larger urban areas

**Statement 2 is correct:** It mandated elections **every five years for all ULBs**, and established **State Election Commissions (SECs)** under Article 243ZA to conduct these elections independently.

**Statement 3 is correct:** **Ward Committees** were to be formed to ensure grassroots participation for municipalities with a population of 3 lakhs or more.

- It introduced **District Planning Committees (DPCs)** and **Metropolitan Planning Committees (MPCs)** to prepare development plans at regional levels.

#### 15. (a)

**In News:** Recent Supreme Court data reveals that **over 8.82 lakh execution petitions are pending** across district courts nationwide, 3.38 lakh new petitions were filed in just six months, calling the situation 'highly disappointing' and 'alarming'.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Even after a judgment, enforcement through execution petitions can take years due to procedural delays and resistance from the losing party.

- The decree-holder must file a separate execution petition to enforce the judgment. Courts do not initiate execution on their own.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Execution petitions are the final and most crucial stage in justice delivery in India — without execution, a judgment is just a piece of paper.

#### 16. (b)

**In News:** In recent years, India's constitutional courts have revived the concept of '**constitutional morality**' for constitutional interpretation and judicial reasoning, and has become a **litmus test for the constitutional validity of laws** and a safeguard against the volatility of public morality.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- 'Constitutional morality' does not permit the government to override constitutional provisions.
- Instead, it means adherence to the core values and spirit of the Constitution — such as liberty, equality, rule of law, and constitutional supremacy.
- It acts as a restraint on arbitrary exercise of power, ensuring that state actions remain within the constitutional framework.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- The judiciary has invoked constitutional morality in several landmark judgments to protect fundamental rights and interpret constitutional provisions.

#### 17. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The 8th Central Pay Commission was announced in **January, 2025**.

- The commission aimed to examine and recommend **changes in the Salaries and other benefits of Central Government employees**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** It will be a **temporary body**.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The Commission will comprise one **Chairperson Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai**; One Member (Part Time) and one Member-Secretary.

- It will make its recommendations within **18 months of the date of its constitution**.

18. (d)

**Context**

- India's urban centers need to evolve **from being reactive spaces to proactive engines** of growth and **focus on land-use zoning**, as it aspires to become a \$30 trillion economy by 2047 under the vision of Viksit Bharat.

**Do You Know?**

- Urban planning is the function of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/Urban Development Authorities **(12th Schedule of the Constitution of India)**.
- MoHUA is supporting States/ULBs in capacity building activities through various Schemes such as AMRUT, for improving the capacities of ULB functionaries, elected representatives, etc.

19. (d)

**In News:** The introduction of the [Constitution \(One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment\) Bill, 2025](#) aiming to enhance governance and accountability, along with serious risks to democratic principles and civil liberties.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- Only amendments that affect federal provisions (like the powers of states, representation in Parliament, or the judiciary) require ratification by at least half of the state legislatures.
  - Most amendments do not need state approval.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- Amendments require a formal legislative process in Parliament. Executive orders are administrative tools and cannot alter constitutional provisions.
- Amendments must be passed by Parliament under Article 368, and the President's role is limited to giving assent after both Houses approve the bill.

20. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Chief Justice of India (CJI) holds office until the age of 65 years — this is explicitly stated in the Constitution (Article 124).

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The consultation process for appointment of the CJI is not explicitly defined in the Constitution. Article 124(2) empowers the President to appoint the CJI after consultation with such judges as deemed necessary. However, the specific convention of appointing the senior-most judge as CJI and the detailed collegium consultation process is based on judicial conventions and Memorandum of Procedure, not explicitly laid down in the Constitution.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The President is not constitutionally bound to accept the recommendation of the outgoing CJI; the recommendation is only advisory. Although the seniority convention is generally followed, the President theoretically has discretion. Hence, the President cannot be said to be incapable of ignoring the CJI's recommendation.





# GEOGRAPH

1. With reference to Sir Creek, consider the following statements
  1. It is a 96-km-long tidal estuary which divides Pakistan's Sindh province from Gujarat's Kutch region.
  2. It extends into the Arabian Sea and it is one of the largest fishing zones in the subcontinent.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
2. The Keibul Lamjao National Park, the world's only floating national park, is situated in which lake?
  - (a) Chilika Lake
  - (b) Vembanad Lake
  - (c) Pulicat Lake
  - (d) Loktak Lake
3. What are "Flying Rivers" in the context of the Amazon rainforest?
  - (a) Rivers that flow above ground due to elevation in the Andes
  - (b) Massive streams of water vapour transported through the atmosphere
  - (c) Underground rivers in the Amazon basin
  - (d) Seasonal floods caused by Amazon tributaries
4. With reference to Mud Volcanoes, consider the following statements:
  1. Mud volcanoes erupt molten lava and ash similar to true volcanoes.
  2. They are commonly found in regions with subsurface hydrocarbon deposits.
3. Mud volcanoes are usually less hazardous than true volcanoes.  
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
5. With reference to the Polar Silk Road, consider the following statements:
  1. It is part of China's Belt and Road Initiative and passes through the Arctic Ocean.
  2. It was first proposed in China's Arctic Policy White Paper of 2018.
  3. It connects Asia and Europe through the Southern Ocean.

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

6. Consider the following statements:

1. A Supermoon occurs when a full moon or new moon coincides with the Moon's closest approach to the Earth (perigee).
2. The term "Supermoon" was first used by astrologer Richard Nolle in the 1970s and is now commonly used in astronomy and the media.

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

7. Seneca Lake, known for its size and mysterious booms, is found in which of the following countries?

- (a) France
- (b) United States
- (c) Russia
- (d) Ukraine

8. With reference to the Incoming Solar Radiation (Insolation), consider the following statements:

1. It refers to the solar energy received in the form of longwave radiation.
2. It depends on the earth's rotation on its axis and atmospheric transparency.

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

9. The Sawalkote Hydroelectric Project is proposed to be built on which of the following rivers?

- (a) Sutlej
- (b) Indus
- (c) Ravi
- (d) Chenab

10. Consider the following statements:

1. The Strait of Hormuz is located between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.
2. The Panama Canal links the Atlantic Ocean with the Pacific Ocean.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only



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

11. Which one of the following is located in the South China Sea?

- (a) Thitu Island
- (b) Kuril Islands
- (c) Senkaku Islands
- (d) Aleutian Islands

12. With reference to India's Antarctic Presence, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. In 1983, India established the first permanent base in Antarctica named Maitri.
2. In 2018 India commissioned research station Bharati, located between Thala Fjord & Quilty bay, east of Stornes Peninsula in Antarctica.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

13. Consider the following statements regarding the Durand Line:

1. The Durand Line is a roughly 2,640 km land border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.
2. It was established in 1947 following an agreement between Sir Mortimer Durand and Amir Abdur Rahman Khan.

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

14. Port Pasni, recently seen in the news, is located in which country?

- (a) India
- (b) Afghanistan
- (c) Iran
- (d) Pakistan

15. The Mullaperiyar Dam, recently in the news, is built on which river?

- (a) Periyar
- (b) Vaigai
- (c) Kaveri
- (d) Godavari

16. Mongolia is a landlocked country bordered by:

- (a) China to the south and Russia to the north
- (b) Kazakhstan to the west and Russia to the north
- (c) China to the east and Russia to the south
- (d) Russia to the south and Kazakhstan to the east

17. Madagascar, recently in the news due to a military takeover, is located in which of the following water bodies?
- Atlantic Ocean
  - Indian Ocean
  - Pacific Ocean
  - Mediterranean Sea
18. The White Nile, one of the main tributaries of the Nile, originates from which lake?
- Lake Tana
  - Lake Tanganyika
  - Lake Victoria
  - Lake Albert
19. With reference to the 'India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)', consider the following statements:
- It was unveiled during the G20 Summit 2023 in India.
  - It is envisioned to link Maritime routes from Indian ports to the UAE.
  - It focuses on rail networks across Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel to European ports.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3
20. Which of the following statements is correct regarding Cape Verde?
- It is the highest mountain range in Africa.
  - It is a group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean.
  - It is the largest desert in South America.
  - It is the smallest independent state and is an enclave within Rome.
21. Which of the following contributes to the formation of the Moon's exosphere?
- Solar radiation
  - Solar wind
  - Meteorite impacts
  - Volcanic eruptions
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1, 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 2, 3 and 4 only
  - 1, 2, 3 and 4
22. With reference to the Western Ghats, consider the following statements:
- They are also known as the Sahyadri Hills and form the western edge of the Deccan Plateau.
  - They extend from the Tapti River in Gujarat to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu.
  - They are younger than the Himalayas and were formed during the Tertiary period.

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

**23.** With reference to Loktak Lake, consider the following statements:

1. It is the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India.
2. It is famous for its phumdis — floating islands of vegetation, soil, and organic matter.
3. It has been listed under the Montreux Record due to ecological degradation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**24.** Which of the following statements about the Ten Degree Channel is correct?

- (a) It separates India and Sri Lanka.
- (b) It connects the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal.
- (c) It separates the Lakshadweep group from the Maldives.
- (d) It separates the Andaman group from the Nicobar group of islands.

**25.** Which of the following statements about the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is correct?

- (a) Indira Point, India's southernmost point, is located on Little Nicobar Island.
- (b) Saddle Peak, the highest point in the islands, is located in Great Nicobar.
- (c) The Barren and Narcondam islands, north of Port Blair, are volcanic islands.
- (d) Port Blair, the capital, is located in Middle Andaman.

**26.** Consider the following:

1. Bab el-Mandeb Strait
2. Lombok Strait
3. Preparis Channel
4. Strait of Hormuz

Which of the above are part of the Western Indian Ocean?

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

**27.** With reference to Cyclone Montha and tropical cyclones in general, consider the following statements:

1. The name "Montha" is of Thai origin and means a fragrant flower.
2. Tropical cyclones are frontal low-pressure systems that form over tropical oceans.
3. The Coriolis force is essential for the formation of tropical cyclones.
4. Sea surface temperature above 27°C is one of the necessary conditions for cyclone formation.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

28. With reference to the Cyclones, consider the following statements:

1. The term Cyclone was coined by Henry Peddington and is derived from the Greek word Cyclos, meaning “coils of a snake.”
2. Cyclones form over warm ocean waters and are characterized by a high-pressure center and outward spiraling winds.
3. Cyclones in the North Indian Ocean are named by the Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre (RSMC) under the coordination of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

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

29. With reference to the Chabahar Port, consider the following statements:

1. It is located on the Gulf of Oman and is the only oceanic port of Iran.
2. Chabahar consists of two ports — Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti — of which the latter is being developed in four phases.
3. The port enables India to access Afghanistan and Central Asia while bypassing Pakistan.

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

30. Cyprus, recently in the news for expressing interest in joining the India–Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC), is located in which of the following regions?

- (a) Western Mediterranean Sea
- (b) Eastern Mediterranean Sea
- (c) Black Sea
- (d) Caspian Sea

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

**In News:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh warned Pakistan that any aggression in the disputed Sir Creek area will be met with a strong response.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** Sir Creek is a 96-km-long tidal estuary or a “fluctuating tidal channel” between Gujarat’s Rann of Kutch and Pakistan.

- It is named after a British representative and extends into the Arabian Sea. It divides Pakistan’s Sindh province from Gujarat’s Kutch region.

- It is considered a disputed region due to varying interpretations of maritime boundary lines by both sides.
- It is also one of the largest fishing zones in the subcontinent and is believed to have untapped oil and gas resources.

**2. (d)**

**Context**

- A recent study by Nagaland University has established a direct link between land use and severe water pollution in Manipur's Loktak Lake.

**About Loktak Lake**

- It is the **largest freshwater lake in Northeast India** and is known for its unique **floating biomass**, called **phumdi** in the Meitei language.
- **Rivers like Khuga, Nambul, Imphal, Kongba, Iril, and Thoubal** drain into Loktak Lake.
- The lake supports **132 plant species** and **428 animal species**, including several endemic and migratory species.
- It is designated as a **Ramsar Site** for its ecological significance.
  - Due to the degradation, Loktak Lake has been on the **Montreux Record** since **1993**, a global warning list for wetlands facing severe ecological damage.
- **Ecological Importance:**
  - It is home to the **Keibul Lamjao National Park**, the world's only floating national park.
  - The park shelters the **Sangai or brow-antlered deer**, Manipur's state animal, which is **critically endangered**.

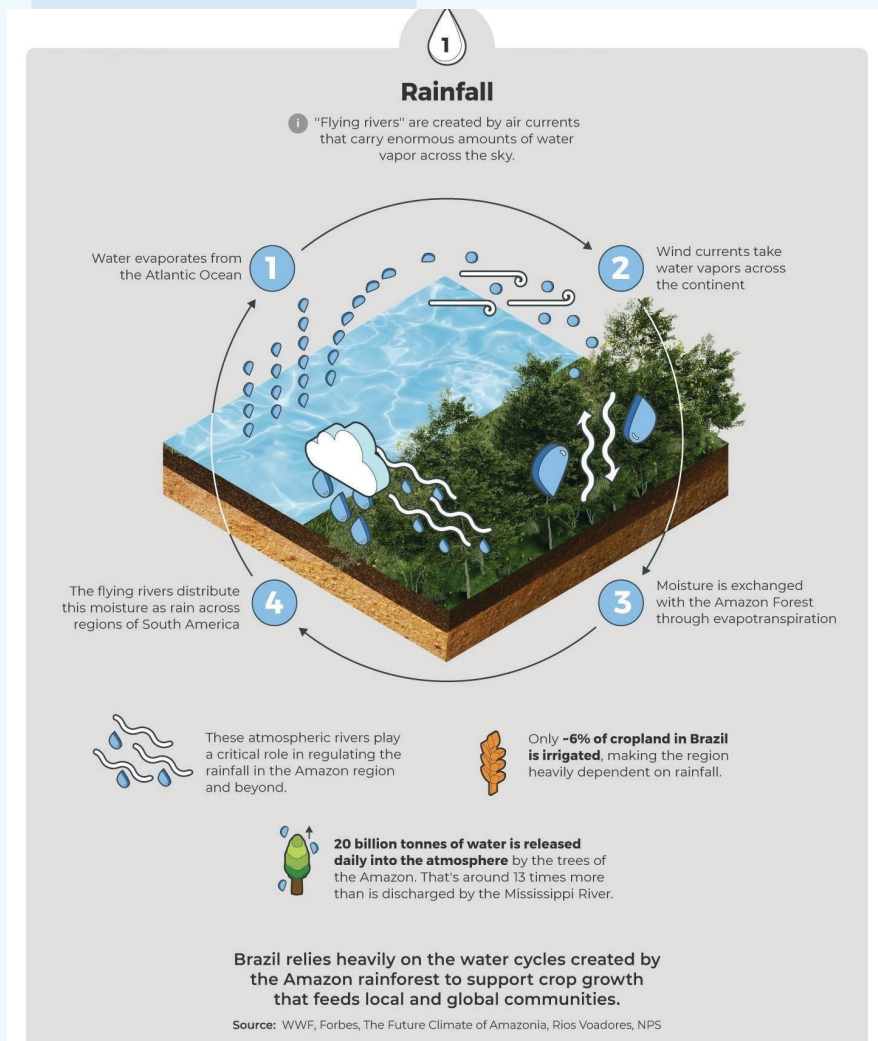
**3. (b)**

**In News**

- The Amazon rainforest plays a critical role in **South America's water cycle** through the phenomenon called **"flying rivers"**.

**About Flying Rivers**

- "Flying rivers" are massive streams of water vapour carried in the atmosphere, invisible to the eye.
- **Process:** Moisture originates from the Atlantic Ocean.
- Trade winds push moist air westward across the equator.
- Amazon trees act as a **"biological pump"** – absorb water from soil → **transpire it back into the air** → release huge amounts of water vapour.



- This **recycled water forms clouds and rainfall further inland**, supplying regions as far as the **Andes and southern South America**.

4. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Mud volcanoes are geological formations where **mud, gases, and water are expelled** from beneath the Earth's surface — not molten lava, unlike true volcanoes.

**Statements 2 and 3 are correct:**

- **Formation:**
  - It is usually found in regions with **subsurface hydrocarbon deposits**.
  - When gas pressure builds up below the surface (often due to tectonic compression), it forces mud and fluids upward through faults or fractures.
  - Over time, this builds a cone-shaped mound — the “mud volcano.”
- Though not explosive like lava volcanoes, **they can cause localized damage due to sudden eruptions or gas emissions**.
- **Mud volcanoes are not real volcanoes** and are **not as hazardous as real volcanoes** since they can only emit warm mud and only very locally.

5. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Polar Silk Road is envisioned as an extension of China's Belt and Road Initiative, utilizing the Arctic Ocean—specifically the Northern Sea Route—to connect Asia with Europe.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The Polar Silk Road was outlined in China's 2018 Arctic Policy White Paper as a key component of its strategic interests in the Arctic region.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The Polar Silk Road passes through the Arctic Ocean, not the Southern Ocean, which surrounds Antarctica.

6. (c)

**Context**

- The Supermoon, also known as the Harvest Moon, was observed recently.

**About the Supermoon**

- A supermoon occurs when a **full moon or new moon** coincides with the moon's closest approach to the earth in its elliptical orbit — a point known as the **perigee**.
- Because the moon's orbit is not a perfect circle, its distance from the earth varies throughout the month by around 50,000 km.
- When the moon is near its perigee and also directly opposite the sun, the full moon appears about **14% larger and 30% brighter** than when it is at its farthest point. This is the supermoon.
- Culturally, supermoons have long captured human imagination, inspiring folklore and spiritual observances across civilisations.
- The term “supermoon” was first used by astrologer **Richard Nolle** in the 1970s and is now common in astronomy and the media.

7. (b)

For centuries, residents near Seneca Lake in New York have reported mysterious booming sounds known as the “**Seneca Guns**” or “**Seneca Drums**”.

**Seneca Lake** is located in Ontario, Yates, Seneca, and Schuyler counties, and is centrally positioned in **New York's Finger Lakes region(US)**.

- It has the largest water volume among the Finger Lakes, with Geneva at its northern end and Watkins Glen at the southern end.



8. (b)

**In News:** A recent joint study published in *Nature's Scientific Reports* shows India's sunlight hours are shrinking due to pollution and cloud buildup threatening the country's solar energy ambitions.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- **Incoming Solar Radiation (Insolation)** refers to the solar energy received by the Earth's surface in the form of shortwave radiation.
- It is the **primary source of heat and energy** for our planet and drives atmospheric and climatic processes.
  - Earth receives **1.94 calories per cm<sup>2</sup> per minute** at the **top of the atmosphere**.
- The **distribution** of land and sea, atmospheric circulation, and angle of solar rays are important in **daily weather and climate**.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- **Factors Affecting Insolation:** The amount and intensity of insolation received at different locations and times depend on:
  - **Earth's rotation on its axis;**
  - Angle of inclination of the Sun's rays;
  - Length of the day;
  - **Atmospheric transparency** (affected by clouds, dust, and pollution);
  - Topography and land configuration.

9. (d)

Recently, an apex committee of the Environment Ministry has accorded a fresh environmental clearance to the **Sawalkote hydroelectric project**.

**Sawalkote hydroelectric project** received environmental clearance in 2017 under the Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Corporation (JKPDC).

- In 2021, JKPDC handed over its execution and control to NHPC Ltd, which will manage it until 2061.
- It is proposed to come up on **Chenab river in Ramban, Jammu and Kashmir**.
- It is planned as a run-of-the-river project utilising the flow of the Chenab to **generate electricity**.

10. (d)

**Major Choke Points in International Trade Sea Route**

- **Strait of Hormuz:** Located between the **Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman**, the Strait of Hormuz is a crucial passage for oil shipments from the Middle East.
  - A significant portion of the world's oil supply passes through this choke point.
- **Panama Canal:** Linking the **Atlantic and Pacific Oceans**, the Panama Canal is crucial for maritime trade between the Americas, Europe, and Asia.
  - It allows ships to bypass the lengthy and treacherous journey around the southern tip of South America.

11. (a)

**Context**

- Tensions reignited in the South China Sea after a collision between a Chinese coast guard ship and a Philippine government vessel near Thitu Island part of the Spratly Islands.

**About the Spratly Islands**

- The Spratly Islands are a group of over **100 small islands, reefs, and atolls** located in the **South China Sea**.

- **Significance:** They are strategically positioned along major international shipping routes and are believed to be rich in oil, gas, and fisheries resources.
- **Claimants:** China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan.
- **Thitu Island**, also known as **Pag-asa Island**, is the **second-largest** naturally occurring island in the Spratly Islands archipelago within the South China Sea.
- **The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague** ruled that China's "**Nine-Dash Line**" has no legal basis under the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** and it had violated the Philippines' sovereign rights within its EEZ.
  - However, China has refused to recognize the decision.



12. (d)

#### Context

- The Ministry of Finance has approved the establishment of Maitri II, India's upcoming research station in eastern Antarctica, to be completed by January 2029.

#### India's Antarctic Presence

- In **1983**, India established the first permanent base in Antarctica named Dakshin Gangotri. However it is no longer in operation.
- India presently has two research stations at Antarctica namely '**Maitri**' and '**Bharati**'.
  - **Maitri:** It has been in operation since 1989 and is located in a rocky mountainous region known as **Schirmacher Oasis in Queen Maud Land**.
  - **Bharati:** The new station was **commissioned** in **2012**. It is located between **Thala Fjord & Quilty bay**, east of Stornes Peninsula in Antarctica.

#### About Maitri II

- **Nodal Agency:** National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa.
- **Estimated Cost:** ₹2,000 crore over seven years.
- **Location:** Eastern Antarctica, near the **Schirmacher Oasis**, replacing the aging Maitri station.
- **Green Research Base:** Designed to operate on renewable energy sources, solar during summer and wind energy year-round, reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

13. (a)

#### In News

- Border clashes erupted between Afghanistan and Pakistan along the Durand Line.



### About the Durand Line

- The **Durand Line** is a 2,640 km land border established in **1893** following an agreement between **Sir Mortimer Durand**, then Foreign Secretary of British India, and **Amir Abdur Rahman Khan**, the ruler of Afghanistan.
- The line was intended to define the spheres of influence between **British India and Afghanistan**, effectively splitting ethnic Pashtun and Baloch communities between the two sides.



14. (d)

### In News

- Pakistan has recently offered the United States the opportunity to develop and operate Port Pasni as a commercial terminal, enabling US access to Pakistan's critical minerals.

### About Port Pasni

- Location:** Pasni Port is situated in the Gwadar district of Balochistan, alongside the Arabian Sea. It is approximately 113 km east of the China-operated Gwadar Port and roughly about 286 km from Iran's Chabahar Port.
- Facilities:** The port currently hosts a fish harbour, cargo jetty, and base for the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA).
- Natural Depth:** Its deep-water harbour makes it suitable for major shipping and mineral export operations.

15. (a)

### Context

- Recently, the Supreme Court of India issued notices to various stakeholders calling for urgent directions to reinforce the aging structure of the 130-year-old Mullaperiyar dam.

### Mullaperiyar Dam

- It is a gravity dam **built on the Periyar River in the Idukki district of Kerala** that was constructed between 1887 and 1895.
- The dam is **operated and maintained by Tamil Nadu**, under a 999-year lease agreement signed in 1886 between the **Maharaja of Travancore and the British government**.
- It diverts water to the **Vaigai basin in Tamil Nadu** for irrigation across 68,558 hectares.

16. (a)

### Context

- India and Mongolia inked **10 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** during a bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa in New Delhi.

**About**

- **Location:** Landlocked country in East-Central Asia, bordered by Russia (north) and China (south).
- **Terrain:** Predominantly Gobi Desert, vast steppes, and mountains (Altai, Khangai).
- **Major Rivers:** Selenge River
- **Important Lakes:** Khövsgöl Lake
- **Capital:** Ulaanbaatar

17. (b)

**In News**

- The Madagascar military unit seized power after the President was impeached for desertion of duty amid weeks of mass protests.

**Madagascar**

- It is an island country lying off the southeastern coast of Africa.
- It is located in the southwestern Indian Ocean and is separated from the African coast by the 250-mile- (400-km-) wide Mozambique Channel. It is an island country of Africa. It is located around 400 km off the coast of East Africa in the Indian Ocean with the nearest mainland African country being Mozambique.
- It is located in the Southern and Eastern Hemispheres of the Earth.
- Mauritius and Réunion (territory of France), lie to the east of Madagascar.

18. (c)

**About Nile River**

- The Nile River is a **north-flowing river in Africa**, spanning about 6,650 km and draining **into the Mediterranean Sea**.
- It is among the longest rivers on Earth and a vital lifeline for Egypt, Sudan, and South Sudan.
- The Nile has two main tributaries: the **longer White Nile and the Blue Nile**.
  - The White Nile flows from the Lake Victoria region through Uganda and South Sudan, while the Blue Nile rises from Lake Tana in Ethiopia before meeting the White Nile at Khartoum.

19. (d)

**In News:** India has intensified efforts to diversify its global economic partnerships, and is focusing on large-scale connectivity projects such as the **India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)**.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- IMEC was unveiled during the **G20 Summit (2023) in India**, representing a vision for **transcontinental connectivity**, backed by leaders from the **EU, France, Germany, Italy, and Saudi Arabia**.

**Statement 2 and 3 are correct**

- IMEC is envisioned as a **comprehensive network linking India to Europe** through the **Arabian Peninsula**. The corridor includes:

- **Maritime routes** from Indian ports to the UAE;
- **Rail networks** across Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel to European ports like Haifa.

**20. (b)**

**In News:** Cape Verde made history by becoming the second-smallest country (after Iceland in 2018) to qualify for the FIFA World Cup

**Cabo Verde** is an archipelago of 10 islands in the Atlantic Ocean.

- It is an island nation located about 620 km off the west coast of Africa, named after the nearby Cape Verde in Senegal.
- It has a service-driven economy focused on trade, transport, tourism, and remittances, transitioning toward a market economy since the mid-1990s.

**21. (a)**

**Context**

- The Chandrayaan-2 mission has made the first-ever observation of the effects of the **Sun's Coronal Mass Ejection (CME)** on the Moon using its onboard scientific instruments.

**About the observation**

- The finding was made by **Chandra's Atmospheric Composition Explorer-2 (CHACE-2)**, a payload onboard Chandrayaan-2's orbiter.
- CHACE-2 recorded a **sharp rise in total pressure and molecular density** in the Moon's sunlit exosphere.
  - **CMEs** are the events when the Sun ejects significant quantities of its building material, comprising mostly **Helium and Hydrogen ions**.

**Composition of Lunar Exosphere**

- The Moon's atmosphere is **extremely thin**, classified as an exosphere, implying that the gas atoms and molecules in the lunar environment rarely interact despite their coexistence.
- The boundary of the exosphere is the surface of the Moon and hence the Moon's exosphere falls under the category of '**surface boundary exosphere**'.
- The lunar exosphere is **formed by processes** such as:
  - **Solar radiation**,
  - **Solar wind** (ions of hydrogen, helium, and trace heavier elements), and
  - **Meteorite impacts** that release surface atoms into space.
- Unlike Earth, the **Moon lacks a magnetic field**, making it directly exposed to CMEs.

**22. (c)**

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Western Ghats are also known as the Sahyadri Hills and form the western edge of the Deccan Plateau.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The Western Ghats extend from the Tapti (Tapi) River in Maharashtra (not Gujarat) to Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu. They do not start at the Tapti in Gujarat; Gujarat is not considered part of the main Western Ghats stretch.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The Western Ghats are much older than the Himalayas and date from the late Jurassic to early Cretaceous periods; the Himalayas formed during the Tertiary period, so the Ghats are not younger nor Tertiary in origin.

**23. (d)**

**Statement 1 is correct:** Loktak Lake is the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The lake is renowned for its phumdis, floating islands of vegetation, soil, and organic matter.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Due to ecological threats such as pollution, siltation, and unsustainable activities, Loktak Lake has been placed on the Montreux Record—a list of Ramsar wetland sites undergoing severe ecological change and requiring priority conservation action.

24. (d)

#### Context

- At the India Maritime Week 2025 in Mumbai, the Union Home Minister announced the **Great Nicobar Project** will play a transformative role in enhancing India's maritime global trade and shipbuilding capacity.

#### Andaman and Nicobar Islands

- Location:** The islands are located 1,300 km southeast of the Indian mainland in the Bay of Bengal.
  - It extends from 6° 45' N to 13° 41' N and from 92° 12' E to 93° 57' E.
- This archipelago is composed of more than 500 big and small islands, which are divided into two distinct groups of islands – **The Andaman Islands and the Nicobar Islands**.
  - '**Ten Degree Channel**' separates the Andaman Islands in the north from the Nicobar Islands in the south.

25. (c)

#### Andaman and Nicobar Islands

- Location:** The islands are located 1,300 km southeast of the Indian mainland in the Bay of Bengal.
  - It extends from 6° 45' N to 13° 41' N and from 92° 12' E to 93° 57' E.
- This archipelago is composed of more than 500 big and small islands, which are divided into two distinct groups of islands – **The Andaman Islands and the Nicobar Islands**.
  - '**Ten Degree Channel**' separates the Andaman Islands in the north from the Nicobar Islands in the south.

#### The Andaman Islands

- These islands are divided into three major sub-groups – **North Andaman, Middle Andaman, and South Andaman**.
- The capital city of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands **Port Blair** is located in **South Andaman**.

#### The Nicobar Islands

- These islands are divided into three major sub-groups – **Northern Group, Central Group, and Southern Group**.
  - The Great Nicobar is the largest and the southernmost island in the group located in the Southern Group.
  - India's southernmost point '**Indira Point**' is located at the southern tip of the Great Nicobar.

#### Other Features

- Most of these islands have a volcanic base and are made of tertiary sandstone, limestone, and shale.
  - The Barren and Narcondam islands**, north of Port Blair, are volcanic islands.
  - Some of the islands are fringed with coral reefs.
- Saddle Peak (737 m)** in North Andaman is the highest peak in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

26. (a)

**In News:** The **Western Indian Ocean (WIO)** has emerged as a pivotal maritime region where security, trade, and diplomacy converge, once seen as a remote expanse, and a peripheral concern in global geopolitics.

- **Bab el-Mandeb Strait:** It connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the broader Indian Ocean. It lies between Djibouti/Eritrea and Yemen.
- **Strait of Hormuz:** Though often associated with the Persian Gulf, it opens into the Arabian Sea, which is considered part of the Western Indian Ocean.
- **Lombok Strait:** It is located in Indonesia, between Bali and Lombok. It belongs to the Eastern Indian Ocean.
- **Preparis Channel:** It lies between India's Andaman Islands and Myanmar, part of the Eastern Indian Ocean.

27. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The name Montha was given by Thailand and means a fragrant flower.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Tropical cyclones are actually non-frontal low-pressure systems. That means they do not form along weather fronts like mid-latitude cyclones, but instead develop in a tropical environment where the main energy source is the warm ocean water below.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The Coriolis force, caused by the Earth's rotation, is crucial because it imparts the spin or rotation necessary for the development of the cyclone's characteristic swirling motion. Without Coriolis force, the cyclone's rotation would not organize and strengthen.

**Statement 4 is correct:** A warm sea surface temperature (above 27°C) provides the necessary heat and moisture to fuel the convection and energy that sustain a cyclone. Without sufficiently warm water, cyclones cannot develop or intensify.

28. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The word Cyclone is derived from the **Greek word Cyclos** meaning the **coils of a snake**.

- It was coined by **Henry Peddington** because the tropical storms in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea appear like coiled serpents of the sea.

**Statement 2 is not correct: Formation of a Low-Pressure System:** When the air rises up and away from the ocean surface, it creates an **area of lower air pressure below**.

- It causes the air from surrounding areas with higher pressure to move towards the low-pressure area which further leads to **warming up of the air and causes it to rise above**.
- **Cyclonic Circulation:** The rotation of the Earth (Coriolis effect) causes the rising air to start spinning around the low-pressure center. This spinning motion leads to the development of cyclonic circulation.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The names are maintained and updated by an **international committee of the World Meteorological Organization**.

- Cyclones in the North Indian Ocean region are named by the **regional specialized meteorological centers (RSMCs)** in India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
- Each country contributes names to a list used on a **rotating basis**.

29. (d)

**All three statements are correct:** Iran's Chabahar port is located on the **Gulf of Oman** and is the **only oceanic port of the country**.

- It is situated in the **city of Chabahar** in **Sistan and Baluchestan Province**.
- Chabahar has two ports; **Shahid Kalantari** and **Shahid Beheshti**.
  - The former is an old port with limited water front to accommodate feeder vessels.
  - The Shahid Beheshti Port is being developed in four phases. On completion of all 4 phases, port capacity will 82 million tons per year.

- The port gives access to the **energy-rich Persian Gulf nations'** southern coast and bypasses Pakistan.
- **Kandla port in Gujarat** is the closest port at 550 nautical miles, while the distance between Chabahar and Mumbai is 786 nautical miles.

**30. (b)****In News**

- The Cyprus Foreign Minister visited India and expressed strong interest in joining the India-Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC), citing Cyprus's strategic location, EU membership, and robust shipping sector.

**About Cyprus**

- It is an island nation in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, known for its rich history, natural beauty, and cultural diversity.
- It is located about 40 miles south of Turkey and 60 miles west of Syria.
- It gained independence from Britain in 1960, but tensions between Greek and Turkish Cypriots have led to a de facto partition since 1974.



# GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. DigiLocker, sometimes mentioned in the context of Digital India, is primarily aimed at;
  - (a) Providing free internet access in rural areas
  - (b) Offering citizens a secure digital platform for authentic documents
  - (c) Creating a centralized biometric database of citizens
  - (d) Establishing a national payment gateway for e-commerce
2. Consider the following statements regarding the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY):
  1. It is designed on the lines of the Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP).
  2. The scheme will create entirely new agricultural programmes across the country.
  3. Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of Aspirational Agriculture Districts under PMDDKY.

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. With reference to the National Service Scheme (NSS), consider the following statements:
  1. It was introduced as a key theme under the second Five Year Plan in India.
  2. It primarily focuses on war heroes and martyrs.
  3. It is inspired by the Gandhian ideals of selfless service.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
4. With reference to the Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves (TOTR) Project, consider the following statements:
  1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and implemented through the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
  2. It will be implemented during the period 2025–2028.

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



5. Recently, the Prime Minister launched the PM–SETU with the objective of:
- Transforming Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in India
  - Promoting digital payments across rural India
  - Encouraging private sector investment in renewable energy
  - Expanding the National Highway network
6. With reference to the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, consider the following statements:
- The scheme aims to provide up to 300 units of free electricity per month to one crore households through subsidised rooftop solar panels.
  - It is implemented by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
7. The primary objective of the PM-KUSUM scheme is to:
- Promote rooftop solar power in urban households
  - Provide solar-powered irrigation support to farmers
  - Subsidize solar street lighting in villages
  - Promote private investment in large-scale solar parks
8. With reference to the PM Surya Ghar Yojana, consider the following statements:
- It was launched in 2024 and aims to provide free electricity to households by facilitating the installation of rooftop solar panels.
  - The scheme offers a subsidy of up to 40% to households, making renewable energy more affordable and accessible.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
9. The 'Vishwas Scheme' introduced by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) primarily aims to:
- Promote voluntary early retirement among EPF members.
  - Reduce litigation by lowering penal damages for delayed PF remittances.
  - Provide higher interest rates on PF contributions for small-scale industries.
  - Facilitate online transfer of PF accounts across states.
10. Which of the following statements is correct with reference to Operation Chakra V?
- It aims to promote digital literacy in rural India
  - It aims to stop illegal immigrants and drug smuggling
  - It aims to dismantle transnational cyber-enabled financial fraud
  - It aims to protect the natural environment and prevent pollution

- 11.** Which of the following statements about the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (PMGS-NMP) is/are correct?
1. It was launched in 2021 to provide multimodal connectivity and improve logistics efficiency across India.
  2. It is implemented under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
  3. PM GatiShakti is driven by seven engines including Railways, Roads, Ports, Waterways, Airports, Mass Transport, and Logistics Infrastructure.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 2 and 3 only
  - (c) 1 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 12.** 'Mission Vatsalya Portal' is primarily associated with which of the following?
- (a) Providing healthcare and nutrition support to pregnant women and lactating mothers.
  - (b) Strengthening institutional care and welfare services for children in need of protection.
  - (c) Offering financial assistance to widows and elderly citizens through direct benefit transfer.
  - (d) Facilitating adoption of children through a single-window online system.
- 13.** Consider the following statements with respect to the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme.
1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
  2. It mainly focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at the farm level through Micro Irrigation.

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
- 14.** Consider the following statements about the Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS):
1. It is launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
  2. It targets youth aged 21–24 years who are currently not enrolled in any full-time academic program or employment.
  3. The internship duration is 12 months, and it plans to provide opportunities to one crore youth in the top 500 companies over five years.

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
- 15.** Which of the following statements about the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme is NOT correct?
- (a) It provides short-term credit for cultivation and allied activities.
  - (b) It can be used to meet household consumption needs.
  - (c) It provides long-term housing loans to rural households.
  - (d) It covers post-harvest and marketing expenses.

16. The “We Rise” initiative is a collaboration between WEP and DP World. What is its primary objective?
- To provide micro-finance exclusively to women in rural India
  - To mentor high-potential women-led MSMEs for global export readiness and trade access
  - To set up women-only industrial parks in each state of India
  - To mandate a 33% reservation for women in senior management of public sector enterprises
17. With reference to the Smart Policing Initiative in India, consider the following statements:
- The acronym SMART in policing was introduced by the Prime Minister in 2014.
  - The CyTrain portal provides online capacity building for police officers on cybercrime investigation.
  - The ASUMP scheme is aimed at modernising central police forces only.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3
18. With reference to the Model Youth Gram Sabha Initiative, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- The initiative is a joint effort of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
  - The initiative will be rolled out across all the schools nationwide, excluding Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) and Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs).
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

#### Context

- The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has announced that candidates’ documents, including caste, income, and disability certificates, will now be verified through DigiLocker.

#### About DigiLocker

- DigiLocker is a flagship initiative of the **Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY)** under Digital India programme.
- DigiLocker aims at ‘Digital Empowerment’ of citizens by providing **access to authentic digital documents** to citizen’s digital document wallet.
- The issued documents in DigiLocker system are deemed to be at par with original physical documents as per **Rule 9A of the Information Technology (Preservation and Retention of Information by Intermediaries providing Digital Locker facilities) Rules, 2016**.

**Benefits to Agencies**

- **It reduces the administrative overhead** by minimizing the use of paper and curtailing the verification process.
- **Digital Transformation:** Issued Documents available via DigiLocker are fetched in real-time directly from the issuing agency.
- **Secure Document Gateway:** Acts as a secure document exchange platform like payment gateway between trusted issuer and trusted Requester/Verifier with the consent of the citizen.

2. (c)

**In News**

- The Centre announced 100 Aspirational Agriculture Districts to be developed under the **Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY)** across 29 states and UTs.
  - Uttar Pradesh leads with 12 districts, followed by Maharashtra (9), Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan (8 each) and Bihar (7).

**About Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY)**

- The Union Cabinet approved the **Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY)** in **July 2025**.
  - It is designed on the lines of the **Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP)**.
- It is a transformative agricultural initiative announced in the Union Budget 2025–26. With an annual outlay of ₹24,000 crore over six years, PMDDKY aims to boost growth in **100 agri-districts by converging 36 existing Central schemes across 11 Ministries**, alongside state programmes and private sector partnerships.
- Instead of launching new schemes, it focuses on **coordinated, saturation-based delivery to last-mile farmers, minimizing duplication and maximizing impact**.
- The **PMDDKY** aims to boost rural development with five key goals: increase agricultural productivity, promote crop diversification and sustainability, expand post-harvest storage at local levels, improve irrigation infrastructure, and enhance farmers' access to agricultural credit.

3. (a)

**Context**

- President Droupadi Murmu presented the **MY Bharat-National Service Scheme (NSS) Awards** for the year 2022–23 at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

**National Service Scheme (NSS)**

- NSS, launched in **1969** during the **birth centenary of Mahatma Gandhi**, is one of the flagship youth programmes of the Government of India.
- It aims to foster the personality and character development of students through voluntary community service, inspired by the **Gandhian ideals of selfless service**.
- The volunteers engage in diverse activities addressing issues of social relevance such as literacy and education, health and family welfare, environmental conservation, women's empowerment, disaster relief, Swachhata (cleanliness) drives, and programmes supporting economic and rural development.

4. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves (TOTR) Project is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and is implemented through the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). The NTCA prepared the project document and led implementation coordination with state forest departments.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The project is planned to be implemented during the period 2025–2028 (2025-26 to 2027-28) across 80 forest divisions in multiple states identified as high-conflict zones.

5. (a)

**Context:** The Prime Minister launched the **Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs- PM – SETU**.

**About**

- It is a **centrally sponsored scheme** to transform 1,000 Government ITIs across India into modern, industry-aligned training institutions.
- **PM-SETU** will follow a hub-and-spoke model, with **200 hub ITIs linked to 800 spoke ITIs**.

6. (c)

**About the Scheme**

- **Objective:** To supply up to 300 units of free electricity per month to 1 crore households by enabling them to install rooftop solar panels. It is the world's largest **domestic rooftop solar initiative**.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
- **Subsidy & Financial Support:** Households receive a central government subsidy covering up to 40% of the solar panel installation cost (₹30,000 per kW up to 2 kW, ₹18,000 per extra kW up to maximum ₹78,000 for systems larger than 3 kW).
- **Eligibility:** Any Indian citizen who owns a house with a suitable roof and has not previously installed rooftop solar benefitting from similar subsidy schemes.

7. (b)

**In News**

- The Union government is planning to promote the **PM-KUSUM** in African and island nations through the **International Solar Alliance**.

**PM-KUSUM Scheme**

- **About:** It is a flagship scheme launched by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in 2019.
- **Aim:** To provide financial support (subsidies of up to 30% or 50% of the total cost for standalone solar pumps) to farmers for installing **solar-powered irrigation systems** like solar pumps and grid-connected solar plants.
  - To deliver affordable and reliable solar energy to the agricultural sector, reducing irrigation costs and cutting pollution caused by diesel use.
- **Target:** The scheme aims to add about 34,800 MW of solar capacity by March 2026.
- **Scheme Components**
  - **Component A:** Setting up 10,000 MW of decentralized, grid-connected solar power plants (ground/stilt-mounted) on barren or cultivable land, by individuals, groups, or cooperatives.
  - **Component B:** Installation of 14 lakh standalone (off-grid) solar agriculture pumps, replacing diesel pumps for irrigation.
  - **Component C:** **Solarization of 35 lakh grid-connected agriculture pumps, including feeder-level solarization**, enabling farmers to use solar energy and sell excess power.

8. (c)

**Both statements are correct: PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana**

- It was launched in **2024** and aims to provide free electricity to households by facilitating the installation of rooftop solar panels.
- **Installation Targets:**

- **By October 2025:** Reaching 40 lakh,
- **March 2027:** 1 crore households.
- The scheme offers a **subsidy of up to 40%** to households, making renewable energy more affordable and accessible.
- **Eligibility:**

The household must be an Indian citizen.

The household must own a house with a roof that is suitable for installing solar panels.

The household must have a valid electricity connection.

The household must not have availed any other subsidy for solar panels.

#### 9. (b)

Vishwas Scheme – Reduction of Litigation

- To reduce the **large volume of litigations related to penal damages on delayed provident fund (PF) remittances**, the EPFO introduced the 'Vishwas Scheme'.
- **Purpose:** To promote trust-based compliance and significantly reduce litigation arising from the imposition of high penal damages on delayed PF payments by employers.
- Earlier penal rates were very high; these were reduced to a flat rate of 1% per month.

#### 10. (c)

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) conducted raids across Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala as part of Operation Chakra-V, arresting three individuals linked to a major transnational cyber fraud. It is part of CBI's ongoing efforts to dismantle transnational cyber enabled networks involved in large scale financial fraud targeting Indian citizens.

- It was launched by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 2022 with INTERPOL support, targeting organized cyber-enabled financial crime networks operating globally.

#### 11. (c)

**Context**

- **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan** for multi-modal connectivity has completed four years.

**PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (PMGS-NMP)**

- It was launched in **2021** for providing multimodal connectivity infrastructure to **various economic zones** and improving logistics efficiency across India.
- It is **not under a single ministry** but is coordinated by the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Aim:** To provide seamless and efficient connectivity for the movement of people, goods, and services across various modes of transport, thereby enhancing last-mile connectivity and reducing travel time.
- **PM GatiShakti is driven by seven engines:** Railways, Roads, Ports, Waterways, Airports, Mass Transport and Logistics Infrastructure.
- 57 Central Ministries/Departments including 8 Infrastructure, 22 Social and 27 Economic & other Ministries/Departments have been onboarded on PMGS NMP.



## 12. (b)

**The Ministry of Women and Child Development** has launched the revamped Mission Vatsalya Portal which is an **integrated Digital platform for all the stakeholders related to child protection services**.

- The earlier Khoya-Paya and TrackChild services have been brought under this unified portal.
- The key features of Mission Vatsalya Portal include single digital platform for use by the Stakeholders i.e. State Child Protection Society, State Adoption Resource Agency at State level and District Child Protection Unit, Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board, Special Juvenile Police Unit at District level and Child Care Institutions.

## 13. (b)

**In News** :The Government has introduced new flexibility under the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme to promote efficient water use and boost farmer income.

**Statement 1 is not correct** : The scheme “Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana: Per Drop More Crop” was launched by the Dept. of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India on 1st July 2015.

**Statement 2 is correct** : The scheme mainly focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at the farm level through Micro Irrigation (Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation System). Besides, it also supports micro-level water storage, and water conservation/management activities (Other Interventions) to supplement source creation for Micro Irrigation.

## 14. (b)

**Context**

- The Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Nirmala Sitharaman, interacted with interns of the Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS) at Hampi, Karnataka.

**About the Scheme**

- Launched by the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)**, PMIS is part of the Prime Minister’s package of five schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for Indian youth over a **5-year** period.
- Targets youth aged **21–24 years** who are currently not enrolled in any full-time academic program or employment.
- The internship will have a duration of **12 months** and plans to provide opportunities to **one crore youth** in the top 500 companies across India over the next five years.

## 15. (c)

**Context**

- The Union Finance Minister urged rural banks to enhance agricultural credit disbursement to meet the evolving financial needs of New Rural India, while reviewing the performance of Karnataka Grameena Bank (KaGB) in Ballari.

**Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme**

- The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme is designed to provide farmers with **adequate and timely credit** to meet their diverse financial needs. It helps farmers access institutional credit easily, ensuring their financial stability and agricultural productivity.
- The scheme offers support for:
  - **Cultivation and post-harvest activities:** Ensuring funds are available for cultivation and post-harvest costs.
  - **Marketing loans:** Helping farmers bridge financial gaps until they sell their produce at competitive market rates.



- **Household consumption needs:** Offering financial support to meet essential household expenses, preventing dependency on informal lending sources.
- **Working capital for farm assets:** Assisting in the maintenance of essential farming equipment and infrastructure.
- **Investment credit for allied activities:** Expanding financial access to animal husbandry, dairying, fisheries, and other agricultural extensions.
- Recognizing the importance of allied sectors, the KCC scheme was expanded in **2019** to include animal husbandry, dairying, and fisheries.
- Banks can provide collateral-free loans up to ₹1.60 lakh, ensuring financial security and fostering growth in these allied fields.

16. (b)

**Option b is correct:** The “We Rise” initiative, a collaboration between NITI Aayog’s Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and DP World, is designed to identify and mentor high-potential women-led MSMEs across India, helping them become export-ready and facilitating their access to global markets through trade facilitation, mentorship, and strategic partnerships.

17. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The acronym SMART in policing — Strict and Sensitive, Modern and Mobile, Alert and Accountable, Reliable and Responsive, Tech-savvy and Trained — was introduced by the Prime Minister in 2014 during the DGPs/IGPs Conference in Guwahati. It envisioned transforming Indian police into a citizen-centric, modern, and technology-driven force.

**Statement 2 correct:** The CyTrain portal is an initiative under the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), Ministry of Home Affairs. It provides online capacity-building and training for police officers, prosecutors, and other stakeholders on various aspects of cybercrime investigation, forensics, and digital evidence handling.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The Assistance to States for Modernisation of Police (ASUMP) scheme is not limited to central police forces. It is designed to support State Governments and UTs in modernising their police forces — including mobility, communication, weaponry, cyber infrastructure, and forensic capabilities.

18. (a)

**Context**

- The Union government launched the **Model Youth Gram Sabha (MYGS) initiative** along with a Training Module and the MYGS Portal in New Delhi.

**The Model Youth Gram Sabha (MYGS)**

- **The Model Youth Gram Sabha (MYGS)** is a pioneering initiative to strengthen Janbhagidari and promote participatory local governance by engaging students in simulated Gram Sabha sessions.
- **Aligned with National Education Policy 2020**, it aims to inculcate democratic values, civic responsibility and leadership among youth, nurturing future citizens committed to transparency, accountability and the vision of Viksit Bharat.
- The initiative is a joint effort of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.**
- The initiative will be rolled out across more than **1,000 schools** nationwide, including Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs), Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs), and State Government Schools.



# DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. With reference to President's Bodyguard (PBG), consider the following statements:
  1. It is the oldest regiment of the Indian Army, tracing its origins back to 1773.
  2. It is the only Regiment that is permitted two 'Standards', namely the President's Standard of Body Guard and the Regimental Standard of The PBG.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
2. Which of the following correctly describes the Tomahawk missile?
  - (a) A long-range cruise missile developed by the United States
  - (b) A short-range ballistic missile developed by Russia
  - (c) A medium-range surface-to-air missile developed by China
  - (d) A hypersonic missile developed jointly by NATO countries
3. With reference to H125 Helicopters, which of the statements given below are incorrect?
  - (a) The Final Assembly Line (FAL) for the H125 will be located in Vemagal, Karnataka, marking India's first private sector helicopter assembly facility.
  - (b) The H125 is a twin-engine helicopter designed exclusively for combat missions.
  - (c) The H125 is the only helicopter to have landed on Mount Everest.
  - (d) The H125 was formerly known as the Eurocopter AS350.
4. Exercise KONKAN, an annual bilateral maritime exercise, is conducted between India and which one of the following countries?
  - (a) France
  - (b) United Kingdom
  - (c) Japan
  - (d) Australia
5. The motto of the Indian Air Force, "Touch the Sky with Glory (Nabham Sparsham Deeptam)", is derived from which ancient text?
  - (a) Rig Veda
  - (b) Arthashastra
  - (c) Bhagavad Gita
  - (d) Manusmriti
6. What is SAKSHAM, recently procured by the Indian Army?
  - (a) A missile defense system developed by DRDO
  - (b) An indigenously developed counter-drone system

- (c) A satellite-based surveillance system for border monitoring
- (d) A long-range artillery targeting system

**7.** Consider the following statements regarding Exercise AUSTRALIND:

1. It is a bilateral military exercise between India and Austria.
2. It was first launched in 2022 in Rajasthan.

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

**8.** 'Sada Tanzeem' is a military exercise between India and which of the following countries?

- (a) Iran
- (b) Qatar
- (c) Senegal
- (d) Saudi Arabia

**9.** The NOMADIC ELEPHANT is a Joint Military Exercise between India and which one of the following countries?

- (a) Japan
- (b) Mongolia
- (c) Russia
- (d) Australia

**10.** Consider the following statements with reference to the National Security Guard (NSG):

1. It was established in 1986 and is modelled on the pattern of GSG-9 of Germany.
2. It comprises personnel from Army and the Central Armed Police Forces as well as State Police Forces.
3. It is the federal Contingency World Class Zero Error Force to deal with anti-terrorist activities in all its manifestation.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All the three
- (d) None

**11.** The Samudra Shakti exercise is conducted between which among the following countries?

- (a) India and Japan
- (b) India and Indonesia
- (c) India and Australia
- (d) India and the United States

**12.** Consider the following statements about the Su-57 fighter aircraft:

1. The Su-57, also called Felon, is a single-seat, twin-engine, fourth-generation stealth multirole fighter.

2. Its top speed is Mach 5, and it is developed by Russia's Sukhoi Company.

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

**13.** With reference to the 'Maoism or Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) in India', consider the following statements:

- 1. It traces its roots to the Naxalbari uprising of 1967 in West Bengal.
- 2. It is primarily concentrated in remote, forested, and tribal regions.

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

**14.** Consider the following statements about the BrahMos missile:

- 1. It is a joint venture between DRDO (India) and NPO Mashinostroyeniya (Russia).
- 2. It is a two-stage missile with a solid propellant booster engine.

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

**15.** Which of the following statements about the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) is/are correct?

- 1. It was launched in 2010 by restructuring the earlier Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).
- 2. It is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at reducing rural poverty through self-employment and skilled wage employment.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**16.** With reference to the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar, consider the following statements:

- 1. It aims to celebrate outstanding contributions by scientists, technologists, and innovators in diverse fields of science and technology.
- 2. The award is organized and presented by the Ministry of Science and Technology.
- 3. The Vigyan Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar (VY-SSB) award is conferred upon scientists up to the age of 35 years.

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

17. The Burevestnik missile, recently in news, is significant because—
- (a) It uses nuclear propulsion, theoretically giving it unlimited range and endurance.
  - (b) It is designed for launching from submarines for underwater nuclear deterrence.
  - (c) It is the first missile to use hypersonic glide technology.
  - (d) It is a short-range battlefield tactical missile.
18. SJ-100, recently seen in the news, is
- (a) A twin-engine, narrow-body civil passenger aircraft to be manufactured in India by HAL in collaboration with Russia's UAC.
  - (b) An indigenous light combat aircraft developed under India's Tejas programme.
  - (c) A supersonic business jet designed jointly by ISRO and DRDO.
  - (d) A cargo aircraft developed by the Indian Air Force for regional operations.
19. The Poseidon underwater drone, recently in the news for being tested successfully, belongs to which of the following countries?
- (a) United States
  - (b) China
  - (c) Russia
  - (d) North Korea
20. Exercise Trishul 2025, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) Joint coastal surveillance exercise between India and Sri Lanka
  - (b) Counter-terror operations in the Northeastern region
  - (c) A tri-service military exercise involving the Army, Navy, and Air Force
  - (d) Naval humanitarian assistance and disaster relief drill in the Indian Ocean

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

**In News :** President Droupadi Murmu presented the **Diamond Jubilee Silver Trumpet and Trumpet Banner to the President's Bodyguard (PBG)**, marking 75 years since it was designated as the elite regiment in 1950.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** The President's Bodyguard is the **oldest regiment of the Indian Army**, tracing its origins back to **1773** when it was raised as the **Governor-General's Bodyguard**, later known as the **Viceroy's Bodyguard**.

- Following India's transition to a republic, the regiment was renamed the **President's Bodyguard on January 27, 1950**.
- The PBG is the only Regiment that is permitted two 'Standards', namely the President's Standard of Body Guard and the Regimental Standard of The PBG.

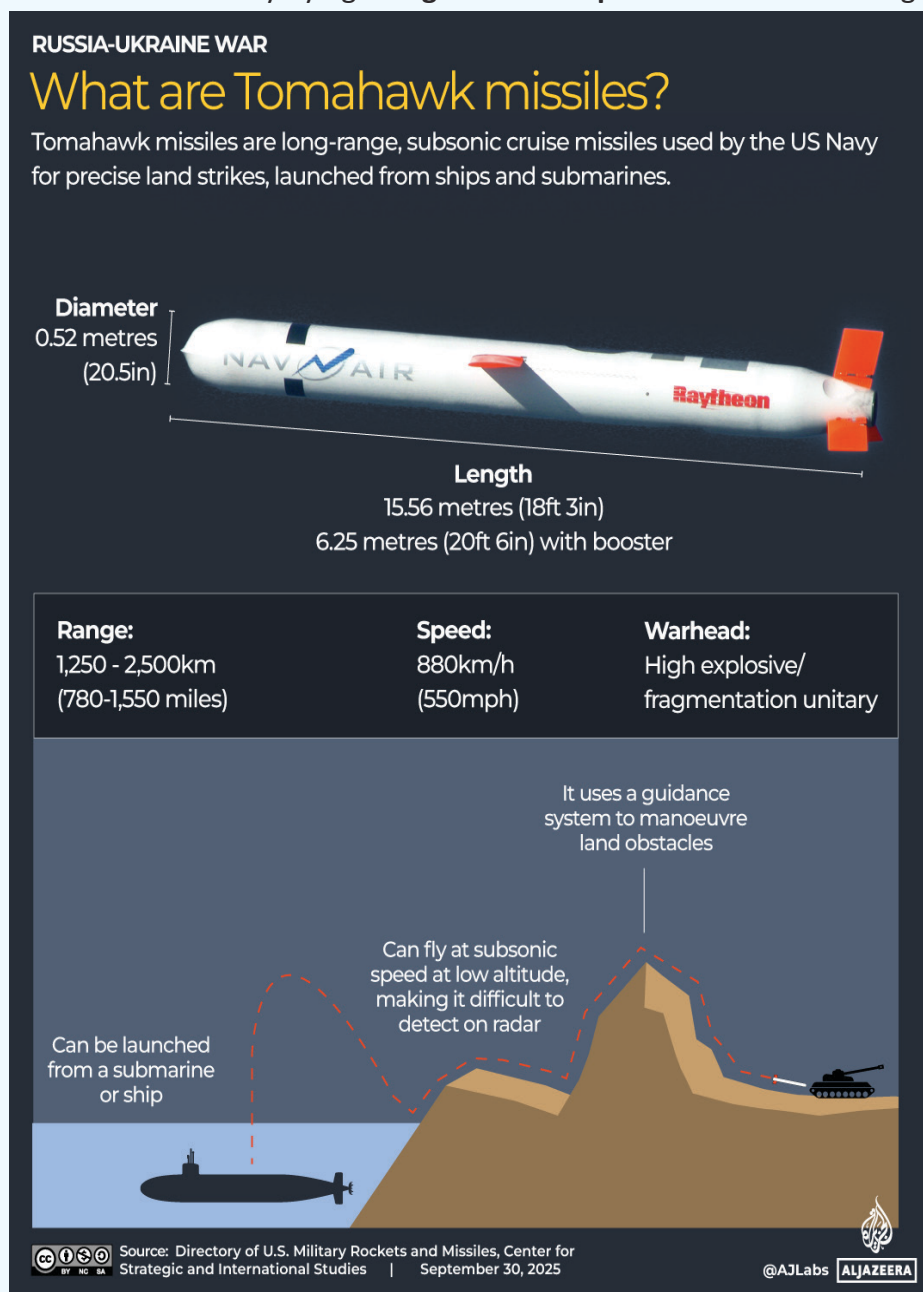
2. (a)

**Context**

- Ukraine has requested long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles from the United States.

### What are Tomahawk missiles?

- Tomahawks are long-range subsonic cruise missiles that can be launched from ships, submarines or ground launchers.
- They have long-range, deep-strike capabilities, and can hit targets **1,250km-2,500km away**.
- They carry high-explosive warheads designed to penetrate hardened targets like military bunkers.
- They **avoid radar detection** by flying at **high subsonic speeds** while maintaining low altitudes.



### 3. (b)

#### Context

- Airbus Helicopters, in partnership with Tata Advanced Systems, is setting up a final assembly line for the **Indian made H125 utility helicopter** in **Vemagal, Karnataka**.

#### About H125 Helicopters

- **The Airbus H125 is a light, single-engine** utility helicopter known for its versatility and exceptional performance in high-altitude and high-temperature conditions.
  - The H125 was formerly known as the **Eurocopter AS350**.

- The H125 will cater to civil needs like emergency medical services, tourism, disaster relief, and law enforcement, while its **military version (H125M)** will serve India's armed forces, especially in high-altitude areas like the Himalayas.
- The H125 is the only helicopter to have landed on **Mount Everest**.

#### 4. (b)

##### Context

- India and the United Kingdom conducted the 2025 edition of Exercise KONKAN, an annual bilateral maritime exercise that began in 2004.

##### About

- The exercise comprised a **Harbour Phase**, involving professional exchanges, cross-deck visits, and operational discussions, and a **Sea Phase** featuring complex drills in anti-air, anti-surface, and anti-submarine warfare, along with carrier-based flying operations.
- The 2025 edition marks the first-ever participation of both nations' **Carrier Strike Groups (CSGs)** — the UK's HMS Prince of Wales and India's INS Vikrant.
- Exercise KONKAN reinforces the **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership under the India-UK Vision 2035**, highlighting a shared commitment to a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.

#### 5. (c)

##### Context

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) celebrated its **93rd anniversary** with a ceremonial parade at Air Force Station Hindon.

##### Key Points

- **About:** Initially known as the **Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF)**, the Indian Air Force was established on **October 8, 1932**, as an auxiliary air force under British rule.
- **Historical Background:** The RIAF's maiden operational flight took off on April 1, 1933, carrying six RAF-trained officers and 19 Havai Sepoys (air soldiers).
  - Due to its outstanding performance during **World War II**, the RIAF was granted the "Royal" prefix in 1945. The prefix was officially dropped and the force was renamed the 'Indian Air Force', when **India became a republic in 1950**, following its independence on August 15, 1947, following 200 years of **British colonial rule**.
  - The Indian Air Force has a **distinguished history** of being heavily involved in several of India's most important wars. These include the **Sino-Indian War of 1962 and the Indo-Pak wars of 1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999**.
  - Additionally, the force participated in important actions like **Operation Safed Sagar** during the Kargil war in 1999, **Operation Poomalai** in 1987 and the recent Operation Sindoor in May 2025.
- **Motto:** The motto of IAF is **Touch the sky with Glory (Nabham Sparsham Deeptam)**, which has been taken from the **eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita**.

#### 6. (b)

##### In News

- The Indian Army has initiated the procurement of **SAKSHAM (Situational Awareness for Kinetic Soft and Hard Kill Assets Management)**.

##### About

- It is an indigenously developed **Counter-Unmanned Aerial System (CUAS) Grid System**, to bolster operational readiness against emerging drone threats.
- It is a **modular Command and Control (C2) system** that integrates real-time sensor data, AI-driven analytics, and counter-drone capabilities to secure the **Tactical Battlefield Space (TBS)**.



- TBS is an airspace domain extending up to 3,000 metres (10,000 feet) above ground level.
- It was developed in collaboration with **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**.

7. (b)

#### In News

- The **4th edition of Exercise AUSTRAHIND 2025** began in Australia.

#### About the Exercise

- **AUSTRAHIND**, launched in **2022** in **Rajasthan**, has evolved into an **annual bilateral military exercise**, held alternately in **India and Australia**.
- The 2025 edition focuses on **joint company-level operations** in **open and semi-desert terrain**, including **joint planning, tactical drills, and special arms skills**.

8. (d)

**“Sada Tanseeq”** is a joint military exercise between India and Saudi Arabia, designed to improve interoperability and cooperation between the two nations’ armed forces.

- The inaugural edition took place in 2024.

9. (b)

#### Context

- India and Mongolia inked **10 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** during a bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa in New Delhi.

#### Brief on India-Mongolia Relations

- **Political Cooperation:** Diplomatic relations between India and Mongolia were established on 24 December **1955**.
  - 2025 marks the **70th anniversary** of India-Mongolia diplomatic relations.
  - India supported Mongolia in having **UN and NAM** memberships.
  - Mongolia has consistently backed India’s bid for a permanent seat in the **UN Security Council**.
- **Defence Cooperation:** The Joint India–Mongolia military exercise **‘Nomadic Elephant’** is held annually, focusing on counter-insurgency and peacekeeping operations.

10. (c)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that a new NSG hub will be set up in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh.

- This will be the seventh NSG hub, joining existing ones in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, and Jammu.

**Statements 1,2 and 3 are correct:** The National Security Guard (NSG) was established in 1986 as a Federal Contingency Force to combat terrorism, following a Cabinet decision in 1984.

- It is modeled on the UK’s SAS and Germany’s GSG-9, its philosophy emphasizes swift strikes and rapid withdrawal.
- It comprises two units: the Special Action Group (Army) and Special Ranger Groups (CAPFs/ State Police), tasked with handling all forms of terrorism nationwide.
- It was established to create a Federal Contingency Force composed of highly motivated, specially equipped, and well-trained personnel to combat terrorism.

11. (b)

#### Context

- The Indian Navy is hosting the fifth edition of the Indo-Indonesian Joint Bilateral Maritime Exercise, **‘Samudra Shakti – 2025’** at Visakhapatnam.

**About**

- Exercise '**Samudra Shakti**' is a key bilateral engagement aimed at enhancing interoperability, strengthening mutual understanding, and sharing best practices between the two navies.
  - The exercise was first conducted in **2018**.
- **Exercise Phases:**
  - **Harbour Phase:** Aimed at building camaraderie and professional understanding.
  - **Sea Phase:** Focused on complex operational coordination. Includes Helicopter Operations, Air Defence Exercises, Weapon Firing Drills, and Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) exercises.

**12. (d)****Context**

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is now considering a proposal from Russia to procure the **Su-57 fifth-generation fighter jets**, which may also involve manufacturing them locally in India.

**About the Su-57:**

- Developed by Russia's **Sukhoi Company**, the Su-57, also called Felon, is a **twin-engine, single-seat, fifth-generation stealth multirole fighter**.
- **Role:** Air superiority and strike missions; capable of engaging both **aerial and ground targets**.
- **First flight:** 2010.
- **Top speed:** Mach 2 (~2,136 km/h).
- **Combat range:** ~1,900 km.
- **Maximum takeoff weight:** ~35 metric tons.
- **Stealth & survivability:** Low radar cross-section, reduced infrared and electro-optical signatures; designed for covert operations.

**13. (c)**

**In News:** In a significant development for internal security and peace efforts, 210 Maoists surrendered in **Dandakaranya region of Chhattisgarh**, following a similar event in Maharashtra, as a part of a broader strategy by the Union and state governments to **abandon violence and embrace rehabilitation**.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- It was rooted in radical communist ideology, advocating **armed struggle to overthrow the state and establish a classless society**.
- **LWE in India** traces its roots to the **Naxalbari uprising of 1967 in West Bengal**, inspired by **Mao Zedong's revolutionary tactics**.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- Maoist activity is **primarily concentrated in remote, forested, and tribal regions**, especially in states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha.
- Urban operations are rare and mostly limited to ideological propaganda.

**14. (c)**

**Context:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath flagged off the first batch of BrahMos missiles manufactured at the BrahMos Aerospace unit in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

**About BrahMos Missile**

- **Joint Venture:** Between **DRDO (India)** and **NPO Mashinostroyeniya (Russia)**.
- **Name Origin:** Derived from the **Brahmaputra (India)** and **Moskva (Russia)** rivers.

- **First Test:** Conducted on **June 12, 2001**.
  - **Induction Timeline:** Navy (2005), Army (2007) and IAF (2017).
- **Type:** “*Fire and forget*” supersonic cruise missile — can be launched from **land, sea, or air** in all-weather conditions, and is nearly **impossible to intercept**.
- **Combat Use:** Reportedly used for the first time during **Operation Sindoor**.
- **Speed:**
  - Current: Mach 2.8 (Supersonic)
  - Future: Mach 5+ (Hypersonic version under development)
- **Range:**
  - Initially 290 km (under MTCR limit)
  - Extended to **400 km**, with a **600+ km** variant under development.
- **Stages:** BrahMos is a **two-stage missile** with a solid propellant booster engine.
  - Its first stage brings the missile to supersonic speed and then gets separated.
  - The liquid ramjet or the second stage then takes the missile closer to three times the speed of sound in the cruise phase.

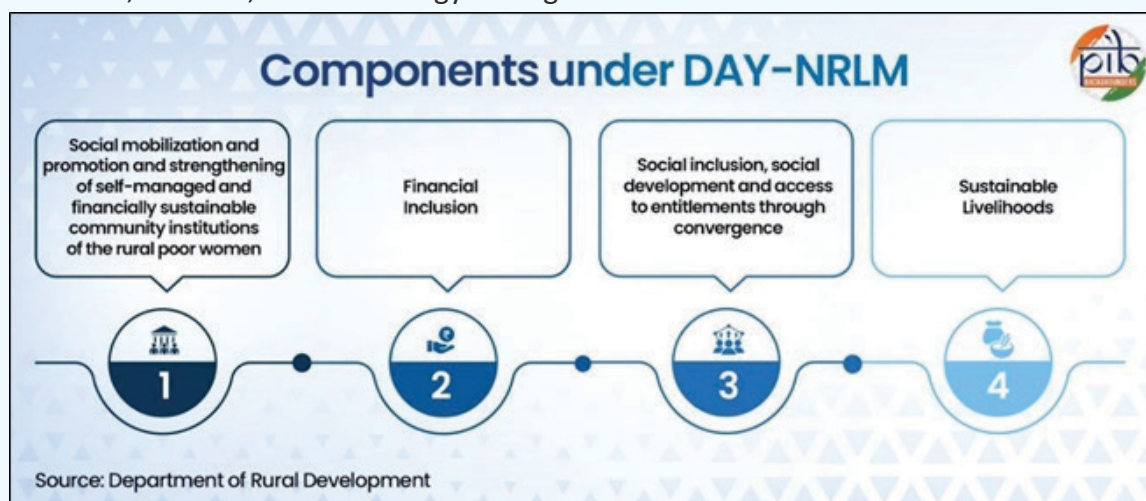
15. (c)

**Context**

- The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM), implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development, is one of the world’s largest poverty alleviation programmes.

**About the Mission**

- **Launch:** It was launched in 2010 by restructuring the earlier Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), the initiative was renamed in 2016 as Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- **Aim:** It is a centrally sponsored scheme, aimed to reduce rural poverty through self-employment and skilled wage employment.
- **Women Centric Model:** The mission promotes economic independence by linking women to credit, markets, and technology through SHGs and federations.



16. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** The Government of India (GoI) has announced the **full list of winners of Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025**.

- **Aim:** To celebrate outstanding contributions by scientists, technologists, and innovators in diverse fields of science, technology, and technology-led innovation.
- The award is organized and presented by the **Ministry of Science and Technology**.

**Statement 3 is not correct: Vigyan Yuva-Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar (VY-SSB) award will recognise and encourage young scientists up to the age of 45 years who have made an exceptional contribution in any field of science and technology.**

17. (a)

The Burevestnik missile is a Russian nuclear-powered cruise missile with nuclear propulsion, designed to offer virtually unlimited range and endurance, far exceeding any conventional missile. It is not specifically designed for submarine launch; it is a ground-launched system. It is not the first missile to use hypersonic glide technology, nor is it a short-range battlefield tactical missile.

18. (a)

**Context:** The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Russia's United Aircraft Corporation (UAC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for production of civil commuter aircraft **SJ-100**.

**About**

- The **SJ-100** is a **twin-engine, narrow-body** passenger aircraft. So far, over **200 units** have been produced and are operated by **more than 16 commercial airlines** worldwide.
- Under this collaboration, **HAL will have the rights to manufacture the SJ-100** for domestic customers — a move expected to be a **game changer for short-haul connectivity** under the **UDAN Scheme**.
- This will also mark the **first time a complete passenger aircraft is produced in India** since the **AVRO HS-748**, which HAL manufactured between **1961 and 1988**.
- The SJ-100 project is not only a step towards '**Aatmanirbharta**' in **civil aviation**, but will also **strengthen the private sector**, and **generate employment** across the aviation manufacturing ecosystem.

19. (c)

**In News**

- Russia has successfully tested a Poseidon drone declaring it impossible to intercept.

**Poseidon drone**

- It is a new atomic-powered and nuclear-capable underwater drone.
- It outperforms all existing systems in speed and depth.
- It is designed to travel at a speed of up to 200 kph (124 mph) significantly faster than any existing torpedoes or warships.
- It is designed to evade defenses to cause a tsunami powerful enough to devastate a coastal city.

20. (c)

**Context**

- India has launched **Exercise Trishul 2025**, a **major tri-service military exercise** across **Gujarat and Rajasthan**, involving the **Army, Navy, and Air Force**.

**About the exercise**

- **Exercise Trishul 2025** is the **largest tri-service exercise** since the **Operation Sindoor** strikes six months ago.
- The **Kutch region of Gujarat**, near the **Sir Creek border**—a long-standing flashpoint with Pakistan—forms the core area of operations.
- More than **20,000 troops**, supported by T-90S and Arjun tanks, attack helicopters, missile systems, **Rafale and Sukhoi-30MKI fighters**, as well as a **fleet of frigates and destroyers**, are conducting joint operations along the western front.



# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Consider the following statements with reference to India-European Free Trade Association Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA).
1. TEPA is India's first Free Trade Agreement to include commitments on investment and job creation
  2. TEPA aims to attract USD 100 billion in foreign direct investment over 15 years and generate 1 million direct jobs in India.
  3. The EFTA's market access offer under TEPA covers 100% of non-agri products and tariff concession on Processed Agricultural Products (PAP).
  4. India's Sensitive sectors are protected, including pharma, medical devices and processed food.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

2. With reference to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), consider the following statements:
1. ICAO is a specialized UN agency which was established in 1995 for safe and sustainable global air travel.
  2. The ICAO Assembly, held every year and comprises 36 signatory States to the Chicago Convention.
  3. India has been a member of ICAO since 2001 and has maintained an uninterrupted presence.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

3. Consider the following statements with reference to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO):
1. It is a political and military alliance of countries from Europe and North America founded in 1991.
  2. It is founded on the principle of collective defence, meaning an attack on one ally is considered an attack on all.

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

4. With reference to UNESCO, consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1945 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. It is a specialised agency of the United Nations.
3. India is one of its founding members.

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

5. With reference to the 'Insurrection Act' of the United States (US), consider the following statements:

1. It allows the US President to declare martial law.
2. It applies exclusively to domestic situations like rebellion, insurrection, or obstruction of federal law within US borders.

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

6. The Moscow Format, recently in the news, is primarily related to:

- (a) Climate change negotiations in Central Asia
- (b) Coordinating regional efforts for peace and stability in Afghanistan
- (c) Trade agreements among Central Asian countries
- (d) Ukraine-Russia conflict negotiations

7. The Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA), recently in the news, was signed between which two countries?

- (a) United States and China
- (b) United States and Russia
- (c) Russia and United Kingdom
- (d) France and Russia

8. With reference to UN peacekeeping, consider the following statements:

1. UN peacekeeping operations began in 1948 with the creation of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to monitor ceasefires in the Middle East.
2. Initially unarmed and focused on observation, UNTSO missions remained limited during the Cold War due to global tensions.

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



9. With reference to the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), consider the following statements:
1. The UNHRC is an intergovernmental body with 47 members.
  2. It was established in 2006, replacing the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
  3. Each member serves a term of four years, with no restriction on consecutive terms.

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

10. Consider the following countries:

1. Brazil
2. Argentina
3. Paraguay
4. Uruguay

Which of the above countries are members of the MERCOSUR bloc?

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

11. With reference to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), consider the following statements:

1. The concept of non-alignment was first formulated at the Bandung Conference in 1955.
2. The idea of non-alignment was inspired by leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, Josip Tito, and Gamal Abdel Nasser.
3. The first official NAM summit was held in Belgrade in 1961, emphasizing self-determination, national independence, and opposition to colonialism.

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

12. Consider the following statements with reference to India-Japan Fund (IJF).

1. It is managed by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in collaboration with Niti Ayog.
2. It targets both green industries and high-emission sectors transitioning to low-carbon strategies.

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



- 13.** With reference to the 'United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)', consider the following statements:
1. Every member state has one equal vote in the General Assembly.
  2. Its decisions are legally binding on member states.
  3. It controls UN peacekeeping operations.
  4. Its official languages include Arabic, Chinese, and Russian.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 14.** With reference to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is an intergovernmental organization established by the G20 to examine and develop measures to combat money laundering.
2. FATF has more than 80 members including India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- 15.** Which of the following best explains the West Bank geopolitical significance in the Middle East?

- (a) It is central to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and affects regional stability
- (b) It controls major maritime trade routes
- (c) It is the headquarters of the Arab League
- (d) It is a major oil-producing region in the Middle East

- 16.** With reference to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, consider the following statements:

1. The convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1999 and entered into force in 2002.
2. It encourages countries to freeze funds linked to terrorist activities and share information to prevent financing.
3. India is not a signatory to the convention.

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

- 17.** The Samarkand Resolution adopted in 2024, primarily focuses on:

- (a) Enhancing trade cooperation among Central Asian countries.
- (b) Promoting sustainable mining in mountain regions.

- (c) Strengthening snow leopard conservation and climate adaptation measures.
- (d) Establishing a new international fund for mountain tourism.

**18.** Consider the following statements regarding the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport (2005):

1. It is the first legally binding international instrument against doping in sports.
2. It entered into force in 2007 after being adopted by the 33rd UNESCO General Conference.
3. It is the most ratified convention in UNESCO's history.

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

**19.** Which of the following countries has recently become the 11th and newest member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)?

- (a) Papua New Guinea
- (b) East Timor
- (c) Sri Lanka
- (d) Maldives

**20.** With reference to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand by six founding members.
2. The headquarters of ASEAN is located in Jakarta, Indonesia.
3. As of 2025, ASEAN has 11 member countries.

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

**21.** With reference to the 'New Strategic EU-India Agenda', consider the following statements:

1. It aims to accelerate negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and Investment Protection Agreement (IPA).
2. It has a provision of linking India's Carbon Market with the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

**22.** With reference to the East Asia Summit (EAS), consider the following statements:

1. It is a leaders-led forum established in 2005 to promote dialogue and cooperation on political, strategic, and economic issues in East Asia.

2. All ASEAN Member States and eight Dialogue Partners, including India, are members of the EAS.
3. The first East Asia Summit was held in Bangkok, Thailand.
4. The United States and Russia are members of the EAS.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**23.** With reference to The International Solar Alliance (ISA), consider the following statements:

1. It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization, launched in 2015 by India and France at the COP21 summit.
2. It has the goal of mobilizing USD 1 trillion in solar investments by 2045.

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

**24.** With reference to the United Nations Convention against Cybercrime, consider the following statements:

1. It is the first universal and legally binding treaty to establish a global framework for investigating and prosecuting online offences.
2. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) serves as the secretariat for the Convention.

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

**25.** 'G-2' recently, seen in the news, is related to which of the following countries?

1. India
2. U.S.
3. France
4. China

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

## EXPLANATIONS

## 1. (d)

India-European Free Trade Association(EFTA) Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) came into effect .

- The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is the intergovernmental organisation of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. It was set up in 1960 by its then seven Member States for the promotion of free trade and economic integration between its members.

Statements 1,2 ,3 and 4 are correct : The India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)

- TEPA is a modern and ambitious agreement that incorporates, **for the first time in any Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed by India**, a commitment linked to investment and job creation.
  - The agreement was signed in March 2024 at New Delhi.
- It comprises of 14 chapters with main focus on market access related to goods, rules of origin, trade facilitation, trade remedies, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, investment promotion, market access on services, intellectual property rights, trade and sustainable development and other legal and horizontal provisions.
- EFTA has committed to **100% tariff elimination** on non-agricultural goods and concessions on processed agricultural products, covering 99.6% of India's exports.
  - It aims to attract **USD 100 billion** in foreign direct investment over 15 years and generate 1 million direct jobs in India.
- Covers 82.7% of tariff lines (95.3% of EFTA exports), with protections for sensitive sectors like pharma, food, dairy, and gold.

## 2. (d)

**In News:** India has been re-elected to Part II of the Council of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for the 2025-2028 term, reflecting increased global confidence in its leadership in international civil aviation.

**All the statements are incorrect :** Council of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a **specialized UN agency established in 1944** that helps 193 countries collaborate for safe, efficient, and sustainable global air travel.

- **Part II of the ICAO Council comprises States** making the largest contribution to the provision of facilities for international civil air navigation
- **The ICAO Assembly**, held every **three years**, is the sovereign body of the organization and comprises all **193 signatory States** to the **Chicago Convention**.
  - The 36-member Council, elected during the Assembly, serves as ICAO's governing body for a three-year term.
- **India has been a founding member** of ICAO since **1944** and has maintained an uninterrupted presence on the Council for 81 years.
- The country continues to play a pivotal role in shaping ICAO's mission to promote safe, secure, sustainable, and inclusive international civil aviation.

## 3. (b)

**In News:** Recently , Poland announced plans to join the NATO Pipeline System (NPS) with a €4.7 billion investment. **NATO Pipeline System (NPS)** was established during the **Cold War**, and supplies fuel and lubricants to NATO forces with modern flexibility.

**Statement 1 is not correct :** **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** is a **political and military alliance** which was founded in 1949 and is a group of 32 countries from Europe and North America that exists to protect the people and territory of its members.

**Statement 2 is correct :** NATO is founded on the principle of collective defence, meaning that if one NATO Ally is attacked, then all NATO Allies are attacked.

4. (b)

#### About UNESCO

- UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) was established in 1945, with its constitution coming into force in 1946.
- It aims to promote peace and security through international cooperation in education, science, culture, and communication.
- **Headquartered in Paris, France, UNESCO** had 194 member states and 12 associate members as of July 2025.
- **India** has been a founding member since 1948, hosting two UNESCO offices.
- Key Publications of UNESCO are Global Education Monitoring Report, United Nations World Water Development Report, UNESCO Science Report: Towards 2030, and Global Ocean Science Report.

5. (b)

**In News:** Recently, the US President threatened to authorize the deployment of the **Insurrection Act, 1807** citing rising crime and unrest.

#### Statement 1 is not correct

- The **Insurrection Act** permits the deployment of military forces to enforce laws or suppress rebellion, but it **does not authorize martial law**.
  - **Martial law** involves the **suspension of civil authority and legal protections**, which the **Insurrection Act does not grant**.
- The **Posse Comitatus Act** generally prohibits military involvement in civilian law enforcement.
  - The Insurrection Act is a narrow exception, not a blanket authorization.

#### Statement 2 is correct

- The **Insurrection Act** is intended for violent insurrections or lawlessness that obstruct federal law.
- It applies **exclusively to domestic situations** like **rebellion, insurrection, or obstruction of federal law within US borders**.
- The last **major use was in 1992** during the **Los Angeles riots**.

6. (d)

#### In News

- India, China, Pakistan attend 10-nation Moscow Format talks that inducts Mr. Muttaqi, as an “official” member for the first time.

#### About

- The Moscow Format is a regional diplomatic initiative established in 2017 to address the Afghanistan conflict, promote stability, and foster national reconciliation.
- It serves as a platform for regional countries to coordinate on Afghan peace and stability.
- Its members are India, Afghanistan, China, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

7. (b)

#### Context

- Russia’s lower house of parliament approved withdrawal from the **Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA)** with the United States.

**About PMDA**

- Signed in **2000** and effective from **2011**, the agreement required both countries to dispose of **34 tonnes of weapons-grade plutonium each** — enough for around **17,000 nuclear warheads**.
- The goal was to convert weapons-grade plutonium into safer forms, such as **mixed oxide (MOX) fuel** or irradiating it in **fast-neutron reactors** for electricity production.
- Russia had already suspended implementation in **2016**, claiming the U.S. did not adhere to the agreement.

8. (c)

**In News**

- The United Nations is going to reduce its global peacekeeping operations by 25%, with 13,000–14,000 personnel expected to withdraw from nine missions due to significant U.S. funding cuts.

**UN Peacekeeping**

- It is a key mechanism used by the United Nations to maintain global peace and security.
- It operates alongside other UN efforts, including conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding. **Origin** : It began in 1948 with the creation of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to monitor ceasefires in the Middle East.
  - Initially unarmed and focused on observation, missions remained limited during the Cold War due to global tensions.
- **Expansion** : The 1990s saw a major expansion, with the UN deploying multidimensional operations that integrated military, political, and humanitarian efforts to address civil conflicts, support governance, and protect human rights.

9. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct: The Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental body** within the United Nations with **47 members**.

- The Council was formed by the General Assembly in **2006**, when India was elected to its first term.
- **It promotes and protects human rights** around the world, reviews the situation in member countries, and provides a forum to discuss issues.
- The Human Rights Council replaced the **former United Nations Commission on Human Rights**.

**Statement 3 is not correct: Elections take place every year.** Seats are equitably distributed among the five UN regional groups, with one-third of the members being renewed each year.

- Each member serves a **three-year term**.
- **Membership is limited to two consecutive terms**.

10. (d)

**In News:** Recently, **India and Brazil** agreed to expand the scope of the existing **Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)** under **MERCOSUR bloc**, aiming to include more sectors and products.

- **MERCOSUR** is a prominent **South American trade bloc** — reflects its strategic intent to diversify trade partnerships and deepen **South-South cooperation**.
- It was established in 1991, includes **Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay** as founding members.

#### 11. (d)

**All three statements are correct: Bandung Conference (1955):** The concept of non-alignment was formulated during the Bandung Conference, where newly independent nations sought to **avoid entanglement in the Cold War's ideological divide**.

- **It was inspired by three world leaders:** Nehru of India, Tito of Yugoslavia and Nasser of Egypt.
- **Belgrade Summit (1961):** The first NAM summit in Belgrade formalized the movement, emphasizing support for self-determination, national independence, and opposition to colonialism and imperialism.
- **Ten Bandung Principles:**
  - Respect for fundamental human rights, and the Charter of the United Nations.
  - Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations.
  - Recognition of the equality of all races and nations.
  - Non-interference in internal affairs of another country.
  - Respect for the right of each nation to defend itself, singly or collectively.
  - Abstention from the use of arrangement of collective defense to serve the particular interests of any of the big powers.
  - Mutual non-aggression.
  - Peaceful coexistence and settlement of disputes.
  - Promotion of mutual interests and cooperation; and
  - Respect for justice and international obligations.

#### 12. (b)

**In News :** The India-Japan Fund (IJF) has invested ₹500 crore in Eka Mobility, a leading Indian electric commercial vehicle manufacturer, to support its expansion, R&D, supply chain, and marketing efforts.

**Statement 1 is not correct : India-Japan Fund (IJF)** is managed by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIF).

- It is a strategic bilateral partnership which seeks to invest in India's environment preservation sector

**Statement 2 is correct :** India-Japan Fund (IJF) also explores opportunities to partner with Japanese companies investing into India.

- **It targets both green industries and high-emission sectors transitioning to low-carbon strategies.**

#### 13. (b)

**In News:** Multilateralism remains essential to global cooperation amid ongoing geopolitical tensions, climate crises, and rising nationalism.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- The UNGA operates on the **principle of sovereign equality**—each of the 193 member states has **one equal vote**, regardless of size or power.
- Non-member observer states (like the Vatican or Palestine) can participate in debates but cannot vote.



**Statement 2 is not correct**

- UNGA resolutions are **recommendatory, not legally binding**.
- Only Security Council (UNSC) resolutions under Chapter VII of the UN Charter **carry legal force**.

**Statement 3 is not correct**

- Peacekeeping operations are directed and authorized by the UN Security Council (UNSC), not the General Assembly.

**Statement 4 is correct**

- The **six official languages** of the UNGA are **Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish**.

**14. (d)****Context**

- Iran has ratified a law to join the **United Nations International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (CFT)** in a bid to align with global financial norms.

**About**

- **FATF status:** As of October 2025, Iran remains on the **FATF blacklist** for its failure to adopt sufficient anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CFT) standards.
  - The ratification is seen as a first step toward potential re-evaluation by the FATF.

**Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**

- **The Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** is an intergovernmental organization which leads global action to tackle money laundering, terrorist and proliferation financing.
- **History:** FATF was established in **1989** by the **G7** to examine and develop measures to combat money laundering. It originally included the G7 countries, the European Commission and eight other countries.
  - **In 2001**, the FATF expanded its mandate to also combat terrorist financing.
- **Members:** FATF has **40** members including **India**.
- FATF has the authority to issue warnings and sanctions against countries that fail to comply with its standards, such as suspension of membership and blacklisting.

**FATF 'Grey list' and 'Blacklist'**

- **Black List:** Countries known as Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs) are put on the Blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities.
- **Grey List:** Countries that are considered a safe haven for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the FATF Grey list.

**15. (a)****Context**

- Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, has given preliminary approval to the bill titled "Application of Israeli Sovereignty in Judea and Samaria, 2025," aimed at applying Israeli law to the occupied West Bank.

**About West bank**

- The West Bank is a **landlocked territory in the Middle East** that is a central part of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- It lies to the **west of the Jordan River** and is bordered by Israel to the west, north, and south, and by Jordan and the **Dead Sea** to the east.



### History and political status

- **British Mandate:** From 1920 to 1947, the area was part of the British-mandated territory of Palestine.
- **1948–1967:** After the **1948 Arab-Israeli War**, the West Bank was occupied and later annexed by Jordan. This annexation was not widely recognized internationally.
- **1967 Six-Day War:** Israel captured the West Bank during the 1967 Six-Day War and argues that the area is “**disputed**” rather than “**occupied**.”
- **Oslo Accords:** Beginning with the **1993 Oslo Accords**, parts of the West Bank were put under varying degrees of Palestinian self-rule through the Palestinian Authority (PA).
- **International status:** The international community overwhelmingly considers the West Bank to be occupied territory.
  - **The International Court of Justice (ICJ)** and the **United Nations** have ruled that Israeli settlements in the West Bank are illegal under international law.

16. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct: Adoption:** It was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1999. Entered into force in 2002.

- **Extradition & Cooperation:** Facilitates extradition of offenders and promotes international cooperation in investigations and prosecutions.

**Statement 3 is not correct: India:** India ratified the convention in 2003.

- Supports India’s legal framework under Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967 and anti-money laundering laws.

17. (c)

**Option c is correct:** The Samarkand Resolution, adopted in 2024 during the 14th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), focuses primarily on the conservation of the snow leopard and strengthening climate adaptation efforts in its high mountain ecosystems. The resolution emphasizes urgent collaborative and cross-border actions among the 12 snow leopard range countries to address climate change impacts, habitat degradation, and to promote ecosystem resilience. It calls for innovative financing, science-based conservation, and cooperation under various international environmental agreements to safeguard the snow leopard and its habitat.

18. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport (2005) is the first legally binding international instrument specifically against doping in sports.

**Statement 2 is correct:** It was adopted at the 33rd UNESCO General Conference on 19 October 2005 and entered into force on 1 February 2007.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** However, it is not the most ratified convention in UNESCO’s history; it is the second most ratified treaty, with 192 State Parties, but not the absolute highest.

19. (b)

**Context:** East Timor, also known as Timor-Leste, has become the 11th and newest member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), marking the bloc’s first expansion since the 1990s.

About

- This little-known nation, wedged between Indonesia and Australia, is the poorest in the region — home to just 1.4 million people.

- It struggles with high unemployment and malnutrition, and about 42% of its population lives below the national poverty line.
- ASEAN membership will give East Timor access to the bloc's free trade deals, investment opportunities, and broader regional markets.

## 20. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** It was established in **1967 in Bangkok, Thailand. It was founded by five countries:** Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

- **Aim:** To promote regional cooperation and stability amid Cold War tensions.
- **Headquarters:** Jakarta, Indonesia.
- **Current Member States:** ASEAN currently consists of 11 member countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and East Timor.
- **ASEAN maintains dialogue partnerships** with multiple countries and organizations, including India, China, the USA, Japan, Australia, the EU, and others.

## 21. (b)

**In News:** Recently, **India and the European Union (EU)** announced a **New Strategic EU-India Agenda**, which includes a proposal to explore the integration of **India's Carbon Market** with the **EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)**, marking a bold step toward aligning carbon market mechanisms **between the Global North and South**.

**Statement 1 is correct:** The **EU-India Strategic Partnership Roadmap 2025** explicitly mentions **enhancing trade and investment cooperation**.

- FTA and IPA negotiations are ongoing as part of the new strategic agenda.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The **EU-India Agenda** focuses on **green transition, clean energy, and climate cooperation**, but **there is no provision linking India's carbon market to the EU's CBAM**.

- The **CBAM** is an EU mechanism to impose carbon tariffs on imports based on carbon intensity — it is **not connected to or harmonized with India's carbon market**.
- India has **criticized** CBAM and called for **consultations** under WTO norms, viewing it as a **trade barrier**.

## 22. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The East Asia Summit (EAS) is leaders-led, established in 2005 to promote cooperation and dialogue on various issues in the region.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The EAS consists of 11 ASEAN countries and 8 dialogue partners: Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia, and the United States.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The first EAS was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2005, not Bangkok, Thailand.

**Statement 4 is correct:** Both the US and Russia joined the EAS as members starting from the 6th Summit in 2011.

## 23. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** It is a treaty-based intergovernmental organization, launched in **2015 by India and France at the COP21 summit**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** **Aim:** Promoting solar energy as a sustainable solution for energy access and climate change, with the goal of **mobilizing USD 1 trillion in solar investments by 2030**.

- **Members:** ISA now counts **125 Member and Signatory Countries**, driving projects on mini-grids, rural electrification, and solar financing.

- Initially focused on developing countries, the ISA's Framework Agreement **was amended in 2020 to allow all United Nations member states to join.**
- **Headquartered in Gurugram** India, the ISA is the first international organization established in the country.

24. (c)

**Both the statements are correct: 72 nations** have signed a **landmark United Nations Convention against Cybercrime treaty** in Hanoi aimed at tackling cybercrime.

- **Aim:** It proposes a legislative framework to boost international cooperation among law enforcement agencies and offer technical assistance to countries that lack adequate infrastructure for combating cybercrime.
- **First Universal Convention:** The Convention against Cybercrime establishes the **first universal framework** for investigating and prosecuting offences committed online – from ransomware and financial fraud to the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.
  - **Legally Binding:** The UN Cybercrime Convention is a powerful, legally binding instrument to strengthen the collective defences against cybercrime.
- **Adoption:** It was adopted by the General Assembly in 2024 after five years of negotiation.
  - The signing process is expected to remain open till next year.
- **Secretariat:** **The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime** serves as the secretariat to the Ad Hoc Committee and to the future Conference of the States Parties.

25. (c)

The summit between the U.S. and China in Busan, South Korea ended with **several outcomes for bilateral ties between the two countries.**

**The G-2:** US President called the meeting **"G-2"**, borrowing from groupings like G-20 and the G-7, the latter of which constitutes some of the world's most advanced economies.

- **The G-2** or the idea of creating an **exclusive U.S.-China** club to work on global issues was floated as a concept about **15 years ago** around the summit between U.S. President Barack Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao in **2009**.
- During this time trade, climate change and nuclear proliferations were pressing concerns for the U.S.
  - Subsequently as U.S.-China tensions increased, the administration dropped the idea entirely by 2011.

■ ■ ■ ■

# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the Interstellar Mapping and Acceleration Probe (IMAP)?
1. It is a project of NASA and ISRO spanning years of technical and programmatic collaboration.
  2. It is situated at the first Earth-Sun Lagrange point (L1), at around one million miles from Earth toward the Sun.
  3. It is designed to explore the boundaries of the heliosphere and improve space weather forecasting.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

2. With reference to the Leprosy, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by bacteria *Mycobacterium leprae*.
  2. It is also known as Hansen's disease, majorly impacting the limbs.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

3. With reference to the India's nuclear energy expansion plans, consider the following statements:
1. The country plans to achieve 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047.
  2. The country aims to reduce the emission intensity of its GDP by 44% by 2030 from the 2005 level.
  3. India targets to achieve 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030.

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

4. With reference to the Small Modular Reactors (SMR), consider the following statements:
1. These are advanced nuclear reactors that have a power capacity of 30MWe (megawatt electric) to 300 MWe per unit up.

2. It has more generating capacity than traditional nuclear power reactors.

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

5. With reference to Compressed Biogas (CBG), consider the following statements:

- 1. CBG is produced by purifying and compressing raw biogas obtained from anaerobic digestion of organic waste materials.
- 2. The methane concentration in purified CBG generally exceeds 90%, making it comparable in composition and energy potential to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG).

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

6. With reference to the phosphine in the atmosphere, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a byproduct of decaying organic swamp matter.
- 2. It contains molecules of nitrogen and phosphorus.

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

7. Which of the following is the function of the Regulatory T-cells (Tregs)?

- (a) It kills virus-infected cells directly.
- (b) Activate B-cells to produce antibodies.
- (c) Suppress excessive immune responses to prevent autoimmune reactions.
- (d) Differentiate into plasma cells.

8. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Quantum mechanics was first formally described by German physicist Werner Heisenberg in 1925.
- 2. The 2025 Nobel Prize in physics was given for the discovery of a phenomenon called quantum mechanical tunneling.

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



9. The 2025 Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded for the discovery of:
- Graphene
  - Metal-Organic Frameworks (MOFs)
  - CRISPR gene-editing technology
  - Superconducting materials
10. With reference to Rare Earth Elements (REEs), consider the following statements:
- The term “rare” in rare earth elements refers to their scarcity in the Earth’s crust.
  - They are critical components in technologies such as electric vehicles, wind turbines, and satellite communication systems.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
11. With reference to the India’s Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP), consider the following statements:
- It is an Indo-German partnership aimed at strengthening biomedical, clinical, and public health research in India.
  - The programme aims to train over 2,000 researchers and increase the proportion of women scientists supported.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
12. Which of the following are Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) that disproportionately affect people in low- and middle-income countries ?
- Cancers
  - Tuberculosis
  - Diabetes
  - Asthma
  - Malaria
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1, 2, 3 and 5 only
  - 1, 3 and 4 only
  - 2, 4 and 5 only
  - 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
13. Consider the following statements with reference to Thalassemia
- It is a blood disorder passed from parents to children through genes.
  - It is characterized by abnormal production of hemoglobin which is a protein in red blood cells.



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

**14.** With reference to Rhodamine B, sometimes seen in the news, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a natural water-soluble fluorescent dye used in manufacturing industries.
- 2. It is considered safe for use in food products as it is non-toxic and biodegradable.
- 3. Sometimes it has been reported as an environmental contaminant due to its persistence in water bodies.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**15.** The Time Rondeau Crystal (TRC), recently seen in news, differs from conventional time crystals as;

- (a) It only exists at absolute zero temperature
- (b) It relies on superconducting qubits for its formation.
- (c) It demonstrates coexistence of order and disorder in time
- (d) It requires strictly periodic external driving to maintain order.

**16.** With reference to Prussian Blue, sometimes seen in the news, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a chelating agent used to remove radioactive iodine from the human body.
- 2. It works by binding radioactive cesium and thallium in the intestines and reducing their reabsorption.
- 3. It is recognized by the World Health Organization as an essential medicine.

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

**17.** SWAS, STAR, and SAFAL, recently in news are types of:

- (a) Eco-friendly fireworks
- (b) Water purification devices
- (c) Air quality monitoring sensors
- (d) Noise-canceling devices

**18.** Which of the following best describes the primary role of dopamine in the human brain?

- (a) Regulate blood pressure and heart rate
- (b) Control voluntary muscle movements only
- (c) Mediate pleasure, motivation, and reward
- (d) Regulate circadian rhythms

**19.** With reference to the PUNCH Space Mission, consider the following statements:

1. It is a constellation of four small satellites in low Earth orbit.
2. It aims to study the Sun's corona and solar wind as a unified system.

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

**20.** Which of the following statements about rotavirus is incorrect?

- (a) It is a major cause of severe diarrhoea among infants and young children.
- (b) It infects and damages the cells lining the small intestine.
- (c) It is highly contagious and spreads via the fecal–oral route.
- (d) It primarily affects the respiratory tract of children.

**21.** Consider the following statements

1. Lead used in batteries, paints, and consumer goods.
2. Lead exposure is damaging for developing fetuses and young children.

Which of the following above is /are correct?

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

**22.** Which of the following best describes Monoclonal Antibodies (mAbs)?

- (a) Naturally occurring antibodies produced during infection
- (b) A mixture of antibodies derived from different B-cells that target multiple antigens
- (c) Lab-engineered proteins derived from a single clone of B-cell that target a specific antigen
- (d) Small RNA molecules that silence gene expression

**23.** Consider the following statements about Malaria:

1. There are five Plasmodium parasite species that cause malaria in humans.
2. Malaria can only be transmitted through mosquito bites and not through blood transfusion or contaminated needles.

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

**24.** With reference to cloud seeding, consider the following:

1. Seeding can create clouds where there were none before.
2. Seeding agents act as nuclei for water droplet formation or ice crystallisation.
3. Salts like silver iodide, potassium iodide, or sodium chloride are used as seeding agents.

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

**25.** With reference to the Blockchain Applications in Governance, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Blockchain-enabled Certificates and Document Chain ensures tamper-proof issuance and storage of academic, caste, income, and ration certificates.
2. Property Chain helps in tracking goods across multiple stakeholders to reduce counterfeit medicines.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**26.** Which of the following is India's first dark sky reserve, established to promote astro-tourism and preserve pristine night skies?

- (a) Munnar, Kerala
- (b) Hanle, Ladakh
- (c) Spiti Valley, Himachal Pradesh
- (d) Mount Abu, Rajasthan

**27.** With reference to ethanol, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Ethanol can be produced only from sugarcane and molasses.
2. Ethanol blending with gasoline helps in reducing carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon emissions from vehicles.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**28.** Which of the following best describes the concept of Quantum Information Scrambling?

- (a) It is the process of converting classical data into quantum bits using superposition.
- (b) It is the rapid spreading of quantum information throughout a system, making it inaccessible to local measurements.
- (c) It is the destruction of information during quantum measurement.
- (d) It is the conversion of quantum information into thermal energy.

**29.** The Large Magellanic Cloud (LMC), in which multiple complex organic molecules were recently spotted by the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), is

- (a) A dwarf irregular satellite galaxy of the Milky Way
- (b) A globular cluster in the Andromeda Galaxy
- (c) A nebula in the Orion constellation
- (d) A quasar located 10 billion light-years away

30. Rare Earth Elements (REEs), recently in the news following a US–China agreement on their export, are best described as —
- A group of precious metals like gold, silver, and platinum found in limited deposits worldwide
  - A group of 17 metallic elements, plus scandium and yttrium, crucial for advanced technologies
  - Radioactive elements primarily used in nuclear reactors and weapons
  - Non-metallic minerals essential for fertilizer and agricultural production

### EXPLANATIONS

#### 1. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct :** NASA launched the Interstellar Mapping and Acceleration Probe (IMAP) to map the heliosphere's boundary, track energetic particles, and enhance space weather forecasting.

**Statements 2 and 3 are correct :** Interstellar Mapping and Acceleration Probe (IMAP),

- will study the heliosphere—the Sun's protective bubble around our solar system. It aims to map the heliosphere's boundary, trace energetic particles, and improve space weather forecasting. **Positioned at the Sun-Earth Lagrange point 1**, IMAP will continuously monitor solar wind and cosmic particles using 10 specialized instruments. The data will enhance understanding of how the heliosphere shields us from cosmic radiation, improve space weather predictions, and aid safer human space exploration.

#### 2. (a)

##### Context

- India's leprosy prevalence rate has fallen from **57.2 per 10,000 population** in 1981 to just **0.57 in 2025**.

What is Leprosy?

- Leprosy, or Hansen's disease**, is a chronic infectious disease caused by **bacteria Mycobacterium leprae**.
  - Infection can lead to involvement of the **nerves, respiratory tract, skin, and eyes**.
- Symptoms** include discoloured skin patches, lack of ability to feel touch, pressure, pain, heat and cold, muscle weakness, non-healing ulcers, deformities particularly in hands, feet and face and inability to close eyes and poor vision.
- Leprosy is transmitted** through droplets from the nose and mouth during close and frequent contact with untreated cases.
- Leprosy can be **multibacillary or paucibacillary**. It refers to classifications based on the number of Mycobacterium leprae bacteria present and the severity of the disease.
  - While **multibacillary leprosy shows a high density** of bacilli on slit-skin smear examination, **paucibacillary leprosy cases show only a few** or no bacilli on slit-skin smear examination.
- Treatment:** The introduction of **Multidrug Therapy (MDT) in 1983** in India revolutionized treatment of leprosy.
  - Early diagnosis and treatment with MDT can prevent disabilities and deformities.

#### 3. (d)

**All the statements are correct: Nuclear Capacity:** India's plans to increase its nuclear power capacity from the current 8,180 MW to 22,480 MW by 2031-32 and eventually 100 GW by 2047.

- Energy Demand Growth:** India's electricity demand is expected to increase 4-5 times by 2047, and nuclear power will help meet base-load demand alongside renewables.

- **India's Targets:** To reduce the emission intensity of its GDP by 44% by 2030 from the 2005 level.
  - To achieve 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.
- **Roadmap for 100 GW:** A roadmap is being developed with stakeholders, and while challenges remain, achieving the 100 GW target is seen as both ambitious and achievable.

4. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** These are advanced nuclear reactors that have a power capacity of **30MWe (megawatt electric) to 300 MWe per unit up**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** It has about **one-third of the generating capacity of traditional nuclear power reactors**.

- **Significance:** Advanced SMRs offer many advantages, such as relatively small physical footprints, reduced capital investment, ability to be sited in locations not possible for larger nuclear plants, and provisions for incremental power additions.
  - SMRs also offer distinct safeguards, security and nonproliferation advantages.

5. (c)

Compressed Biogas (CBG) is derived from raw biogas through a process of purification and compression.

Raw biogas, generated via anaerobic digestion of organic and agricultural waste, typically contains 55–60% methane and 35–40% carbon dioxide, along with trace impurities.

Upon purification (removal of  $H_2S$ ,  $CO_2$ , and water vapour), methane content rises above 90%, after which it is compressed to 200–250 bar pressure — resulting in CBG, a clean, renewable, and CNG-equivalent fuel.

6. (a)

**Context**

- Astronomers detected **trace amounts of phosphine** in the atmosphere of a **brown dwarf called Wolf 1130C**, located dozens of light-years from Earth.

**Phosphine**

- **Phosphine ( $PH_3$ )** is a molecule made of **three hydrogen atoms and one phosphorus atom**.
- On Earth, it is mostly produced by microbial life in swamps and animal intestines.
- **In 2020, phosphine detection on Venus** sparked debates about possible life there.
  - Phosphine is also present on gas giants like Jupiter and Saturn, showing it can form in uninhabitable environments.
- **Significance:** It helps scientists understand how phosphine forms naturally and could refine the search for phosphine as a potential biosignature (hint of life) on other planets.

7. (c)

**B-cells and T-cells** are a specific type of white blood cell called **lymphocytes**.

- They **help the immune system** to fight germs and protect from disease.
- **Types of T cells:**
  - **Cytotoxic T-cells:** They kill cells infected with viruses and bacteria, and they also destroy tumor cells.
  - **Helper T-cells:** They send signals that direct other immune cells to fight infection.
  - **Regulatory T-cells (Tregs):** These cells suppress excessive immune responses to prevent autoimmune reactions and maintain immune tolerance.
    - ♦ They play a crucial role in preventing the immune system from attacking the body's own cells and tissues.

8. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Quantum mechanics was first formally described by German physicist Werner Heisenberg in 1925.

- One-hundred years later the United Nations declared 2025 the international year of quantum science and technology to celebrate the centenary of the breakthrough.
- John Clarke, Michel Devoret and John Martinis will share the 2025 Nobel Prize in physics for their discovery of a phenomenon called quantum mechanical tunneling in an electrical circuit.
- They showed that the process of tunneling can occur not only in subatomic particles but also in an electrical circuit made of superconductors.
- Tunneling literally is the ability of particles to pass through physical walls.
  - Such strange behaviour cannot be observed at the macroscopic level but these scientists showed that it was possible to organise a multitude of single particles and coerce them to exhibit “tunnelling” properties.

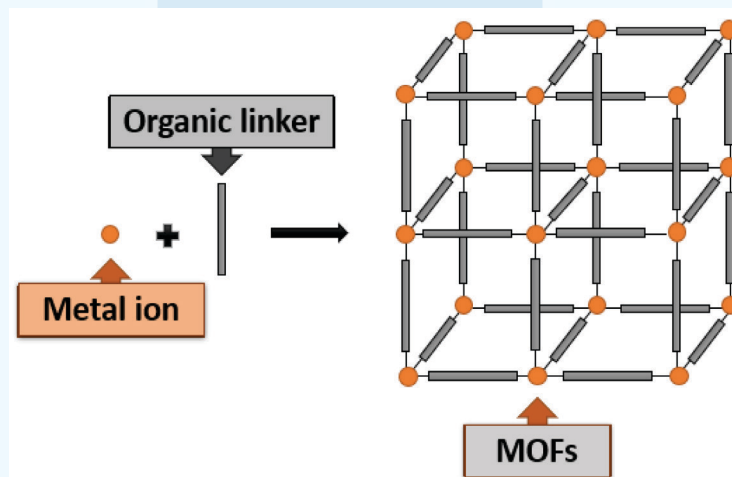
9. (b)

Context

- Susumu Kitagawa, Richard Robson and Omar Yaghi are awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2025.

About

- It was awarded for discovering and creating a class of materials, called metal-organic frameworks (MOF).
- Metal Organic Frameworks: MOFs are crystalline structures in which metal ions serve as nodes and organic molecules as connectors.
  - The resulting structure can have enormous internal surface areas — thousands of square metres per gram — and their pores can be customised to attract or hold specific molecules.



- MOFs form a three-dimensional network with large, porous cavities; this design allows gases and liquids to flow through, making MOFs highly adaptable for various applications.
  - By carefully choosing the building blocks, researchers can control the size and shape of the cavities and the chemical environment within.
  - As a result, MOFs are among the most versatile materials ever created.

10. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Rare earth elements are a series of seventeen substances that are present in the earth's crust.

- Unlike what the name may indicate, rare earths occur plentifully in nature, but the rarity comes from the ability to isolate them chemically and make them usable in industrial applications.



**Statement 2 is correct: Significance:**

- They are used in everyday technologies like a cellphone and computer.
- They are also used in advanced medical technologies like MRIs, laser scalpels and even some cancer drugs.
- In defense applications, they are used in satellite communications, guidance systems and aircraft structures.
- They are critical in a number of green technologies, especially those that are going to support net zero carbon emissions goals, like wind turbines and electric vehicles.

**11. (b)**

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The Union Cabinet has approved **Phase III of the Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP)**.

- **The Biomedical Research Career Programme (BRCP)** is a strategic investment in India's health and innovation landscape, supported by a ₹1,500 crore Indo-UK partnership that aligns global expertise with national priorities.
- **Aim:** To build a world-class research ecosystem in biomedical sciences, clinical, and public health research

**Statement 2 is correct: Expected Outcomes:** The initiative targets training 2,000+ researchers, high-impact publications, patentable discoveries, and peer recognition.

- Aims for 10–15% more support for women scientists, pushing 25–30% projects reaching Technology Readiness Level (TRL-4) and above, and wider Tier-2/3 outreach.

**12. (b)**

According to the latest Global Burden of Disease (GBD) report published in The Lancet, Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) now account for nearly **two-thirds of global deaths, led by ischaemic heart disease, stroke, and diabetes**.

- **Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)**, also known as chronic diseases, tend to be of long duration and are the result of a combination of genetic, physiological, environmental and behavioural factors. The main types of NCDs are cardiovascular diseases (such as heart attacks and stroke), **cancers**, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and **asthma**) and **diabetes**.
- **Communicable diseases**, including HIV/AIDS, **tuberculosis (TB)**, **malaria**, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), are among the leading causes of death and disability in low-income countries and marginalized populations.

**13. (c)**

**In News :** Thalassemia patients in Kerala are facing serious health risks due to a shortage of leukocyte filter sets and iron chelation drugs.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** Thalassemia is a **group of inherited blood disorders** characterised by the body's inability to produce adequate amounts of haemoglobin, the protein found in red blood cells that is responsible for carrying oxygen.

- It leads to anemia and symptoms like fatigue and weakness.
- It is classified into alpha and beta thalassemia, with severity ranging from mild to life-threatening.
  - It is managed through **regular blood transfusions and iron chelation therapy**.

**14. (c)**

Rhodamine B is a **synthetic**, water-soluble fluorescent dye known for its bright pink color. It is widely used in industries such as textiles, paper, and leather, but is toxic and carcinogenic. Due to its persistence in water, it is an environmental pollutant. Its use in food and cosmetics is banned because of health hazards.



15. (c)

**Context**

- An international team of scientists has discovered a new phase of matter called the **Time Rondeau Crystal (TRC)**, a state where order and disorder coexist in time.

**What is Order in Matter?**

- All forms of matter have a specific **arrangement of their particles**.
  - In a **solid crystal** such as salt or diamond, atoms are arranged in a regular and repeating pattern, which represents **order in space**.
  - In contrast, in a **liquid**, atoms move freely and lack any fixed arrangement, representing **disorder**.
- In **2012**, scientists proposed that if matter can exhibit order in space, it might also show order in time. This led to the prediction of a new phase of matter called a **time crystal**.
- A **time crystal** is a system that **repeats its motion or behaviour at fixed time intervals**.
  - For example, imagine pushing a swing at equal intervals. Normally, the swing moves in rhythm with each push.
  - However, in a time crystal, the motion would repeat only after every two pushes instead of one, forming a regular cycle in time.

**What is a Time Rondeau Crystal (TRC)?**

- A Time Rondeau Crystal (TRC) is a **new phase of matter** discovered recently.
- It is **similar to a time crystal**, but with a special difference:
  - It shows **both order and randomness in time**.
  - The system repeats its pattern after some time (order), but between these repetitions, its behavior is irregular (disorder).
- Scientists created the TRC by using **carbon-13 atoms in a diamond** and controlling their spins with **microwave pulses**.
- The pulses were not given at fixed intervals, there was some **randomness**, but still, the system showed regular patterns over longer periods.

16. (b)

**In News:** India has gifted critical Prussian Blue Capsules to Indonesia to mitigate the effects of Cesium-137 contamination.

- **Statement 1 is not correct:** Prussian Blue is not used to remove radioactive iodine from the human body; it is specifically used for radioactive cesium and thallium poisoning.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Prussian Blue works by binding radioactive cesium and thallium in the intestines and reducing their reabsorption, thereby enhancing their excretion from the body.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Prussian Blue is recognized by the World Health Organization as an essential medicine.

17. (a)

**In News**

- The Supreme Court relaxed its earlier blanket ban and permitted the sale and use of **green firecrackers in the Delhi–NCR region**, subject to strict conditions.
  - The court noted that blanket bans had led to smuggling and use of more harmful conventional fireworks, and cited its 2018 Arjun Gopal judgment, which introduced green firecrackers and showed reduced emissions.

**Green firecrackers**

- They are eco-friendly alternatives to traditional fireworks, developed to address air pollution concerns.

- They offer a balanced solution by enabling festive celebrations while minimizing environmental and health impacts.

#### Types

- **SWAS (Safe Water Releaser)** emits water vapor to reduce dust; free of sulphur and potassium nitrate.
- **STAR (Safe Thermite Cracker)** low sound and particulate emissions; no sulphur or potassium nitrate.
- **SAFAL (Safe Minimal Aluminium)** uses less aluminium and more magnesium for reduced noise.

18. (c)

#### Context

- Modern lifestyles, driven by technology and constant instant gratification, have led to a collective “dopamine overdose” that is fundamentally rewiring our brains.

#### Dopamine and the Brain’s Reward Circuit

- Dopamine is a **neurotransmitter** responsible for feelings of **pleasure, motivation, and reward**.
- It operates primarily through the **mesolimbic pathway**, linking the **ventral tegmental area (VTA)** and the **nucleus accumbens**, both crucial in reinforcing behaviours that bring satisfaction or success.
- When we achieve a goal, receive praise, or enjoy a meal, dopamine is released, motivating us to repeat that action.

#### Impact on Young Minds

- Algorithms used by social media and other digital platforms are designed to maximize engagement by operating on an intermittent reward schedule, similar to a slot machine.
- **Impact:** Dopamine overload leads to **fatigue, demotivation, and loss of focus**.
  - The brain, overstimulated by quick dopamine hits, begins to find ordinary tasks unrewarding.
  - Over time, this contributes to **anxiety, sleep disorders, poor self-esteem, and even clinical depression**.
  - Modern lifestyles, characterised by **multitasking, constant scrolling, and digital comparison**, amplify this mental exhaustion, affecting productivity and creativity.

19. (c)

**Both the statements are correct:** PUNCH stands for **Polarimeter to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere**.

- **Aim:** To study the Sun’s corona (outer atmosphere) and the solar wind as a unified system.
- **Features:**
  - **PUNCH consists of four small satellites in low Earth orbit.**
  - It will make 3D global observations of the inner heliosphere to understand how the Sun’s corona becomes the solar wind.
  - The satellites will map the transition zone where the Sun’s corona turns into solar wind.
- **Key Achievement:** The mission is “making the invisible visible” by imaging the solar wind, which is normally hard to detect.
- **Scientific Significance:** Understanding and forecasting space weather is critical because solar events like solar wind and coronal mass ejections (CMEs) can affect Earth and other parts of the solar system.

20. (d)

**Context**

- According to a recent study India's indigenous rotavirus vaccine, Rotavac, has significantly reduced rotavirus-related gastroenteritis cases among children since its introduction in the **Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP)**.

**About Rotavac**

- Introduction:** India introduced Rotavac, an **indigenous oral rotavirus vaccine**, in 2016 under the **Universal Immunisation Programme**, administered at 6, 10, and 14 weeks of age.
- Accessibility:** As part of UIP, the vaccine is provided free of cost to all eligible beneficiaries.

**What is Rotavirus?**

- Rotavirus is a highly contagious virus that **infects and damages the cells lining the small intestine**.
- It is a **leading cause of severe diarrhoea (gastroenteritis)** in infants and young children worldwide.
- Transmission:** Primarily through the fecal–oral route (contaminated food, water, or surfaces).

21. (c)

**In News :** New study in Communications Earth & Environment reveals that lead exposure remains a major public health and economic threat.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** Lead production currently stands at about 16 million tonnes per year, much of which is used in batteries, paints, and consumer goods. The study warns that rising demand for electrification, coupled with poor recycling practices, could worsen global inequalities and undo decades of progress in protecting children's health. Lead exposure is particularly damaging for developing fetuses and young children, as it crosses both the placenta and the blood–brain barrier. Even at low levels, it can impair brain development, lower IQ, and cause behavioural issues.

22. (c)

**Context**

- A novel monoclonal antibody (mAb) named **MAM01**, has demonstrated strong, dose-dependent protection against malaria in an early clinical trial.

**What are Monoclonal Antibodies (mAbs)?**

- Monoclonal antibodies are lab-engineered proteins designed to **target specific antigens** (foreign substances like viruses, bacteria, or cancer cells).
- They are derived from a single clone of a **B-cell** and hence are **identical in structure and specificity**.
- mAbs mimic the natural immune response but are **highly specific**, making them powerful tools in treating diseases.
- MAM01 targets a highly conserved region of the **Plasmodium falciparum circumsporozoite protein (CSP)**, which enables it to block infection before the malaria parasite reaches the bloodstream.

23. (a)

**Context**

- A novel monoclonal antibody (mAb) named **MAM01**, has demonstrated strong, dose-dependent protection against malaria in an early clinical trial.

**What is Malaria?**

- Malaria** is a life-threatening disease spread to humans by some types of mosquitoes. It is mostly found in tropical countries.

- **Transmission:** It is caused by **plasmodium protozoa**. The plasmodium parasites spread through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. **Blood transfusion and contaminated needles** may also transmit malaria.
- **Types of parasites:** There are 5 Plasmodium parasite species that cause malaria in humans and 2 of these species – **P. falciparum** and **P. vivax** – pose the greatest threat. The other malaria species which can infect humans are **P. malariae, P. ovale** and **P. knowlesi**.
  - **P. falciparum is the deadliest malaria parasite** and the most prevalent on the African continent. P. vivax is the dominant malaria parasite in most countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Symptoms:** Fever and flu-like illness, including chills, headache, muscle ache and fatigue.

24. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Cloud seeding is a **weather modification method** to enhance a cloud's ability to produce rain.

- Cloud seeding depends on natural clouds; it can't create them.

**Statement 2 and 3 are correct: Working Principle:** The salts, or the seeding agents, serve as nuclei around which water droplets can form or ice can crystallise.

- **Seeding Agents:** Clouds are usually injected with salts like silver iodide, potassium iodide, or sodium chloride to trigger condensation.

25. (a)

**Context**

- India is accelerating its adoption of blockchain technology to transform governance, enhance transparency, and strengthen digital trust through the National Blockchain Framework (NBF).

**What is Blockchain?**

- Blockchain is a **distributed, transparent, secure, and immutable database** that functions like a **ledger of records or transactions**, resistant to tampering and accessible across a network of computers.

**Blockchain-Enabled Applications Transforming Governance**

- **Certificates and Document Chain:** The chain allows secure issuance, storage, and retrieval of documents such as academic certificates, caste, income, ration cards, driving licenses, and birth or death certificates.
- **Logistics Chain:** Provides a tamper-proof and transparent platform to track goods across multiple stakeholders.
  - **Example: Karnataka's Aushada system** tracks medicines from manufacturers to hospitals, verifying quality, expiry, and traceability, reducing the risk of spurious drugs.
- **Property Chain:** Ensures transparency in land and property transactions, allowing verification of ownership and rights, minimizing disputes, and expediting resolution processes.
- **Judiciary Chain:** Blockchain facilitates electronic delivery of notices, summons, and bail orders, reducing delays and eliminating manual dependencies.
  - **The Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS)** integrates the criminal justice ecosystem, ensuring a unified digital platform for case records, evidence, and judicial documents.

26. (b)

**Option b is correct:** A dark sky reserve is a designated area recognized for its exceptionally clear and unpolluted night skies, free from light pollution. These areas are protected to preserve night sky visibility for both scientific and recreational purposes, such as astronomy and stargazing, as well as to protect ecosystems dependent on natural darkness.

Hanle, a village located in the Union Territory of Ladakh, is India's first officially recognized dark sky reserve. This status was conferred on Hanle due to its extremely clear and dark skies, which are among the best in the world for astronomical observations. Hanle's skies have been rated Bortle-1, the highest clarity on the nine-point Bortle scale, making it an ideal location for astrophysical research and night sky tourism.

27. (b)

#### Context

- The Indian Sugar & Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) has expressed concern over the reduction in ethanol sourcing from the sugar sector for the 2025–26 ethanol supply year.

#### What is Ethanol?

- Ethanol is **99.9%** pure alcohol that can be blended with petrol.
- Alcohol production involves **fermentation of sugar** using yeast.
- Ethanol can be produced from a wide range of feedstocks**, not just sugarcane and molasses.
  - Sugary materials:** Such as sugarcane, molasses, sugar beet, and sweet sorghum.
  - Starchy materials:** These include crops like **corn, wheat, rice, and potatoes**, which must first be converted into fermentable sugars.
  - Cellulosic materials:** Lignocellulosic biomass from agricultural waste (like corn stover and sugarcane bagasse), wood, and grasses can also be used, though this process is more complex.
  - Other sources:** Research has also explored alternative feedstocks such as algae and municipal solid waste.

#### Ethanol Blending

- Ethanol blending refers to the **practice of mixing ethanol with gasoline** to create a fuel mixture that can be used in internal combustion engines.
- Ethanol blending with gasoline helps in reducing carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon emissions from vehicles.

28. (b)

**Option b is correct:** Quantum information scrambling refers to a dynamical process in complex quantum many-body systems where initially localized quantum information rapidly disperses throughout the system. This results in the information becoming intricately entangled and spread over many degrees of freedom, rendering it inaccessible to local measurements. Scrambling is a key concept in understanding quantum chaos, thermalization in closed systems, and has implications in quantum gravity and black hole physics. It is quantified using tools like out-of-time-ordered correlators (OTOCs) and reflects how locally stored quantum data gets distributed non-locally in a strongly interacting quantum system.

29. (a)

#### Context

- Using the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), researchers identified five carbon-rich compounds surrounding a nascent star called **ST6 in the Large Magellanic Cloud (LMC)**.

#### About the Large Magellanic Cloud (LMC)

- LMC is a **dwarf irregular satellite galaxy** of the Milky Way, located about 160,000 light-years from Earth in the constellation Dorado.
- Structure:** It is known for its large, glowing nebulae, such as the **Tarantula Nebula**, which indicate active star birth.
- Star Content:** It contains about **30 billion stars**, with many young, star-forming regions.

- **Composition:**

- The LMC has **fewer heavy elements** like carbon, nitrogen, and oxygen than the Milky Way.
- Such metal-poor conditions mimic those of the early universe, providing a natural laboratory for studying primitive cosmic chemistry.

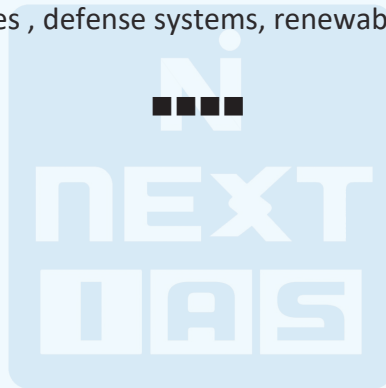
### 30. (b)

#### In News

- US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping concluded their meeting in South Korea with an agreement to maintain the **flow of China's rare earth exports to the US**.

#### What are rare earth elements?

- **Overview:** The term "rare" refers to their low concentration in extractable deposits, making mining and processing economically and environmentally challenging.
- **Types:** They are a group of 17 metallic elements, plus scandium and yttrium, known for their high density, melting points, conductivity, and thermal conductance.
- **Source:** They are mainly sourced from bastnasite, loparite, and monazite, and are classified into light (Cerium group) and heavy (Yttrium group) based on atomic numbers.
- **Distribution:** China dominates the global rare earth market, producing 60% of mine output and over 90% of refined products and magnets.
- **Applications:** They are essential in small quantities for a wide range of advanced technologies, including electronics, vehicles, defense systems, renewable energy, and medical devices.



# ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. Consider the following statements with reference to Dugongs (Dugong dugon)
1. They are primarily herbivores which are found in the Gulf of Mannar and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India.
  2. They are listed as Endangered species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.
  3. They are protected under Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
  - (b) Only two
  - (c) All the three
  - (d) None
2. With reference to the Amazon Rain Forests, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It belongs to only five nations of the South American Continent.
  2. Mashko Piro tribe inhabit the remote regions of the rainforest.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. Consider the following statements regarding Snow Leopards in India:
1. The snow leopard is found only in India and Nepal.
  2. It is classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List.
  3. The snow leopard is the state animal of Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

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
4. With reference to the Coral Triangle, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It spans across Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste.
  2. It is home to more than 75% of the world's coral species.



Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

5. With reference to the camel breeds in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Kharai camel of Gujarat is the only Indian camel breed adapted to coastal and mangrove ecosystems and is capable of swimming in seawater.
2. The Bactrian camel, with two humps, is native to the Thar Desert region of Rajasthan.

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

6. Which of the following geological storage options for carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is currently estimated to have the largest storage capacity globally under Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology?

- (a) Deep unmineable coal seams
- (b) Depleted oil and gas reservoirs
- (c) Deep saline formations
- (d) Basalt formations suitable for mineral carbonation

7. With reference to bats, consider the following statements:

1. They are the only mammals capable of sustained flight.
2. They play a crucial role in pollination and seed dispersal.
3. All bat species in India are listed under Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

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

8. Which of the following is an example of an invasive alien species in India?

1. Parthenium hysterophorus
2. Lantana camara
3. Rhizophora mucronata
4. Eichhornia crassipes

Select the correct answer:

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

9. With reference to the Great Green Wall Initiative, consider the following statements:
1. It was launched by the UN Forum on Forests in 2007 to combat desertification across the western African region.
  2. It focuses exclusively on planting trees across the Congo Basin to counter deforestation.
- 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
10. The Great Green Wall initiative, often seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) Combating desertification and land degradation in Africa.  
(b) Enhancing biodiversity in the Amazon rainforest.  
(c) Preventing soil erosion in the Himalayan region.  
(d) Afforestation in the Indo-Gangetic plains.
11. With reference to *Cistanthe longiscapa*, sometimes seen in the news, consider the following statements:
1. It is an annual flowering herb native to the Atacama Desert in Chile, locally known as “pata de guanaco.”
  2. It survives extreme aridity by using the Crassulacean Acid Metabolism (CAM) pathway, in which stomata remain open during the night to fix carbon dioxide.
  3. Its spectacular blooming phenomenon, locally called Desierto Florido, occurs every year during the summer season.
- 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
12. With reference to India’s National Red List Roadmap, consider the following statements:
1. It is a national initiative launched to develop a unified system for assessing and conserving India’s threatened species, aligned with IUCN Red List standards.
  2. The initiative is being jointly implemented by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) in collaboration with IUCN–India and the Centre for Species Survival (CSS), India.
  3. It aims to publish India’s first National Red Data Books for flora and fauna by 2030.
- 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
13. Consider the following statements
1. Mormugao and Visakhapatnam Port recently recognised as Green Hydrogen Hubs under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

2. The National Green Hydrogen Mission aims to achieve a targeted production capacity of 5 million tonnes per annum of Green Hydrogen by 2030.

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

14. With reference to the Blue Flag Certification, consider the following statements:

1. It is an international recognition conferred only on marine protected areas declared under the Ramsar Convention.
2. It requires beaches to maintain specific water quality standards, waste management systems, and public environmental education.
3. In India, it is implemented under the BEAMS programme of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Programme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

15. Consider the following statements with reference to Indian wolf (*Canis lupus pallipes*)

1. They primarily live in semi-arid grassland and shrubland habitats in India and Pakistan.
2. The IUCN Red List of Threatened species classifies them as Near Threatened species.

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

16. Consider the following statements regarding the Snow Leopard:

1. The snow leopard is classified as Endangered under the IUCN Red List.
2. India accounts for around one-fourth of the global snow leopard population.
3. It is listed in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

17. Considering regional distribution, why does the Western Ghats support the largest elephant population in India?

- (a) Extensive grasslands with no predators
- (b) Low human density across the plains
- (c) High forest cover, contiguous habitats, and protected corridors
- (d) Government-led relocation programs concentrated in this region

- 18.** Consider the following statements with reference to Motion 042 of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
1. It was tabled by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and co-sponsored by BirdLife International.
  2. It urges governments to phase out the use of coal, oil, and gas.
  3. It encourages exploration of new international mechanisms, including a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All the three
- (d) None

- 19.** With reference to the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Its primary objective is to equalize the carbon cost of imported goods with EU-produced goods to prevent carbon leakage.
2. It is part of the European Union's Green Deal, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- 20.** With reference to the REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation Plus) mechanism, consider the following statements:

1. It is a climate change mitigation initiative recognized under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. REDD+ supports developing countries in implementing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) through forest conservation.

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

- 21.** An international bird-watching programme was recently organised at the Rakchham-Chitkul Wildlife Sanctuary. Where is this sanctuary located?

- (a) Uttarakhand
- (b) Himachal Pradesh
- (c) Sikkim
- (d) Arunachal Pradesh

- 22.** Which of the following statements regarding global methane emissions is/are correct?

1. Methane has a higher warming potential than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period.
2. Wetlands are the single largest natural source of methane.

3. Methane accounts for nearly one-third of global warming since the pre-industrial era.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**23.** With reference to the Snow Leopard (*Panthera uncia*), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is listed as Vulnerable under the IUCN Red List.
- 2. It is included in Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- 3. It is found only in India, Nepal, and Bhutan within South Asia.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**24.** Which of the following statements about pilot whales is correct?

- 1. Despite their name, they are not true whales but large oceanic dolphins.
- 2. Long-finned species prefer warmer tropical and subtropical waters, including parts of the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**25.** With reference to the Snow leopards, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. They are found only in India, China, Bhutan, and Nepal.
- 2. Snow leopard is the state animal of Sikkim.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**26.** With reference to the Western Ghats, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. Western Ghats are older than the Himalayas.
- 2. They are recognized as one of the world's eight biodiversity hotspots.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- 27.** Consider the following statements with reference to Red Sanders:
1. It is endemic to the Eastern Ghats, in India where it has a very restricted geographic range.
  2. The IUCN Red List of threatened species classifies it as Vulnerable.
- 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
- 28.** With reference to the Golden snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus roxellana*), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is endemic to the shola forests of western Ghats in India.
  2. The species is listed as “Endangered” on the IUCN Red List.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 29.** The AmazonFACE project, recently seen in the news, is a joint initiative supported by which of the following countries?
- (a) Brazil and India
  - (b) Brazil and the United Kingdom
  - (c) Brazil and Germany
  - (d) Brazil and the United States
- 30.** Which of the following wildlife sanctuaries/parks are associated with the cheetah reintroduction programme in India?
1. Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh
  2. Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh
  3. Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh
  4. Pench National Park, Madhya Pradesh
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
  - (b) 1 and 3 only
  - (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
  - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- 31.** With reference to the Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF), consider the following statements:
1. It is a Multi-Partner Trust Fund established to support the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).
  2. It was set up jointly by China and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
  3. The KMGBF, adopted at COP-15 to the CBD, is a legally binding framework with 4 goals for 2050 and 23 targets for 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

### EXPLANATIONS

#### 1. (b)

**In News :** The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has officially recognized **India's first Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay**, Tamil Nadu, at the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

**Statements 1 and 3 are correct :** **Dugong** are relatives of manatees, have a similar plump look but a dolphin-like tail.

- Dugongs are primarily herbivorous, grazing on 30 kg-40 kg of seagrass a day.
- They are known as "sea cows," and peacefully graze on seagrass in shallow coastal waters of the Indian and western Pacific Oceans.
  - They are found in the **Gulf of Mannar, the Palk Bay, the Gulf of Kutch and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India**. Once abundant in Indian waters, dugongs are protected under Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

**Statement 2 is not correct : Protection status :** The species is listed as **Vulnerable** on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.

#### 2. (b)

##### Amazon Rain Forests

- **Location:** The region belongs to **nine nations** of the **South American** continent.
  - It is bounded by the **Guiana Highlands** to the north, the **Andes Mountains** to the west, the **Brazilian central plateau** to the south, and the **Atlantic Ocean** to the east.
- **Area Covered:** The majority of the forest, 60%, is in **Brazil**, followed by **Peru** with 13%, **Colombia** with 10%, and with minor amounts in **Bolivia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname and Venezuela**.
- **Mashko Piro tribe**, the Nomadic hunter-gatherers inhabit the remote regions of the **Amazon rainforest**.

#### 3. (b)

##### In News

- Himachal Pradesh's snow leopard population has risen by 62 per cent over the past four years.
- About Snow Leopards (*Panthera uncia*)
- They are often called the "**ghost of the mountains**," a reclusive feline native to the mountainous regions of Central and South Asia.
  - They are sparsely distributed across **12 countries in central Asia**, from southern Russia down to the Tibetan plateau, including Mongolia, China, Afghanistan, Pakistan, **India** and Nepal.
  - They are classified as '**Vulnerable**' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red list and listed in **Schedule-I species of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
  - The snow leopard is the state animal of **Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh**.
  - **Project Snow Leopard** was launched by the Government of India in 2009 to ensure scientific and community-focused conservation of the species.



4. (c)

**Context**

- The Philippines has launched **Southeast Asia's first coral larvae cryobank** to preserve coral genetic diversity and protect reef ecosystems.

About the Coral Triangle

- The Coral Triangle also known as the **Amazon of the Seas** spans around **6 million sq. km** across **Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste**.
- It encompasses portions of **2 biogeographic regions**: the Indonesian-Philippines Region, and the Far Southwestern Pacific Region.
- It is home to more than **75%** of the world's coral species, **a third of reef fish**, vast mangrove forests, and six out of seven marine turtle species.



5. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Kharai camel, found in the Kutch region of Gujarat, is unique among Indian camel breeds for its adaptation to both arid land and saline/mangrove coastal ecosystems. It is renowned for its swimming ability in seawater, sometimes covering several kilometers to graze on mangrove islands.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The Bactrian camel is a double-humped camel found in the cold deserts of Ladakh, not in the Thar Desert of Rajasthan. Its primary role in India is in the Nubra valley (Ladakh) for transport and tourism rather than the heavy drought in Rajasthan.

6. (c)

Deep saline formations, or deep saline aquifers, have the largest estimated global CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity, ranging from hundreds to tens of thousands of billions of tons, due to their vast geographic spread and porous rock formations filled with salty water suitable for CO<sub>2</sub> injection and long-term storage. In comparison, depleted oil and gas reservoirs have a smaller total capacity but are well characterized and have established injection practices. Deep unmineable coal seams have even less capacity and are still in early demonstration phases. Basalt formations suitable for mineral carbonation.

7. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Bats are the only mammals capable of sustained powered flight, unique among mammals.

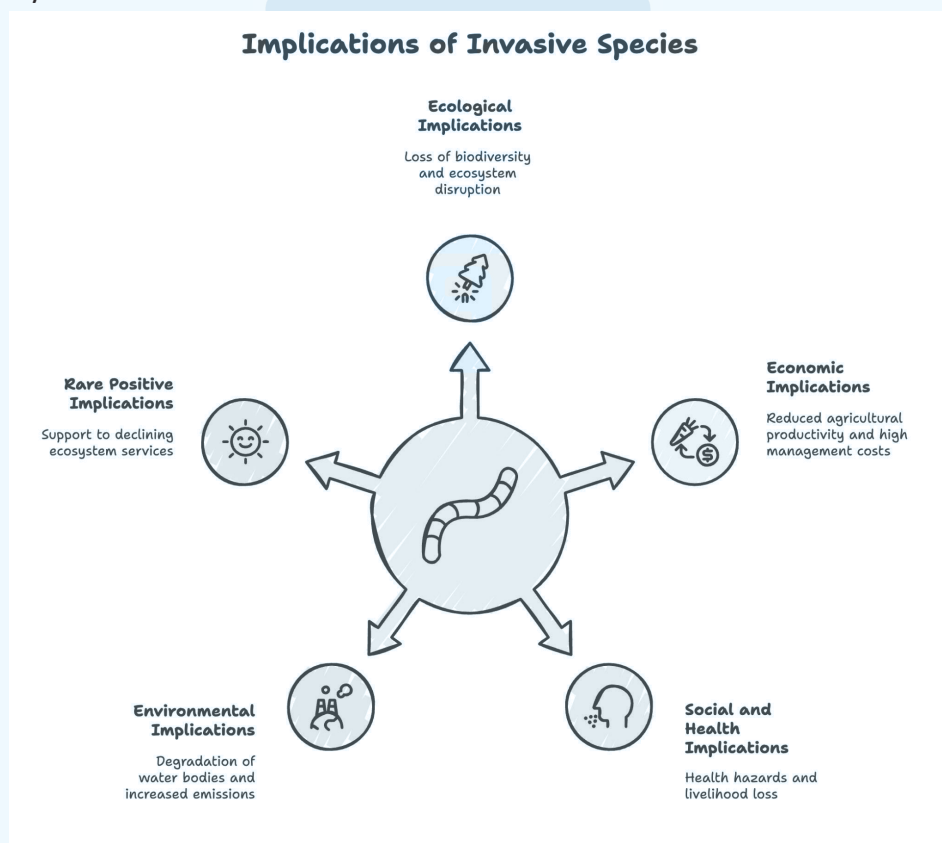
**Statement 2 is correct:** Bats are important pollinators and seed dispersers, crucial for many ecosystems, especially tropical forests.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** In India, only two bat species (Wroughton's free-tailed bat and Salim Ali's fruit bat) are listed under Schedule I (highest protection) while many fruit bats are categorized as vermin under Schedule V, which means they do not have legal protection and can be hunted. Most other bats do not have Schedule II protection.

8. (c)

#### Invasive alien species

- **Definition:** They are **non-native organisms** introduced accidentally or intentionally (e.g., ornamental fish, decorative plants, or for land restoration).
- They often **lack natural predators** in the new environment, allowing them to multiply unchecked.
- They often **spread rapidly, outcompeting native species**, harming biodiversity, causing local or global extinctions, and damaging habitats.
- **Common Examples in India** **Lantana camara:** Invades forests, outcompetes native plants, and hinders regeneration.
- **Parthenium hysterophorus (Congress grass):** Spreads over farmland and causes allergic reactions.
- **Eichhornia crassipes (Water hyacinth):** Chokes lakes and rivers, depleting oxygen and affecting fisheries.
- **African Catfish (Clarias gariepinus):** Outcompetes native fish species, threatening aquatic biodiversity.



9. (d)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The Great Green Wall Initiative was not launched by the UN Forum on Forests, but by the African Union in 2007. Its goal is to combat desertification and land degradation primarily in the Sahel region, bordering the Sahara Desert, not limited to western Africa alone.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The initiative does not focus on the Congo Basin. It targets the Sahel region, stretching from Senegal in the west to Djibouti in the east, aiming to restore degraded land and improve livelihoods.

## 10. (a)

Despite ambitious goals to restore 100 million hectares of land across Africa, the **Great Green Wall project** faces significant challenges in Senegal.

- Research indicates that financial pledges are not fully realised, and new trees struggle to survive due to inadequate irrigation and maintenance.
- **Launched:** 2007 by the **African Union**.
- **Objective:** Prevent the Sahara Desert from advancing southwards; restore 100 million hectares of degraded land across 11 Sahel countries (from Senegal to Djibouti and Ethiopia).
- **Length:** Planned to extend 6,000 km.
- **Broader Aim:** Tackle climate change, poverty, and extremism through ecosystem restoration and livelihood creation.
- The GGW initiative's ambition is to restore 100 million hectares of currently degraded land; sequester 250 million tons of carbon and create 10 million green jobs by 2030.

## 11. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** *Cistanthe longiscapa* is an annual flowering herb native to Chile's Atacama Desert and is locally known as "pata de guanaco."

**Statement 2 is correct:** It uses the Crassulacean Acid Metabolism (CAM) pathway, opening stomata at night to fix carbon dioxide, an adaptation to survive extreme aridity.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The spectacular bloom called *Desierto Florido* is a rare, episodic event triggered by unusual rainfall, not an annual occurrence.

## 12. (d)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The National Red List Roadmap seeks to create an integrated, science-based red-listing system for species conservation in India, aligned with IUCN's global methodology.

**Statement 2 is correct:** It is jointly undertaken by ZSI and BSI in partnership with IUCN-India and the Centre for Species Survival (CSS).

**Statement 3 is correct:** The plan includes multi-taxa assessment (flora, fauna, marine biodiversity) and aims to release National Red Data Books by 2030, integrating traditional knowledge for community-based biodiversity conservation.

## 13. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct :** The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has formally recognised three major ports **Deendayal Port Authority (Gujarat)**, **V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority (Tamil Nadu)**, and **Paradip Port Authority (Odisha)** as Green Hydrogen Hubs under the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM). This recognition marks a significant step towards creating an integrated hydrogen ecosystem and advancing India's transition towards clean energy.

**Statement 2 is correct :** The Union Cabinet approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission on 4th January 2023, with an outlay of ₹ 19,744 crore.

- It aims to make India a Global Hub for production, usage and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives, by targeting production of **5 MMT per annum of Green Hydrogen by 2030**.

## 14. (b)

**In News:** Five beaches in Maharashtra have received the **international Blue Flag certification**.

- The list includes Shrivardhan and Nagaon beaches, Parnaka, and Guhagar and Ladghar beaches.

**What is Blue Flag Certification?**

- Blue Flag is a **globally recognized eco-label for beaches**, marinas, and sustainable boating operators that meet strict environmental, safety, educational, and accessibility standards, often termed the gold standard of beach cleanliness.

- It is **administered by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**, a Denmark-based non-profit recognized by **UNEP and UNESCO**.
- India implements **Blue Flag under BEAMS** (Beach Environment & Aesthetics Management Services) within the **Integrated Coastal Zone Management Programme**.
- The nodal agency in India is the Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

#### **Blue Flag beaches in India (2025)**

- **India has 12 certified beaches:** Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod (Karnataka), Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden Beach/Puri (Odisha), Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands), Kovalam (Tamil Nadu), Eden Beach (Puducherry), Minicoy Thundi (Lakshadweep), and Kadmat (Lakshadweep).

#### **15. (a)**

**In News :** The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has for the first time evaluated the Indian wolf (*Canis lupus pallipes*) separately, potentially recognizing it as a distinct species within the *Canis* genus.

**Statement 1 is correct :** The Indian Wolf is primarily found in India and Pakistan, with its historic range confined south of the Himalayas .

- It is mainly found across central, western, and northern India, spanning sixteen states with major populations in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Karnataka.

**Statement 2 is not correct :** Indian Wolf is one of the most ancient wolf lineages, and is now listed as **Vulnerable** on the IUCN Red List, with an estimated population of around 3,093 across India and Pakistan—most of which live outside protected areas.

#### **16. (a)**

##### **In News**

- The snow leopard, known as the elusive “ghost of the mountains”, has the lowest genetic diversity among big cats, even lower than the critically endangered cheetah.

##### **About Snow Leopards (*Panthera uncia*)**

- **Physical traits:** Long tail acts as a rudder for balance.
- **Habitat:** Rugged mountain ranges across **12 Asian countries**, including India.
- **Populations:** **4,500–7,500 globally**, with India accounting for **10–15%**.
- **Conservation Status:** Vulnerable (IUCN); listed in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- **Threats:** Climate change, habitat loss, reduced prey, retaliatory killings, and poaching.
- **Cultural significance:** State animal of **Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh**.

#### **17. (c)**

##### **Context**

- India’s first-ever DNA-based elephant census, conducted under the All-India Synchronous Elephant Estimation (SAIEE) 2025, has revealed a significant 18% decline in the wild elephant population.

##### **Key Findings of SAIEE 2025**

- **Population Estimate:** India’s wild elephant population is now estimated at **22,446**, down from 27,312 in 2017.
- **Methodology:** The count was based on **DNA fingerprinting** of dung samples, enabling the identification of individual elephants, similar to human genetic profiling.

- **Regional Distribution:** The highest elephant population is in the Western Ghats (11,934), followed by the North Eastern Hills and Brahmaputra floodplains (6,559), Shivalik Hills and Gangetic plains (2,062), and Central India and Eastern Ghats (1,891).
- **Top Five States:** Karnataka, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Uttarakhand.
- The **Western Ghats has dense forests**, continuous habitats, and well-protected elephant corridors, providing ample food, shelter, and safe migration routes.
- This combination supports India's largest elephant population. Other regions lack such habitat continuity or protection.

## 18. (c)

**In News :** In a landmark move, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) adopted Motion 042, becoming the first multilateral body to explicitly name fossil fuel production as a threat to nature.

**Statements 1,2 and 3 are correct :** Passed during the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the motion calls for governments and civil society to address the root causes of the climate and biodiversity crises through supply-side measures, including phasing out coal, oil, and gas, halting new extraction projects, and ensuring a just transition for affected communities. It also advocates exploring new international instruments such as a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to fill a critical gap in global governance.

- The motion was tabled by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and co-sponsored by civil society and Indigenous organisations including BirdLife International, the Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica (COICA), and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). It reaffirms IUCN's conservation role by prioritising ecosystem protection at the source of extraction and opposing new fossil fuel expansion.

## 19. (c)

**Context**

- According to European think-tank Sandberg, Indian iron and steel exporters face the highest **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)** fees to the EU, estimated at **€301 million**.

**Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)**

- CBAM is the European Union's tool to put a fair price on the carbon emitted during the production of carbon intensive goods that are entering the EU, and to encourage cleaner industrial production in non-EU countries.
- CBAM is one of the elements of the **EU Green Deal**, the goal of which is to reduce **GHG emissions by 55% by 2030**.
- CBAM is aimed at **equalizing the price of carbon paid for EU** products operating under the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) and imported goods.
  - It refers to a phenomenon where a **EU manufacturer moves carbon-intensive production to countries outside the region with less stringent climate policies**. Its primary objective is to avert 'carbon leakage'.

**Implementation of CBAM**

- The CBAM system is expected to come into force on **January 1, 2026**.
- The CBAM will initially apply to imports of **Cement, Iron and steel, Aluminium, and Electricity**, as these sectors have a high risk of carbon leakage and high carbon emissions.
- EU importers will have to **buy carbon certificates corresponding to the carbon price** that would have been paid in the EU, if the goods had been produced locally.



- The price of the certificates would be calculated according to the **auction prices in the EU carbon credit market**.
- Once a non-EU producer can show that they have already paid a price for the carbon used in the production of the imported goods in a third country, the **corresponding cost can be fully deducted for the EU importer**.
- **CBAM will apply on:** In principle, imports of goods from **all non-EU countries** will be covered by the CBAM. Certain third countries who participate in the ETS or have an emission trading system linked to the Union's will be excluded from the mechanism. This is the case for members of the **European Economic Area and Switzerland**.

## 20. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** REDD+ is a **climate change mitigation solution** developed by **Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**.

- The Paris Climate Agreement recognizes REDD+ and the **central role of forests**.
- It was first introduced in 2005 during the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 11) in Montreal.
  - The "+" was added later at **COP 13 in Bali, 2007** to include broader forest-related activities.

**Statement 2 is correct:** It offers **economic incentives** to developing countries to preserve forests, enhance carbon stocks and promote human well-being.

- **REDD+ reduces deforestation** through the conservation and sustainable management of forests and supporting **developing countries** in turning their political commitments, as represented in their **Nationally Determined Contributions**.

## 21. (b)

### Context

- An international bird-watching programme was recently organised at the Rakchham-Chitkul Wildlife Sanctuary in Himachal Pradesh.

### About the Sanctuary

- Rakchham and Chitkul are two historic villages in Himachal Pradesh's Sangla Valley, often described as the most beautiful valley of the state. The sanctuary is named after these villages.
- Spread over **304 sq km**, it lies in the **dry zone**, so it does not experience the monsoon, making it accessible for exploration throughout the year.
- Several trekking routes pass through the sanctuary, with the **Lamkhanga Pass** being the most famous, connecting Kinnaur to the **Gangotri Glacier**.
- The sanctuary is home to a rich variety of wildlife:
  - **Mammals:** Snow Leopard, Brown Bear, Black Bear, Musk Deer, Himalayan Thar, Himalayan Weasel, and Blue Sheep.
  - **Birds:** Western Tragopan, Monal, Koklass Pheasant, Cheer Pheasant, Khaleej Pheasant, Chukar Partridge, Black Francolin, and over **150 species of birds** in total.

## 22. (d)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Methane has a significantly higher global warming potential than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period—about 84-86 times more potent in trapping heat.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Wetlands are indeed the largest single natural source of methane emissions, contributing roughly 20-30% of atmospheric methane.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Methane is estimated to account for nearly one-third of the observed global warming since the pre-industrial era because of its strong warming potential and increasing atmospheric concentration.

## 23. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Snow Leopard (*Panthera uncia*) is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List due to factors like habitat loss, poaching, and declining prey base.

**Statement 2 is correct:** It is included in Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 in India, which grants it the highest protection status.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** However, the Snow Leopard is not found only in India, Nepal, and Bhutan; its range extends across 12 countries including Afghanistan, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as well.

## 24. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct: Scientific name:**

- *Globicephala melas* (Long-finned Pilot Whale).
  - *Globicephala macrorhynchus* (Short-finned Pilot Whale).
  - **Family:** Delphinidae (Oceanic dolphins).
  - Despite their name, **they are not true whales but large oceanic dolphins.**
- Statement 2 is not correct: Habitat & Distribution:** Long-finned species prefer cooler waters (North Atlantic, Southern Ocean).
- **Short-finned species** prefer warmer tropical and subtropical waters, including parts of the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea.

## 25. (d)

**Context**

- India celebrated International Snow Leopard Day on October 23, with a nationwide campaign “#23for23”.

**About Snow Leopards (*Panthera uncia*)**

- **Physical traits:** Snow leopards are adapted to rugged, cold environments, with thick fur, stocky bodies, and long tails that serve as rudders for balance and warmth.
- **Habitat:** They inhabit the high-altitude mountain ranges of **12 Asian countries, including India**, Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.
  - They are often referred to as the ‘ghosts of the mountains’ as they are hardly ever seen.
- **Population:** The global population is estimated at **4,500–7,500**, with **India accounting for 10–15%**.
  - The first-ever Snow Leopard Census across the Indian Himalayas recorded **718 individual** snow leopards, of which **Ladakh alone hosts 477**.
- **Conservation Status:**
  - **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable
  - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972:** Schedule I species
  - **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):** Appendix I (since 1975)
  - **CMS (Convention on Migratory Species):** Appendix I (since 1986)
- **Threats:** Climate change, habitat loss, reduced prey, retaliatory killings, and poaching.
- **Significance:** State animal of Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

## 26. (c)

**Context**

- The **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**, in its recent **World Heritage**



**Outlook, 2025 report**, classified the Western Ghats as being of “**significant concern**” due to escalating threats.

#### Western Ghat

- The Western Ghats are a **1,600-km** long mountain chain along the west coast of India.
- It covers **six states** — Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. About 60 percent of the mountain range is in Karnataka.
- **Significance:** These Ghats are home to high mountain forests, which moderate the tropical climate of the region.
  - They are home to 325 globally threatened flora, fauna, bird, amphibian, reptile and fish species.
- Western Ghats were accorded the **World Heritage Status by UNESCO in 2012**.
- They are recognized as one of the **world’s eight biodiversity hotspots**.
- Western Ghats are older than the Himalayas.

#### 27. (a)

**In News:** The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), under India’s Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) framework, has released ₹55 lakh to 18 farmers cultivating Red Sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinus*) in eight villages of Tamil Nadu, marking the first direct benefit-sharing initiative for farmers.

**Statement 1 is correct:** Red Sanders is a prized hardwood known for its rich heartwood used in furniture, instruments, carvings, and tools.

- **Distribution:** It is an endemic species to **Eastern Ghats found in Andhra Pradesh** and has ecological, economic, and cultural significance.
  - It is also cultivated in **Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Odisha** and other States.

**Statement 2 is not correct :** The species is protected under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**, and listed under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which strictly regulates its international trade.

- The IUCN Red List of threatened species classifies it as **Endangered**

#### 28. (b)

##### Context

- China sent three golden snub-nosed monkeys to France on a 10-year loan to mark 60 years of diplomatic ties, expanding its renowned “panda diplomacy” into broader wildlife diplomacy.

##### Golden snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus roxellana*)

- The golden snub-nosed monkey is **endemic** to the mountainous forests of central China.
- They are known for their **bright golden fur and blue faces**, adapted to survive in the **cold, high-altitude habitats** of the **Qinling, Minshan, and Daba Mountains**.
- The species is listed as “**Endangered**” on the **IUCN Red List**, primarily due to habitat loss, fragmentation, and climate change.

#### 29. (b)

**Context:** In Brazil’s Amazon rainforest, scientists have built a unique experiment called **AmazonFACE** to simulate future atmospheric conditions by pumping **carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)** into the forest canopy.

- The goal is to understand how the Amazon — often called the “lungs of the Earth” — will adapt to rising CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the coming decades.

##### About the Project:

- **AmazonFACE (Free-Air CO<sub>2</sub> Enrichment)** is located near **Manaus, Brazil**.
- The setup includes **six steel tower rings**, each surrounding 50–70 mature trees.

- Three rings will be fumigated with elevated CO<sub>2</sub> to mirror **future climate projections (2050–2060)**, while others serve as controls.
- Sensors monitor forest responses every 10 minutes — tracking CO<sub>2</sub> absorption, oxygen release, and changes in humidity.
- The project is led by **INPA (National Institute for Amazon Research)** and **Universidade Estadual de Campinas**, with support from **Brazil and the United Kingdom**.

30. (a)

**Context**

- Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary is set to become the third home for cheetahs after Kuno National Park and Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary.

**About Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary**

- It is located on a plateau spanning Sagar and Damoh districts in the **Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh**.
- It is characterised by **deciduous forests of sal, teak, mahua, bamboo and bel trees**.
- It contains extensive grasslands that support a **substantial prey base** including antelopes, wild boar, and other herbivores.

31. (b)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Kunming Biodiversity Fund (KBF) is a Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) created to support implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), especially in developing countries.

**Statement 2 is Correct:** It was established under the leadership of China and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with support from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) and UNDP.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The KMGBF is a non-binding framework, not a legally binding treaty. It sets 4 long-term goals for 2050 and 23 action targets for 2030 adopted at COP-15 to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Montreal (2022).



# MISCELLANEOUS

1. With reference to the 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India Report, 2023', consider the following statements:
1. It was released by NITI Aayog in collaboration with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH).
  2. Suicides in agricultural sector declined in 2023 in comparison to 2022.
  3. The 18-30 years age group has the highest accidental death rate in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are not 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 the 'International Health Regulations (IHR)', consider the following statements:
1. These are a legally binding framework adopted by all member states of the World Health Organisation (WHO).
  2. These cover cross border chemical and radiological diseases.

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

3. Consider the following statements about National Culture Fund:
1. It was set up in 1996 to mobilise extra resources through Public Private Partnerships (PPP) towards conservation of monuments.
  2. It is managed by a Council and an Executive Committee and the Council is chaired by the Union Minister of Culture.
  3. The donation to NCF is eligible for 100% tax exemptions.

Which of the above given statements are correct?

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

4. The Sundar Committee (2005), recently seen in the news, is associated with which of the following?
- (a) National Road Safety Policy

- (b) Railway reforms and modernization policy
- (c) Education reform policy
- (d) Health policy and safety reforms

5. Consider the following statements regarding the International Social Security Association (ISSA):
1. India was awarded the ISSA Award 2025 for 'Outstanding Achievement in Social Security'.
  2. ISSA was founded in 1927 under the International Labour Organization (ILO).
  3. ISSA supports over 300 member institutions from more than 160 countries.

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
6. Recently, term 'Schedule M Norms' was in news, is primarily in context of:
- (a) Regulation of drug manufacturing standards in India
  - (b) Environmental norms for industrial emissions
  - (c) Food safety and packaging standards
  - (d) Labour safety regulations
7. Operation HAECHI-VI, recently in the news, is primarily associated with:
- (a) Counter-terrorism operations in South Asia
  - (b) Combating transnational cyber-enabled financial crimes
  - (c) Anti-narcotics operations in Southeast Asia
  - (d) International peacekeeping missions
8. Consider the following statements
1. The Nobel Prize in Literature for 2025 is awarded to Michel H. Devoret for his novel Sátántangó.
  2. In 1913, Rabindranath Tagore became the first Indian to win the Nobel Prize in Literature for Gitanjali.

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
9. For what efforts was María Corina Machado awarded the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize?
- (a) Fighting corruption and promoting transparency
  - (b) Advocating human rights and social justice
  - (c) Promoting democracy and driving political change
  - (d) Mediating international conflicts
10. Which of the following statements about the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2026 is/are correct?
1. Oxford University has maintained its global number one ranking for the tenth consecutive year.

2. The Indian Institute of Science is Asia's top-ranked university at 12th position globally.

Select the correct answer using the codes below:

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

11. Consider the following statements regarding the Kenton R. Miller Award:

- 1. Dr Sonali Ghosh became the first Indian to receive the prestigious award.
- 2. It is presented every two years by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

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

12. With reference to the Abel Prize, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. The Abel Prize was established by the Norwegian Parliament in 1990 and first awarded in 1991.
- 2. Indian mathematicians have won the Abel Prize three times since its inception.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

13. The 2025 Nobel Prize in Economics was awarded to Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion, and Peter Howitt for their work primarily related to;

- (a) Behavioral economics and market psychology
- (b) Innovation and long-term economic growth
- (c) Game theory and industrial organization
- (d) Monetary policy and inflation control

14. "Maitri II", recently seen in news, refers to;

- (a) A clean energy corridor project in the Indian Ocean
- (b) An Indo-Russian Arctic expedition
- (c) India's green research base in Antarctica
- (d) A renewable energy collaboration between India and the EU

15. Which one of the following Indian states has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Google to establish a world-class AI-powered data centre?

- (a) Telengana
- (b) Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Maharashtra
- (d) Gujarat

16. Wings of Fire, My Journey, and Ignited Minds are literary works associated with which of the following personalities?
- Homi J. Bhabha
  - C.V. Raman
  - Vikram Sarabhai
  - A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
17. Consider the following statements about the Commonwealth Games (CWG):
- The CWG was first held in 1930 in Delhi, India, as the British Empire Games.
  - It is the world's second-largest multi-sport event after the Olympics.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
18. With reference to the Gallantry Awards in India, consider the following statements:
- Param Vir Chakra, Mahavir Chakra, and Vir Chakra are wartime gallantry awards.
  - The Ministry of Home Affairs administers awards for police and civilians.
  - Peace time gallantry awards were constituted before the wartime gallantry awards.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3
19. Consider the following statements about the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought:
- It is awarded annually by the United Nations Human Rights Council to individuals or groups defending human rights and fundamental freedoms.
  - The prize is named after Soviet dissident and Nobel Peace laureate Andrei Sakharov.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
20. Who was the first President of India to visit the Sabarimala temple before President Droupadi Murmu?
- R. Venkataraman
  - Pranab Mukherjee
  - K.R. Narayanan
  - V.V. Giri
21. The Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA) 2025, recently in the news, was released by:
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
  - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- (c) World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
- (d) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

**22.** With reference to the Online National Drugs Licensing System (ONDLS), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It serves as a single-window digital platform for processing drug and cosmetic manufacturing and sales licences in India.
2. It has been developed by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) in coordination with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC).

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**23.** The Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative, recently in news, aims to:

- (a) Develop global resilience to pandemics through early vaccine delivery systems.
- (b) Ensure universal protection from hazardous environmental and climate-related events by 2027.
- (c) Promote early detection of geological hazards such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.
- (d) Establish a unified meteorological database for global temperature monitoring.

**24.** Which Indian state has proposed the Right to Disconnect Bill, allowing private-sector employees to legally switch off after work hours?

- (a) Tamil Nadu
- (b) Kerala
- (c) Karnataka
- (d) Maharashtra

**25.** Project Arunank, recently in news, is primarily associated with:

- (a) River interlinking in Northeast India
- (b) Road and bridge construction along India's eastern border
- (c) Hydropower generation in the Siang Valley
- (d) Tribal welfare and forest-based livelihood programmes

**26.** The Kafala system, recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Regulation of migrant labour in Gulf countries
- (b) Agricultural subsidy framework in Southeast Asia
- (c) Fisheries management in the Indian Ocean region
- (d) Cross-border trade agreement among Middle Eastern nations

**27.** The term 'Digital Arrest' often seen in the news refers to which of the following?

- (a) A legal mechanism allowing cyber police to detain individuals online for cybercrimes.
- (b) A cybersecurity software used by government agencies to prevent online data theft.
- (c) A cyber scam in which fraudsters impersonate authorities and falsely accuse individuals of crimes to extort money.
- (d) A procedure under the IT Act, 2000 for freezing digital assets involved in illegal activities.



28. With reference to the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), consider the following statements:
1. The NCMC has been given statutory status under the Disaster Management (Amendment) Act, 2025.
  2. It is the nodal statutory body to deal with disasters having serious or national ramifications.
  3. The Prime Minister is the Chairperson of the Committee.

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

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

**Statements 1 and 3 are not correct:** Recently, the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** released its **Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India 2023** report, offering a snapshot of the India's public health and safety landscape.

• **Age Groups:**

- **30-45 Years** (31.7%; 1,40,933 deaths);
- **18-30 Years** (24.4%; 1,08,254 deaths).
- India witnessed a staggering **1.73 lakh deaths and 4.47 lakh injuries** due to road accidents in 2023 — a 1.6% increase from the previous year.
  - **Most incidents occur between 6 pm and 9 pm**, highlighting the need for better traffic enforcement and public awareness during peak hours.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The **agricultural sector** saw 10,786 suicides in 2023 (**declined by 10% from 2022**), including 4,690 farmers and 6,096 agricultural laborers.

- It translates to nearly one farmer suicide every day, underscoring the deep-rooted agrarian distress.
- Maharashtra led with 2,518 farmer suicides, followed by Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

2. (c)

**In News:** Recently, the amended International Health Regulations (IHR) officially entered into force, marking a historic milestone in global health governance.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- The International Health Regulations (IHR) are a **legally binding framework** adopted by 196 States Parties, **including all 194 WHO Member States**.
- Their purpose is to prevent, detect, and respond to public health threats that have the potential to cross borders and affect global populations.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- Member countries need to report events that may constitute a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) within 24 hours of assessment.
- While infectious diseases are central, the IHR also covers **chemical, radiological, and other public health risks** that may **cross borders**.

3. (d)

**In News:** The government has allowed private players, alongside ASI, to participate in monument conservation through the **National Culture Fund**.

### About National Culture Fund

- The National Culture Fund (NCF) was indeed set up in 1996 as a Trust under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890, primarily to mobilize extra resources through Public Private Partnerships (PPP) for the conservation of monuments and promotion of India's cultural heritage.
- NCF is managed by a Council and an Executive Committee, with the Council chaired by the Union Minister of Culture. The Executive Committee is chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Culture.
- Donations to the National Culture Fund are eligible for 100% tax exemption under Section 80G(ii) of the Income Tax Act, 1961, encouraging contributions from corporates, individuals, and institutions.

### 4. (a)

#### Context

- According to the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**, India recorded 4,64,029 road accidents in 2023, leading to 1,73,826 deaths and 4.47 lakh injuries.

#### Key Findings

- Nearly **46%** of the victims were two-wheeler riders, reflecting the vulnerability of motorcyclists in India's traffic ecosystem.
- **State-Wise Trends:**
  - **Tamil Nadu** (11,490 deaths) and **Uttar Pradesh** (8,370 deaths) reported the highest **two-wheeler accident** deaths.
  - **Uttar Pradesh recorded the maximum fatalities** on National Highways (7,041 deaths) and also topped deaths from SUVs and trucks. Other high-burden states included **Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh.**

#### Key Committees & Policy Frameworks

- **The Supreme Court's Committee on Road Safety (SCCoRS)** mandates the constitution of **District Road Safety Committees** in every district to improve road safety, as per The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.
- **Sundar Committee on Road Safety and Traffic Management (2005);**
  - It recommended the creation of a **National Road Safety Policy**, approved by the Union Cabinet in **2010**.
  - It also proposed the establishment of a **National Road Safety Board** to oversee safety regulations and enforcement.

### 5. (d)

#### In News

- India has been awarded the prestigious International Social Security Association (ISSA) Award 2025 for 'Outstanding Achievement in Social Security' at the World Social Security Forum in Kuala Lumpur.

#### The International Social Security Association (ISSA)

- It is the world's leading international organization for social security institutions, government departments and agencies.
- The ISSA, founded in 1927 under the International Labour Organization, promotes excellence in social security administration worldwide.
- It supports over 320 member institutions from 160+ countries by providing a professional community, developing standards and research, offering practical services, fostering innovation, and advocating for comprehensive social security systems globally.

6. (a)

**In News**

- The Union Health Ministry has mandated strict compliance with the revised Schedule M norms for pharmaceutical manufacturers in India, following recent incidents of diethylene glycol (DEG) contamination in cough syrups.

**What is Schedule M?**

- Schedule M is part of the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940**, prescribing Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for pharmaceuticals in India.
- It establishes minimum standards for plant, equipment, hygiene, and processes to ensure drug safety and quality.

7. (b)

**Context:** The **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** has arrested eight accused and identified 45 suspects as part of Interpol's **Operation HAECHI-VI**.

**About Operation HAECHI-VI**

- The operation focused on **seven categories of offences**: cyber-enabled financial crime, voice phishing, love and romance scams, online sextortion, investment fraud, money laundering linked to illegal online gambling, business email compromise, and e-commerce fraud.
- Investigators worked together to detect and disrupt **online fraud as well as money laundering activities**, blocking over **68,000 associated bank accounts** and freezing close to 400 cryptocurrency wallets.

8. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct :** The Nobel Prize in Literature for 2025 is awarded to the **Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai**, "for his compelling and visionary oeuvre that, in the midst of apocalyptic terror, reaffirms the power of art".

**Statement 2 is correct :** In 1913, Rabindranath Tagore became the first and only Indian to win the **Nobel Prize in Literature for Gitanjali**.

- The Nobel Prize in Literature** is one prestigious award established by Alfred Nobel's will, and is administered by the Swedish Academy, Sweden.

9. (c)

**Context**

- The 2025 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to **María Corina Machado**, the Venezuelan opposition leader, for her efforts in **promoting democracy and driving political change**.

**About the Peace Prize**

- It is awarded by a committee elected by the **Norwegian Parliament (Stortinget)**. Peace was the **fifth and final prize area** that **Alfred Nobel** mentioned in his will.
- Since 1901** the Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded 105 times, to 139 laureates: 92 men, 19 women and 28 organizations.

10. (a)

**Context**

- Oxford University has maintained its global number one ranking for the tenth consecutive year, according to the **Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2026**.

**About**

- The **22nd edition** of the UK-based THE World University Rankings evaluates 2,191 universities from **115 countries and territories** across 18 performance indicators in **five areas**: teaching, research environment, research quality, international outlook, and industry impact.

- Beyond the **top 100**, universities are assigned “rank bands” instead of specific positions.

#### University rankings 2026: Highlights

- India:** Ranked as the **second most-represented country**, behind only the U.S., with a record 128 institutions — up from 107 last year and just 19 in 2016. The **Indian Institute of Science** is placed in the 201–250 rank band, followed by Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences at 351–400.
- China:** Five universities are in the top 40, up from three last year. **Tsinghua University**, ranked 12th, remains **Asia’s top university**.
- United States:** Seven of the top 10 positions are occupied by the US. However, there is a declining trend overall, with six fewer universities in the top 20 compared to last year and 35 in the top 100, down from 38.

#### World University Rankings 2026: top 10

2026 rank	2025 rank	Institution	Country/region
1	1	University of Oxford	United Kingdom
2	2	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	United States
=3	4	Princeton University	United States
=3	5	University of Cambridge	United Kingdom
=5	3	Harvard University	United States
=5	6	Stanford University	United States
7	7	California Institute of Technology	United States
8	9	Imperial College London	United Kingdom
9	8	University of California, Berkeley	United States
10	10	Yale University	United States

Source: Officiate THE website

#### 11. (a)

##### Context

- Dr **Sonali Ghosh**, Field Director of **Kaziranga National Park** became the **first Indian** to receive the prestigious **WCPA-Kenton Miller Award** at the **IUCN World Conservation Congress** held in **Abu Dhabi, UAE**.

##### About Kenton R. Miller Award

- Established in **2006**, the Kenton R. Miller Award for Innovation in National Parks and Protected Area Sustainability is presented **every two years** by the **World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)**.
  - WCPA is one of the six technical commissions of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The award honors individuals who demonstrate innovation and leadership in conserving national parks and protected areas, particularly in ensuring their long-term sustainability.
- The **award is named after Dr. Kenton R. Miller**, a former IUCN Director General and a prominent global leader in protected area management.

#### 12. (d)

##### Context

- Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara was awarded the Abel Prize 2025 for contributions to algebraic analysis and representation theory.

**About Abel Prize**

- The Abel Prize is an international award recognizing outstanding scientific work in mathematics, often considered the equivalent of a **Nobel Prize for mathematicians**.
  - It is named in honor of the 19th-century Norwegian mathematician **Niels Henrik Abel**.
- **Awarded by:** The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters on behalf of the Government of Norway.
- **Selection process:** An expert committee of **five internationally recognized mathematicians** recommends the laureate(s) to the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters.
- **The prize was established** by the Norwegian Parliament in **2002** and first awarded in **2003**.
  - It can be awarded to mathematicians of any age and nationality.

**Some Notable Laureates**

- **Jean-Pierre Serre: First laureate (2003)** for contributions in algebraic geometry and topology.
- **Srinivasa S. R. Varadhan:** Indian-origin mathematician, won in **2007**.
- **Michel Talagrand (France)** For contributions to probability theory and functional analysis won in **2024**.

**13. (b)****Context**

- The 2025 Economics Nobel prize was awarded to Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion, and Peter Howitt for their groundbreaking work on innovation and economic growth.

**Historical Roots of Modern Economic Growth**

- The research explored why sustained economic growth emerged only in the last two centuries despite technological progress throughout history.
- It argued that before the Industrial Revolution, technological knowledge was largely **“prescriptive”** i.e. people knew how to make things work but not why they worked.
- The Scientific Revolution during the 16th–17th centuries transformed this into **“propositional”** knowledge i.e. linking empirical understanding with scientific reasoning.
- This fusion of science and technology created the foundation for **“useful knowledge,”** enabling systematic innovation.

**The Economics of Creative Destruction**

- Their **1992** model mathematically formalised how creative destruction, where new technologies replace old ones, drives long-term macroeconomic growth.
- **In this framework:**
  - Firms invest in R&D to create superior products or processes.
  - Successful innovators earn temporary monopoly profits.
  - Over time, they are replaced by new innovators — a cycle of creative destruction.
- This process explains **how aggregate GDP grows steadily**, even as individual firms rise and fall.
- Their general-equilibrium model links all markets (goods, labor, and capital), showing how micro-level innovations translate into macroeconomic stability.
- They also demonstrated that R&D has positive social spillovers, justifying public investment in research and education.

**14. (c)****Context**

- The Ministry of Finance has approved the establishment of Maitri II, India’s upcoming research station in eastern Antarctica, to be completed by January 2029.

### About Maitri II

- **Nodal Agency:** National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa.
- **Estimated Cost:** ₹2,000 crore over seven years.
- **Location:** Eastern Antarctica, near the **Schirmacher Oasis**, replacing the aging Maitri station.
- **Green Research Base:** Designed to operate on renewable energy sources, solar during summer and wind energy year-round, reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

15. (b)

**In News:** Recently, the **Government of Andhra Pradesh** signed a **MoU** with **Google** to establish a **world-class AI-powered data centre** in **Visakhapatnam**, valued at **\$15 billion (₹87,520 crore)**.

- **Key Highlights Data Centre in Visakhapatnam:**
  - **Capacity:** 1-gigawatt
  - **Objectives:** Major global connectivity hub, AI-driven advancements across **healthcare, education, agriculture, and industry**.
  - **Global Linkage:** Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and 12 other nations via **subsea cable systems**.

16. (d)

### Context

- Birth anniversary of former **President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (1931–2015)** was observed recently.

### About

- Born on 15 October in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, he was a renowned aeronautical engineer and scientist, widely known as the “Missile Man of India.”
- He served as the **11th President of India** (2002–2007) and is fondly remembered as the ‘People’s President.’
- His literary works include **Wings of Fire, India 2020, My Journey, and Ignited Minds**.
- He was awarded the **Padma Bhushan** (1981), **Padma Vibhushan** (1990), and the highest civilian honour, **Bharat Ratna** (1997).

17. (b)

**Context:** Gujarat’s largest city Ahmedabad has been recommended as the “proposed host” by the executive board of Commonwealth Sport.

- India last hosted the CWG in Delhi in 2010.

### About the CWG

- Started in **1930** (inaugural event in Hamilton, Canada) as the British Empire Games, the present-day Commonwealth Games is a **multi-sport international event, modeled on the Olympics**, involving athletes from the Commonwealth of Nations and their associated territories.
- The Commonwealth of Nations, or simply the Commonwealth, is a voluntary association of **54 sovereign countries**, most of which were former colonies of the British Empire.
- The membership has evolved over time due to political changes and voluntary withdrawals or additions.
- Today, the Commonwealth Games is the **world’s second-largest multi-sport** event and the fourth most-watched global broadcast sports event, featuring athletes from **71 nations and territories**.

18. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** **Gallantry Awards** are given by the Government of India to honour acts of bravery, sacrifice, and exceptional courage by **members of the armed forces, paramilitary forces, and civilians**.



- They are classified as **wartime (gallantry in the face of enemy) and peacetime awards**.
- **Wartime Gallantry Awards:** Param Vir Chakra (PVC), Mahavir Chakra (MVC) and Vir Chakra.
- **Administered by:** Ministry of Defence (for armed forces) and Ministry of Home Affairs (for police and civilians).

**Statement 3 is not correct: Wartime Gallantry Awards:** Param Vir Chakra (PVC), Mahavir Chakra (MVC) and Vir Chakra.

- These were instituted on 26 January **1950**, and were deemed to have effect from 15 August 1947, the date of India's independence.
- **Peacetime Gallantry Awards:** Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Shaurya Chakra.
  - The Government instituted three more gallantry awards on 4 January **1952**, also with retrospective effect from 15 August 1947.
  - Originally, they were named as: Ashoka Chakra Class-I, Ashoka Chakra Class-II and Ashoka Chakra Class-III.

#### 19. (b)

**Context:** Two journalists, both imprisoned—**Andrzej Poczobut in Belarus** and **Mzia Amaghlobeli in Georgia**—have won the **2025 Sakharov Prize**.

About the Prize

- The **Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought** is the **European Union's** highest human rights award, established in **1988** and named after **Soviet dissident and Nobel Peace laureate Andrei Sakharov**.
- It honours individuals or groups defending **human rights and fundamental freedoms**.
- The final winner or winners of the Sakharov Prize are chosen by the **Conference of Presidents**, a European Parliament body led by the president, which includes the leaders of all the political groups represented in the Parliament, making the choice of laureates a truly European choice.
- The award carries an **endowment of €50,000** and is presented at the **European Parliament in Strasbourg** (France) each December.

#### 20. (d)

**Context:** President Droupadi Murmu became the first female President — and only the second President overall after V.V. Giri in the 1970s — to offer prayers at Kerala's Sabarimala temple.

About

- Located 3,000 feet high in the Western Ghats, Sabarimala is one of India's most significant pilgrimage centres — open to people of all faiths. Pilgrims undertake a four-kilometre uphill trek from Pamba to reach the sanctum.
- The shrine is dedicated to Lord Ayyappan, who devotees regard as an eternal celibate.
- President Murmu's visit is symbolically significant, coming years after the landmark 2018 Supreme Court ruling that overturned the traditional ban on women of menstruating age (10–50) entering the temple.

#### 21. (b)

**Context**

- India has moved up to the **9th position** in terms of total forest area globally, as per the Global Forest Resources Assessment (GFRA) 2025, released by the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** in Bali.
  - The GFRA is published **every five years**.

**Key Findings**

- Globally, forests cover **4.14 billion hectares**, accounting for about **32%** of total land area, translating to **0.5 hectares of forest per person**.



- **Russia** has the largest forest cover followed by **Brazil, Canada, the USA, China**, Congo, Australia, Indonesia, India and Peru.
- The report highlights that **global deforestation** has slowed in the past decade.
  - However the world continues to lose **10.9 million hectares** of forest every year (**2015–2025**), a rate still considered alarmingly high.
- **India's Forest Cover Status:**
  - India's forest cover stands at **72.7 million hectares**, representing about **2%** of global forest area.
  - India has maintained its **third position** worldwide after **China and Russia** In terms of **annual forest gain**.
  - **India and Indonesia** together represent over **70%** of global agroforestry areas, indicating strong integration of trees in farmlands.

22. (c)

#### Context

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has directed digital monitoring on the Online National Drugs Licensing System (ONDLS) for tracking the supply chain of high-risk solvents.

#### Online National Drugs Licensing System

- ONDLS is a single-window digital platform in India for **processing drug- and cosmetic-related applications** for manufacturing and sales licences, and various certificates.
- It is developed by the **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC)** in coordination with the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)**.
- **Key Features:**
  - **Digital Tracking System:** The ONDLS portal now enables **real-time monitoring of solvent batches** used in drug manufacturing.
  - **Mandatory Registration:** All state drug regulators and pharmaceutical manufacturers must register on the portal.
  - **Batch-Wise Digital Record:** Every solvent batch must be digitally logged with details such as, Batch number, Quantity, Certificate of Analysis (CoA), Vendor or buyer information.
  - **Pre-Market Verification:** State regulators must ensure no batch is released until data has been uploaded and verified on the portal.

23. (b)

**Option b is correct:** The Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative aims to provide life-saving multi-hazard early warning systems to guarantee that everyone on Earth is protected from hazardous hydrometeorological, climatological, and related environmental events by the end of 2027. This global initiative, launched in 2022 by the UN Secretary-General, focuses on strengthening detection, forecasting, communication, and preparedness across vulnerable nations, led by organizations such as WMO, UNDRR, ITU, and IFRC.

Options (a), (c), and (d) do not capture the comprehensive and multi-hazard scope of the EW4All initiative or its primary goal.

24. (b)

#### Context

- According to a recent survey, 88% of Indian employees say that they are contacted after work hours and now a new Bill in Kerala wants to change that.

#### About

- It's called the **Right to Disconnect Bill** — a proposal that would allow private-sector employees to *legally switch off* after work hours.

- In simple words — no more work calls, no more emails, once you're off the clock. The goal is to diminish the stress of "always being on call."
- Countries like **France, Spain, and Italy** have already implemented similar laws — but Kerala could become **the first Indian state** to do so.

## 25. (b)

Project Arunank is a major initiative of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), focused on the construction and maintenance of strategic roads and major bridges in Arunachal Pradesh and other areas along India's eastern frontier. It aims to enhance connectivity to remote valleys and forward areas, serving both civilian and defence purposes by providing vital infrastructure in challenging terrains.

## 26. (a)

**In News**

- In a landmark labour reform, Saudi Arabia has officially scrapped the decades-old Kafala (sponsorship) system.

**What was the Kafala system?**

- The Kafala system required foreign workers to have a Saudi sponsor, usually their employer, who controlled their visa and legal status.
- This meant that workers couldn't change jobs, leave the country, or even renew their residence permits without the sponsor's consent.

## 27. (c)

A **digital arrest** refers to a cyber scam where fraudsters use fake video calls, forged IDs, and official-looking websites to falsely accuse individuals of crimes and coerce them into paying money.

## 28. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** The Disaster Management (Amendment) Act, 2025, gave statutory status to the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC), making it the apex decision-making body for national disaster response coordination. The committee coordinates preparedness and response efforts of central and state governments, NDMA, and other agencies. The NCMC can co-opt experts or officers depending on the nature of the crisis. The NCMC is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, not the Prime Minister.

29. **Ditwah, Arnab and Murasu are terms recently seen in the news in connection with:**

- (a) Names given to major Indian hydropower projects
- (b) Names of tropical cyclones in the North Indian Ocean
- (c) New Indian defence missile systems
- (d) Titles of UNESCO heritage sites in South Asia

## 29. (b)

**Context:** Severe cyclonic storm Montha created destruction in **Andhra Pradesh**.

- The name '**Montha**', meaning **beautiful or fragrant flower**, was contributed by **Thailand**.
- The next cyclone will be named Senyar, as suggested by UAE, after that it will be Ditwah (Yemen), Arnab (Bangladesh), and Murasu (India).

**What are Cyclones?**

- The word Cyclone is derived from the **Greek word Cyclos** meaning the **coils of a snake**.
  - It was coined by **Henry Peddington** because the tropical storms in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea appear like coiled serpents of the sea.
- Cyclones are **powerful, rotating storms** that form over warm ocean waters, characterized by low pressure at the center and high winds.

