

DAILY MCQs COMPILATION *with* **EXPLANATIONS**

JUNE 2025

NEXT IAS

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HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. Kheer Bhawani Temple, recently seen in the news, was built by which among the following?
 - (a) Maharaja Gulab Singh
 - (b) Maharaja Ranbir Singh
 - (c) Maharaja Pratap Singh
 - (d) Maharaja Ranjit Singh
2. Which of the following best describes the principle of 'Dharma' within the philosophy of Integral Humanism?
 - (a) It exclusively refers to an individual's religious beliefs and rituals.
 - (b) It is the principle that guides righteous conduct that sustains society.
 - (c) It primarily emphasizes the accumulation of wealth and material desires for societal progress.
 - (d) It is the absolute, unchangeable law imposed by a central authority to maintain order.
3. Poson Poya festival, recently seen in the news, is associated with which of the following?
 - (a) The birth of Lord Buddha in Lumbini
 - (b) The attainment of enlightenment by Buddha under the Bodhi tree
 - (c) The preaching of the first sermon by Arahat Mahinda in Sri Lanka
 - (d) The first Buddhist Council held at Rajgir
4. Which tribal communities primarily followed Birsa Munda's Birsait sect?
 - (a) Santhal and Gond
 - (b) Bhil and Korku
 - (c) Munda and Oraon
 - (d) Khasi and Garo
5. Consider the following statements regarding Sant Kabir:
 1. He belonged to the Saguna Bhakti tradition, emphasizing the worship of divine incarnations.
 2. The Kabir Bijak, Kabir Granthavali, and passages in the Adi Granth Sahib represent the major compilations of his verses.

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 Indian cities are part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) under the category of Music?
 1. Varanasi
 2. Chennai

3. Gwalior
4. Hyderabad

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

7. Consider the following statements:

1. Servants of India Society was founded by Gopal Krishna Gokhale in Pune in 1905.
2. Mahatma Gandhi considered Gokhale as his political guru.
3. Servants of India Society was non-political and actively worked towards promoting education and social service.

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

8. Consider the following statements regarding the Nonia Rebellion:

1. It was one of the major uprisings that took place around 1770 in Bihar.
2. The primary aim of the rebellion was to resist the British.
3. The Lonja community, associated with saltpetre manufacturing, led this rebellion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

9. With reference to the Magna Carta, consider the following statements:

1. It was sealed on 15 June 1215 by King John of England, following pressure from English barons.
2. It established the principle that no one, not even the king, is above the law.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

10. With reference to the Indus Script, consider the following statements:

1. Most examples of this script have been found on Harappan seals and their impressions.
2. Most inscriptions of the script are very long, resembling human and animal figures, plants, or tools.

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

11. With reference to the Sahitya Akademi, consider the following statements:

1. It is the only institution in India that undertakes literary activities in 24 Indian languages, including English.
2. It was set up by the Government of India and functions as an autonomous organization.

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. He was known as the “Lion of Parliament” for his powerful oratory and advocacy of national unity, especially regarding the integration of Jammu and Kashmir. He also served as India’s Industry Minister post-Independence and later founded the Bharatiya Jan Sangh in 1951.

Which of the following personalities has been described above?

- (a) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- (b) Shyama Prasad Mukherjee
- (c) C. Rajagopalachari
- (d) Deendayal Upadhyaya

13. Consider the following statements regarding the Kamakhya Temple:

1. It is one of the oldest and most revered among the 51 Shakti Peethas in India.
2. The temple’s architectural style, known as the Nilachala Style, combines elements of the Nagara and Saracenic traditions.

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. Who designed the Teen Murti Bhawan, the building that now houses the Prime Minister’s Museum and Library (PMML)?

- (a) Edwin Lutyens
- (b) Charles Correa
- (c) Laurie Baker
- (d) Robert Tor Russell

15. In which Indian state is the Bonalu Festival officially celebrated as a state festival?

- (a) Telangana
- (b) Gujarat
- (c) Tripura
- (d) Odisha

16. Consider the following languages of India:

1. Bengali
2. Marathi
3. Telugu
4. Kannada
5. Assamese
6. Odia

Which of the above are common to recognised Scheduled and Classical Languages?

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

17. With reference to Madhubani Paintings, consider the following statements:

1. They originated in the Mithila region of Bihar.
2. They are traditionally painted using bright, earthy colours and intricate line work.
3. They depict only Hindu deities and do not include human figures, animals, or nature.

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

18. The Battle of Chausa (1539) was fought between which of the following?

- (a) Akbar and Rana Sanga
- (b) Babur and Ibrahim Lodi
- (c) Humayun and Sher Shah Suri
- (d) Aurangzeb and Dara Shikoh

19. Prominent leaders like Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu are associated with which of the following movements?

- (a) Santhal Rebellion
- (b) Munda Ulgulan
- (c) Indigo Revolt
- (d) Pabna Revolt

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Context

- Elaborate security arrangements are in place for the **annual Kheer Bhawani Mela**, scheduled for June 3 at the revered **Kheer Bhawani Temple** in **Ganderbal district**, Jammu and Kashmir.

About the Temple

- **Built by:** Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1912 and later renovated by Maharaja Hari Singh.
- **Dedicated to:** Goddess Ragnya Devi.

- The temple's name comes from **kheer** (milk-rice pudding), which devotees pour into the **sacred spring** as an offering.
- The spring's water is believed to change colours—from white to red to black—with black seen as a sign of impending misfortune.

2. (b)

What is Integral Humanism?

- It emphasizes the balanced and integrated **development of human beings, encompassing not just material well-being** but also mental, intellectual, and spiritual aspects.
- Upadhyay argued that Western ideologies tended to focus solely on material **desires (Kama) and wealth (Artha)**, neglecting the **moral duties (Dharma) and spiritual liberation (Moksha)**, which he considered essential for true human happiness and fulfillment.
- Upadhyay critiqued **both capitalism for its unchecked individualism and potential for exploitation**, and **Marxist socialism** for its suppression of individual liberty and its purely materialistic worldview.
- The philosophy places the human being at the core of all development models. Policies and governance should be designed to serve the **well-being and dignity of every individual, ensuring a dignified life for all**.
- Central to Integral Humanism are the concepts of:
 - **Chiti**: The inner essence, or national soul, of a civilization – its unique cultural identity and consciousness.
 - **Virat**: The living manifestation of national culture in societal institutions and collective life.
 - **Dharma**: The guiding principle of individual and collective righteousness, representing the inherent laws, duties, and ethical conduct that sustain society.

3. (c)

Context

- Sri Lanka is celebrating the sacred Posa Poya festival, marking the historic arrival of Buddhism over 2,000 years ago.

About the festival

- Observed on the **June full moon**, the festival commemorates the **first sermon** preached by **Arahat Mahinda**, son of Emperor Ashoka, to King Devanampiyatissa at Mihintale.
- Thousands of devotees gather at the **Mihintale Hill** and other sacred sites such as **Anuradhapura**, which are central to the celebrations.
- One of the significant qualities that ought to be emphasized among the values celebrated on Posa Poya is **non-violence**. In a world where violence continues to afflict humanity on many fronts, this festival reminds us that 'Ahimsa' is a timeless value that safeguards both one's own and others' right to life and freedom.

4. (c)

In News

- PM pays tribute to **Bhagwan Birsa Munda** on the occasion of his **Martyr's Day**.

About Bhagwan Birsa Munda

- **Early Life:**
 - Born on 15th November 1875 in Ulihatu of the erstwhile Bengal Presidency.
 - An Indian freedom fighter, religious leader and folk hero from the Munda Tribe.
 - Learned teachings from a **Vaishnav monk**.

- **Founder of New Religion “Birsait”:**
 - He believed in **One God**.
 - **Munda and Oraon community people** joined the sect & challenged British conversion activities of tribals.
 - He preached strong Anti-British sentiment through religion.
 - Also, referred to as **‘Dharti Abba or Father of Earth’** by his followers.
- **Outcomes of the Munda Rebellion:**
 - In 1895, Birsa Munda was arrested for rioting and imprisoned for 2 years.
 - In 1900, Birsa Munda was arrested again and died of cholera in captivity, at the age of just 25.

5. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Kabir “emphasized One God (Nirguna Bhakti),” which refers to devotion to a formless, attributeless God, directly opposing the Saguna Bhakti tradition that focuses on divine incarnations.

Statement 2 is correct: Kabir’s teachings and verses are compiled in:

- Kabir Bijak – preserved by the Kabirpanth.
- Kabir Granthavali – associated with Dadupanth in Rajasthan.
- Passages in the Adi Granth Sahib – the holy scripture of Sikhism, also includes his dohas.

6. (b)

Context

- A proposal for Creative City Lucknow under the category Gastronomy for **Awadhi Cuisine** has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre recently.

UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN)

- The UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) is a **global network of cities** that recognize culture and creativity as drivers of sustainable urban development.
 - UCCN was created in **2004**.
- The network focuses on **seven creative fields**: Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music.

Indian cities in UCCN

- India has several cities recognized by UNESCO as part of the Creative Cities Network.
- The network currently includes;
 - **Jaipur and Srinagar** (Crafts and Folk Arts),
 - **Varanasi, Chennai and Gwalior** (Music),
 - **Mumbai** (Film),
 - **Hyderabad** (Gastronomy),
 - **Kozhikode** (Literature).

7. (d)

Statement 1 is correct: Gopal Krishna Gokhale is a moderate nationalist and social reformer and founded the Servants of India Society on June 12, 1905, in Pune. The aim was to train national missionaries for the service of India.

Statement 2 is correct: Gandhiji acknowledged Gopal Krishna Gokhale as his mentor and political guru, especially appreciating his moderate, reform-oriented approach.

Statement 3 is correct: Servants of India Society was non-political in nature and focused on Promoting education, Uplifting the underprivileged, Sanitation, health, and rural service.

8. (d)

Statement 1 is correct: The Nonia (or Lonia) Rebellion occurred in Bihar during the colonial period, particularly around the 1770s—a time marked by significant resistance against early British economic exploitation and land revenue systems. This coincided with the Great Bengal Famine of 1770, which triggered unrest.

Statement 2 is correct: The rebellion was fundamentally anti-colonial in nature. The community resisted the British colonial impositions, especially around trade monopolies, taxes, and control over local industries such as saltpetre.

Statement 3 is correct: The Lonia (or Nonia) caste was deeply involved in the saltpetre trade, a key ingredient for gunpowder, which the British East India Company tried to control. Their economic displacement and exploitation led them to revolt.

9. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Sealed on 15 June 1215 by King John of England, following pressure from English barons who **sought to limit the king's arbitrary power.**

- **Barons**, part of the feudal system, were key stakeholders as landholders providing knights and military service to the king.
- The immediate cause of baronial rebellion was **John's defeat at the Battle of Bouvines (1214) by King Philip II of France.**
- **Long-term causes** included military failures (loss of Normandy and Anjou in 1204) and heavy taxation imposed to finance campaigns.
- **Purpose:** It was the **first document** to put into writing the **principle that the king and his government was not above the law.**
 - It sought to **prevent the king from exploiting his power**, and placed limits of royal authority by establishing law as a power in itself.
- **Foundation of Rule of Law:** Established the principle that no one, not even the king, is above the law.
 - Introduced the idea that the monarch's power could be legally restricted, a foundational shift in political authority.

10. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The first official report on excavations at Mohenjo-daro, in **1931** had a section on the '**Indus Script**'.

- This script has attracted and fascinated a number of archaeologists, epigraphists, scientists, and many others who have made sincere attempts to solve its riddles.
- **Where is it preserved?** Most examples of this script have been found on **Harappan seals and their impressions.**
 - Other objects that preserved this script are **metal and terracotta tablets, copper objects, pottery, etc.**

Statement 2 is not correct: Nature of the Script: Consists of signs and symbols, many resembling human and animal figures, plants, or tools.

- Most inscriptions are **very short—typically 4–5 signs long**; the longest is about 26 characters.

11. (c)

Context

- The Sahitya Akademi has announced the names of 23 writers for its Yuva Puraskar and 24 for the Bal Puraskar for 2024.

About Sahitya Akademi

- Sahitya Akademi**, India's National Academy of Letters, is the Central institution for literary dialogue, publication and promotion in the country and the only institution that undertakes literary activities in **24 Indian languages**, including English.
- It was inaugurated** by the Government of India on **12 March 1954**.
- Status:** Set up by the Government of India, it functions as an **autonomous organization**, registered as a society on **7 January 1956** under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.
- Each winner receives:** A casket with an engraved copper plaque and ₹50,000 cash prize.

12. (b)

In News

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to Bharatiya Jana Sangh's founding **president Syama Prasad Mukherjee** on his death anniversary.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee

- He was born on 6th July 1901 in Calcutta.
- He was a multifaceted personality-patriot, educationist, parliamentarian, statesman, and humanitarian.
- He inherited a legacy of erudition and nationalism from his father, Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, an esteemed Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University and Judge of the Calcutta High Court.

Major contributions

- He excelled academically and served as the youngest Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, promoting Indian languages and education.
- He was initially involved with Congress and later joined the Hindu Mahasabha, becoming its acting president and advocating for complete Indian independence.
- As Finance Minister in Bengal, he **opposed colonial interference** and contributed to famine relief efforts.
- Post-independence, he served as **Industry Minister**, helping establish key industrial institutions before founding the **Bharatiya Jan Sangh** in 1951.
- He was Known as **"The Lion of Parliament,"** he was a powerful orator championing national unity, **especially the integration of Jammu and Kashmir**.

13. (c)

Context

- Thousands of devotees have arrived in Assam for the Kamakhya Temple's annual Ambubachi Mela.

About; Kamakhya Temple

- Located atop the **Nilachal Hills** in Guwahati, Assam, it is one of the **oldest and most revered among the 51 Shakti Peethas** in India.
- The main shrine is surrounded by individual temples dedicated to the **Ten Mahavidyas**: Kali, Tara, Sodashi, Bhuvaneshwari, Bhairavi, Chhinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagalamukhi, Matangi and Kamalatmika.

- The present structure of the temple was **rebuilt in 1565 CE** by utilizing the ruins of an earlier **11th–12th century stone temple**.
- Architecturally, the temple had been modelled out of a combination of two different styles, namely, **the traditional nagara or North Indian and saracenic or Mughal**.
 - Thus, being an unusual combination which came into its existence on this famous sakti shrine of India, it has been named as the **Nilachala Style of Architecture**.

14. (d)

Context

- PM Modi chaired the 47th Annual General Meeting of the Prime Ministers Museum and Library (PMML) Society at Teen Murti Bhawan in New Delhi.

About

- **Origin:** It is housed at **Teen Murti Bhawan**, the former official residence of India's first Prime Minister, **Jawaharlal Nehru**.
 - Originally known as the **Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML)**, it was established in **1964** after the death of **Jawaharlal Nehru**.
 - On June 27th 1964, the Teen Murti Bhawan was converted into the **Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML)**.
 - Renamed in **2021** as the Prime Ministers Museum and Library to honour the contributions of all Indian Prime Ministers.
- **Design:** The Teen Murti Bhawan, which houses the PMML, was designed by British architect **Robert Tor Russell in 1929–30**.
- **Objectives:** To preserve, document, and disseminate the legacy and contributions of all **Prime Ministers of India**.
 - To act as a premier institution for research in modern Indian history.

15. (a)

Context

- The Bonalu festival's first main puja for the Ashada month began at the Goddess Jagadambika Ammavaru temple inside the Golconda Fort.

About Bonalu

- Bonalu is an **annual Hindu Festival** where **Goddess Mahakali** is worshiped.
- **It is celebrated** in the **twin Cities Hyderabad and Secunderabad** and other parts of Telangana state, India.
- **History:** Bonalu began in the 19th century after a plague outbreak in Hyderabad.
 - As a mark of gratitude for divine protection, people started **offering Bonam** (from Telugu Bhojanalu, meaning meals) to Goddess Mahakali annually.
- **The festival is observed** during the **Ashada month** (June–July), marking the onset of the monsoon season.
- In **2014**, Bonalu was declared the **state festival of Telangana** after its formation as a separate state.

16. (d)

In News: Recently, the Union Home Minister underscored the **importance of Indian languages** in preserving the nation's cultural identity, asserting that language is not merely a tool of communication but the **'soul of a nation'**.

- **Scheduled Languages in India:** Indian Constitution recognizes 22 languages as **Scheduled**, affirming the equal status and promotion of regional languages.
 - These are *Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri*.
- However, India has **recognized eleven classical languages**, i.e. Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia and recently added **Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali**.
- **Common to Scheduled & Classical Languages:** These are *Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Marathi, Assamese and Bengali*.

17. (a)

Context

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh presented a Madhubani painting from Bihar to Chinese Defence Minister Admiral Don Jun during their meeting in Qingdao on the sidelines of the SCO conclave.

Madhubani Paintings

- They originated in the Madhubani district of Bihar's Mithila region.
- They are known for their intricate line drawings filled with bright, earthy colors and tribal motifs.
- They were traditionally created by women on mud walls of bridal chambers.
- They featured themes from Hindu mythology and local beliefs, symbolizing marriage and fertility.
- The paintings show human beings, animals, trees, flowers, birds, etc.

18. (c)

Context

- Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation has completed the development and beautification of the historic Chausa battlefield.

About the Battle of Chausa

- The Battle of Chausa was a notable military engagement between the Mughal emperor, Humayun, and the Afghan, Sher Shah Suri.
- It was fought on 26 June 1539 at Chausa, 10 miles southwest of Buxar in modern-day Bihar, India.
- Sher Shah was victorious and crowned himself Farid al-Din Shēr Shah.

19. (a)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to the heroes of the Santhal Revolution on the occasion of Hul Diwas.

About

- The Santhal rebellion (also known as the Sonthal rebellion or the Santhal Hool) started on 30th June 1855 with the help of prominent leaders like Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu.
- It was a rebellion in present-day Jharkhand and West Bengal, Eastern India against both the British East India Company (BEIC) and Zamindari System by the Santhal.



ECONOMY

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Vizhinjam International Seaport:
1. It is India's first transshipment port capable of handling ultra-large container ships.
 2. It is developed by the Karnataka government under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.

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. Consider the following statements:

1. The Chenab Rail Bridge is the world's highest railway arch bridge.
2. The Anji Bridge, located in Arunachal Pradesh, is India's first cable-stayed railway bridge.

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. A compulsory license in India can be granted three years after a patent is issued if which of the following conditions is/are met?

- (a) The patented invention is not available to the public at a reasonable price
- (b) The reasonable requirements of the public are not being satisfied
- (c) The patented invention is not manufactured or used within the territory of India
- (d) All of the above

4. Consider the following statements:

1. Heeng plants grow in cold, arid environments in Iran and Afghanistan.
2. Heeng is mentioned in the Mahabharata and texts of Ayurveda.
3. Heeng can help relieve abdominal pain and digest food.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

5. Which of the following are members of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)?
1. Governor of Reserve Bank of India
 2. Chief Economic Adviser
 3. Chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

6. With reference to National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIF), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. NIIF was established in 2015 as a sovereign-linked alternative investment platform.
 2. The Governing Council of NIIF is chaired by the Union Finance Minister.

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

7. What does the Gini Index primarily measure?

- (a) Poverty levels in a country
- (b) Employment rate in a country
- (c) Income inequality within a population
- (d) Economic growth rate of a country

8. With reference to the Oil Palm Cultivation, consider the following statements:

1. It is a native of South America and popularly known as red oil palm.
2. Indonesia is the world's largest producer of palm oil, followed by Malaysia.

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. Consider the following statements:

1. China is the largest tea producing country in the world followed by India.
2. India has become the second largest tea exporter in the world.

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 Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), consider the following statements:
1. It was constituted in 1999 as an autonomous body after the recommendations of the Malhotra Committee report.
 2. The main objective of the IRDA is to protect the interests of the policyholder and regulate the insurance industry.

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
- 11.** Which of the following statements best describes the Trade Deficit?
- (a) It arises when a country purchases more goods from other countries than it exports to them.
 - (b) It occurs when the government's revenue expenditure exceeds its revenue receipts.
 - (c) It is a decrease in the value of an asset over time due to wear and tear.
 - (d) It is the gap between the fiscal deficit and the interest paid on borrowed funds.

- 12.** Consider the following statements
1. India is the largest producer and consumer of cotton in the world.
 2. India has the largest cotton acreage globally.
 3. India grows all four species of cotton.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All the three
 - (d) None
- 13.** With reference to the Turmeric Cultivation, consider the following statements:
1. India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of turmeric in the world.
 2. There are 30 varieties of turmeric produced in India.
 3. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Karnataka are some of the important states cultivating turmeric.

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.** Consider the following statements regarding the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI):
1. NIXI is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament in 2003.
 2. One of NIXI's primary objectives is to facilitate the exchange of domestic internet traffic within India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

15. With reference to the '*Economic Policies in India*', consider the following statements:

- 1. Fiscal Policy is managed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- 2. Monetary Policy refers to the government's use of taxation and public spending.

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. With reference to coffee production, consider the following statements:

- 1. Brazil is the world's largest producer of coffee.
- 2. India is among the top five coffee-producing countries globally.
- 3. Within India, Karnataka is the largest coffee-producing state.

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

17. With reference to the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Finance.
- 2. It administers the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.
- 3. One of its objectives is to regulate direct tax collection from salaried employees.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

18. With reference to Brent Crude oil, consider the following statements:

- 1. Brent Crude is a light sweet crude oil extracted from the North Sea.
- 2. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) serves as the benchmark for crude oil pricing in the Middle East and African markets.

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

19. With reference to Potato Cultivation, consider the following statements:

1. China is the world's second top producer and consumer of potato.
2. Among the states in India, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal lead the production, followed by Bihar.

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. With reference to Kolhapuri Chappals, consider the following statements:

1. They are traditionally made by artisan communities in Maharashtra.
2. Kolhapuri chappals received Geographical Indication (GI) status in 2019.

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. With reference to the Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR), consider the following statements:

1. It is a monetary policy instrument employed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to maintain short-term interest rate stability.
2. It is primarily used to absorb surplus liquidity from the banking 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

22. Consider the following statements

1. Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited (SMFCL) is India's first Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) in the maritime sector.
2. NBFCs are engaged in financial activities like loans and investments in securities.
3. NBFCs cannot accept demand deposits and they exclude companies whose main business is agriculture.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

23. With reference to the India's Startup Ecosystem, consider the following statements:

1. India is the 3rd largest startup ecosystem in the world after the US and China.
2. Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) launched in 2016 by NITI Aayog aims to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

24. Which among the following are the components of the Current Account Balance of a country?

- 1. Export and import of goods
- 2. Net income from abroad (such as interest and dividends)
- 3. Net transfers (remittances, foreign aid, etc.)

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

25. Consider the following statements:

- 1. The Ratle Hydroelectric Project is being developed entirely by the central government of India.
- 2. The Kishenganga Project diverts water to the Ravi basin.

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

26. Consider the following statements regarding turmeric production and trade in India:

- 1. India accounts for over 50% of global turmeric production.
- 2. Telangana, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh are among the top turmeric-producing states.
- 3. India is the largest exporter but not the largest producer or consumer of turmeric.
- 4. Waigaon Turmeric and Lakadong Turmeric are both from Tamil Nadu.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only One
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All the four

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

In News

- **MSC Irina (biggest container vessel in the world)** first time reached the **Vizhinjam International Seaport**.

Vizhinjam International Seaport

- It is developed by the **Kerala government** under a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model**.
- It is a deepwater transshipment port for container and multipurpose cargo.
- It is India's **first transshipment port capable of handling** ultra-large container ships.
 - It is located near **Sri Lanka's Colombo Port**, which currently handles 70% of India-bound transshipment cargo.
- It aims to **reduce India's dependence** on foreign ports like Colombo.
- Its natural 24-meter depth allows it to berth the world's largest ships without extensive dredging.

2. (a)

Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the **Chenab** and **Anji** rail bridges.

About

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Chenab Rail Bridge is the **world's highest railway arch bridge**, located in Jammu & Kashmir, standing **359 meters above the Chenab River**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While Anji Bridge is India's **first cable-stayed railway bridge**, it is **not** located in Arunachal Pradesh. It is located in the **Reasi district of Jammu & Kashmir**.

3. (d)

Context

- A growing number of rare disease patients in India are urging the government to invoke the compulsory licensing provision under the **Indian Patents Act, 1970**.

About

- Compulsory licensing is a legal tool under **Section 84 of the Indian Patents Act, 1970**, which allows the government or any third party to manufacture a patented product or use a patented process **without the consent of the patent owner** in certain conditions.
- It aims to protect **public health and access to affordable medicines**.
- **A compulsory license in India** can be granted **three years** after a patent is issued if:
 - The patented invention is not available to the public at a reasonable price.
 - The reasonable requirements of the public are not being satisfied.
 - The invention is not being worked on in the territory of India.

4. (c)

In News: Recently, CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT) developed a tissue culture unit to boost large-scale heeng propagation.

Statements 1,2 and 3 are correct : Heeng plants thrive in **cold, arid environments** suited to the native regions in **Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia**.

- The plant prefers **sandy, well-drained soil** with **low moisture**, ideally receiving annual rainfall of **200 mm or less**, though it can tolerate up to 300 mm in cultivated regions like the Indian Himalayas.
- It flourishes in temperatures of **10-20° C**, tolerates **highs of up to 40° C**, and withstands **winter lows down to -4° C**.
 - In extremely dry and cold weather, heeng plants typically become dormant to survive.

- Heeng is obtained from the **oleo-gum resin of the plant's taproot** and rhizome, which forms **40–64% of the dried gum**.
 - The perennial plant takes about five years to mature and flower.
- Heeng is a widely used spice in Indian cooking, typically added to hot oil at the start of preparation.
- Its use is deeply rooted in Indian tradition, with references in ancient texts like the **Mahabharata and Ayurveda**, which highlight its benefits for **digestion, relieving abdominal pain, and enhancing taste**.

5. (d)

In News : The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs chaired the 29th meeting of the **Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)**, in Mumbai.

Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

- It was established in December 2010 and is chaired by the Union Finance Minister and includes top financial officials such as the **RBI Governor**, Finance Secretary, **Chief Economic Adviser**, and **heads of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) and Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- It addresses issues related to financial stability, sector development, inter-regulatory coordination, financial literacy, inclusion, and supervision of large financial entities.

6. (c)

Context

- The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs chaired the 6th meeting of the Governing Council (GC) of the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIF) in New Delhi.

About

- **NIIF was established in 2015** by the Government of India as a **sovereign-linked alternative investment platform**.
- **Objective:** It aims to **attract long-term capital** from international and domestic investors **into infrastructure and other high-priority sectors** of the Indian economy.
- NIIF is registered with the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** as an **Alternative Investment Fund (AIF)**.
 - The Government of India holds a **49% share in NIIF**, while the remaining is open to other institutional investors.
- **The Governing Council** of NIIF is chaired by the Union **Finance Minister**.

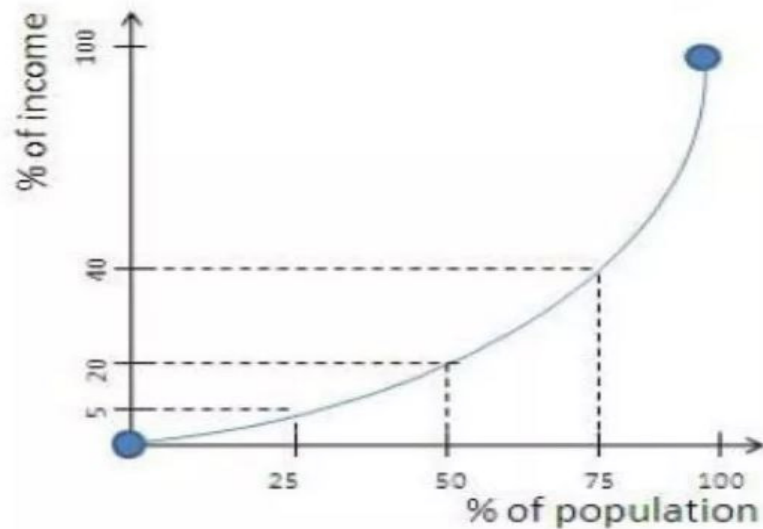
7. (c)

Context

- Despite India's rise as the world's fourth-largest economy with a nominal GDP of \$3.9 trillion, concerns persist over the lack of inclusivity in economic growth.

Gini Index

- The Gini index is a **measure of the distribution of income** across a population.
- **A higher Gini index** indicates **greater inequality**, with high-income individuals receiving much larger percentages of the population's total income.
- **Global inequality, as measured by the Gini index**, has steadily increased over the past few centuries and spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic.



8. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq.), is a native of West Africa and popularly known as African oil palm or red oil palm.

- It is known to be the **highest edible oil yielding perennial crop**.
- It produces **two distinct oils, i.e., palm oil and palm kernel oil**.
 - **Palm oil** is derived from the **fleshy mesocarp of the fruit**, which contains about 45-55% of oil.
 - **The palm kernel oil**, obtained from the kernel of stony seed, is a potential source of lauric oil.

Statement 2 is correct: Distribution: It is grown extensively in South-East Asian countries, (Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea), African countries, and South American countries.

- **Indonesia** is the world's largest producer of palm oil, followed by **Malaysia**.

9. (c)

Both statements 1 and 2 are correct: According to the Tea Board, the Tea exports from India increased by **9.92 per cent at 254.67 million kg**, from January to December 2024, **against 231.69 million kg in the previous calendar year**.

- India has become the **second largest tea exporter in the world**.
- **China** is the largest tea producing country in the world **followed by India**.

10. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)

- IRDA was constituted in **1999** as an autonomous body after the recommendations of the **Malhotra Committee report** to regulate and develop the insurance industry.
 - It was incorporated as a statutory body in **2000**.
- The Authority has the power to frame regulations under **Section 114A of the Insurance Act, 1938**.
- **Objective:** The main objective of the IRDA is to protect the interests of the policyholder and regulate the insurance industry.
- IRDAI is under the jurisdiction of the **Ministry of Finance**, Government of India.

- It has framed regulations ranging from registration of companies for carrying on insurance business to protection of policyholders' interests.

11. (a)

In News: India's trade deficit narrowed to \$6.6 billion in May 2025, a 30% decline from May 2024, driven by lower oil prices and stronger service exports.

A trade deficit occurs when a country's imports exceed its exports, resulting in a negative trade balance.

- It includes both goods and services and serves as a key macroeconomic indicator.
- Persistent trade deficits can lead to currency depreciation, job losses, and increased foreign borrowing.

12. (b)

In News : The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) purchased nearly **100 lakh bales of cotton** at the **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** this season and sold 35 lakh bales.

Statement 1 is not correct : Cotton is a commercial crop in India which contributes about 24% to global cotton production and sustains the livelihoods of millions of farmers and workers. India is the **2nd largest producer and consumer of cotton** in the world.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct : India grows all four species of cotton: G. Arboreum, G. Herbaceum (Asian cotton), G. Barbadense (Egyptian cotton) and G. Hirsutum (American Upland cotton).

- It is primarily grown in the Northern, Central, and Southern zones of India.
- India holds the **largest cotton acreage in the world.**
 - Cotton imports surged by 133% in May 2025, as international cotton is 8% cheaper than Indian cotton.

13. (d)

All the statements are correct: Turmeric farming has become a new way to thwart wild animal threat in Munnar, Kerala.

- Turmeric is a part of **Curcuma Long botanic group** and it is a perennial herbaceous plant of the **ginger family (Zingiberaceae).**
- It is used as a **seasoning, dye, drug with diverse applications** and also used in the cosmetics industry.
- Turmeric is also known as '**Golden Spice**'.
- **India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter** of turmeric in the world.
 - In 2023-24, India was responsible for over **70% of global turmeric production** and there are **30 varieties of turmeric produced in India.**
- **Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Karnataka, West Bengal, Gujarat, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Assam** are some of the important states cultivating turmeric.

14. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: NIXI (National Internet Exchange of India) is not a statutory body. It was incorporated in 2003 under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956 (now Section 8 of Companies Act, 2013), meaning it is a non-profit organization, not established by an Act of Parliament.

Statement 2 is correct: One of the main objectives of NIXI is to facilitate the exchange of domestic Internet traffic between Internet Service Providers (ISPs) within India, helping keep domestic data within the country and improving internet speed and reducing costs.

15. (d)

In News: Both **Fiscal and Monetary authorities** in India have **turned to expansionary policies** like lower interest rates and increased spending to stimulate demand and investment.

Statement 1 is not correct

- **Fiscal Policy** refers to the **government's use of taxation and public spending** to influence the economy.
- **Expansionary Fiscal Policy:** It involves **increasing government spending or cutting taxes** to stimulate demand.
- **Contractionary Fiscal Policy:** **Reduces spending or increases taxes** to cool down an overheating economy or reduce fiscal deficits.
 - The government uses **fiscal responsibility frameworks**, such as the **FRBM Act**, to maintain long-term macroeconomic stability.

Statement 2 is not correct

- **Monetary Policy** is **managed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and involves **regulating interest rates and money supply** to maintain price stability and support growth.
- **Expansionary Monetary Policy:** By **lowering interest rates** or conducting **open market operations** to inject liquidity.
- **Contractionary Monetary Policy:** It involves raising interest rates or reducing money supply, used **to curb inflation**.

16. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: Brazil produces about one-third of the world's coffee, making it the largest producer globally.

Statement 2 is not correct: While India is a significant producer and ranks among the top 10, it is not among the top five globally. The top five coffee-producing countries are Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia, and Ethiopia.

Statement 3 is correct: In India, Karnataka leads in production, followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Karnataka accounts for approximately 70–71% of India's total coffee output.

17. (b)

Context

- The **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** has increased the **auto-settlement limit for advance claims from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh**.

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

- EPFO is a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**. **Statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It administers the **Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952**. **Statement 2 is correct.**
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** EPFO deals with provident fund, pension, and insurance schemes, **not** with direct tax collection.

18. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Brent Crude is indeed a light sweet crude oil from the North Sea and is the most widely used global oil benchmark, especially for Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

Statement 2 is not correct: WTI is the benchmark for U.S. oil, not the Middle East or Africa. Those regions mostly use Brent (for Europe/Africa/Middle East exports) or Dubai/Oman (for Asia-bound exports).

19. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: India is the **world's second top producer and consumer of potato**; in 2020, it saw a production of 51.30 million tonnes.

- **At the top is China**, with its potato output in 2020 at 78.24 million tonnes.
 - Together, the two countries account for **over one-third of the global potato production (359.07 MT)**.

Statement 2 is correct: **Among the states in India, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal** lead the production, followed by Bihar.

- Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab are the other significant potato producers.

20. (c)

Both the statements are correct: **Kolhapuri chappals**, known for their **handcrafted leather design**, are traditionally made by artisan communities in **Maharashtra** and have been in **use since at least the 12th century**.

- Kolhapuri chappals received **Geographical Indication (GI) status in 2019**, recognising their cultural and regional significance.
- **Kala mitti application:** A traditional black mud sticky paste (kala mitti) is applied temporarily to hold the layers in place.
- **Chaprega (decorating the surface):** Artisans create front and back designs using punches and hammers.
 - Small metal tools are used to **stamp traditional patterns like elephants, birds, and geometric borders**.
- The chappals are **polished in natural or dyed colours** such as brown, tan, mustard, etc.

21. (c)

In News: Recently, RBI conducted a ₹1 lakh crore **7-day VRRR auction to absorb excess liquidity**, which had surged to ₹2.43 lakh crore due to government spending and reduced credit demand.

Statement 1 is correct: **Variable Rate Reverse Repo (VRRR)** is a mechanism through which the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** borrows funds from commercial banks for a **short duration** (typically 7 to 14 days) at interest rates determined via auction.

- It aims to **manage liquidity** in the banking system and **maintain short-term interest rate stability**.

Statement 2 is correct: It is primarily used to **absorb surplus liquidity from the banking system**, thereby anchoring short-term interest rates closer to the policy repo rate.

22. (c)

In News : The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) inaugurated Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited (SMFCL).

Statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct : Sagarmala Finance Corporation Limited (SMFCL)

is a Mini Ratna, Category-I, Central Public Sector Enterprise and has been formally registered as a **Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)** with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) .

- It is **India's first NBFC in the maritime sector**.
- A Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 or Companies Act, 2013, and engaged in the business of **loans and advances, acquisition of shares/stocks/bonds/debentures/securities** issued by Government or local authority or other marketable securities of a like nature, leasing, hire-purchase, etc., as their principal

business, but **does not include any institution whose principal business is that of agriculture activity, industrial activity, purchase or sale of any goods (other than securities) or providing any services and sale/purchase/construction of immovable property.**

- NBFCs cannot accept demand deposits.

23. (c)

Both the statements are correct: India is home to one of the most vibrant startup ecosystems with close to 30,000+ tech startups, making it the **3rd largest startup ecosystem in the world after the US and China.**

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):** Launched in 2016 by NITI Aayog, it aims to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across India.
 - It includes initiatives like Atal Tinkering Labs at the school level to foster creativity, Atal Incubation Centres to build a robust startup ecosystem, and Atal Community Innovation Centres to serve unserved and underserved regions.

24. (d)

The Current Account Balance is a key component of a country's Balance of Payments (BoP) and reflects its **transactions with the rest of the world in goods, services, income, and transfers.**

- **The Current Account comprises** trade in goods, trade in services, primary income (investment income), and secondary income (transfers and remittances).
- **A surplus** in the current account occurs when **inflows exceed outflows.**
- **Significance of CAB Surplus:**
 - Indicates Strong External Position.
 - Strengthens Foreign Exchange Reserves.
 - Improves Investor Confidence.

25. (d)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Ratle Hydroelectric Project is being developed by Ratle Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (RHPCL). RHPCL is a joint venture company of NHPC Limited (a central government undertaking under the Ministry of Power) and Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Ltd (JKSPDC). NHPC holds a 51% equity share and JKSPDC holds a 49% equity share.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Kishenganga Hydroelectric Project (KHEP) is a run-of-the-river scheme located on the Kishenganga River (known as Neelum in Pakistan). Its dam diverts water from the Kishenganga River to a power plant in the Jhelum River basin.

26. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: India is the largest producer of turmeric in the world, contributing close to 80% of global production.

Statement 2 is correct: Telangana, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh are among the top turmeric-producing states. Nizamabad (Telangana) and Erode (Tamil Nadu) are especially famous turmeric markets.

Statement 3 is not correct: India is not just the largest exporter, but also the largest producer and the largest consumer of turmeric.

Statement 4 is not correct: Waigaon Turmeric is from Maharashtra (Wardha district) and Lakadong Turmeric is from Meghalaya, specifically the West Jaintia Hills.



INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. With reference to Personality Rights in India, consider the following statements:
 1. Personality rights are exclusively protected under the Copyright Act, 1957 through provisions related to artistic works.
 2. The Supreme Court of India has recognised the right to publicity as inheritable and distinct from the right to privacy.

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. Consider the following:
 1. Macaulay Report (1854)
 2. Kothari Committee (1975)
 3. Arun Nigvekar Committee (2013)

How many of the above is /are related to reforms in Civil services in India?

 - (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None of the above
3. Consider the following statements
 1. Articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution provide that a judge of the Supreme Court/High Court shall be removed by the Prime Minister.
 2. A notice of motion for removal should be signed by not less than 50 members in the Rajya Sabha and 100 members in the Lok Sabha.

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. Consider the following statements regarding the jurisdiction of High Courts under the Constitution of India:
 1. They have original jurisdiction in criminal cases where the death penalty is involved.
 2. They have original jurisdiction to issue writs for the enforcement of Fundamental Rights.
 3. High Courts of certain states have original jurisdiction over matters of admiralty law.
 4. They have original jurisdiction in disputes involving two or more states.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

5. The provisions of the Sixth Schedule are applicable to which of the following states?

- 1. Assam
- 2. Meghalaya
- 3. Manipur
- 4. Mizoram
- 5. Tripura

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Census in India:

- 1. The first synchronous decennial census in India was conducted in 1881 under the supervision of W.C. Plowden.
- 2. Independent India's first census took place in 1951, and since then, it has been conducted in the first year of every decade.
- 3. The Census of India Act of 1948 specifies exact timing and periodicity of Census.
- 4. The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, is responsible for conducting the population census.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Quality Council of India (QCI):

- 1. It is an autonomous body established under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- 2. The chairperson is appointed by the Prime Minister based on recommendations from the industry.
- 3. The National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) is one of QCI's primary accreditation boards.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

8. With reference to the 'Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023', consider the following statements:
1. It mandates 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies.
 2. The quota aims to remain in place for the next 25 years.

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 Lokpal, consider the following statements:
1. The Chairperson of the Lokpal must be a retired Chief Justice of India or a retired Supreme Court judge.
 2. The tenure of the Lokpal Chairperson and Members is fixed at 5 years or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

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. Under which of the following circumstances can the President declare a National Emergency under Article 352?
1. Internal disturbance
 2. War
 3. Failure of Constitutional Machinery in a State
 4. External Aggression

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 3, and 4 only
 - (b) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 2 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3, and 4
11. How many times has a National Emergency been declared in India till date?
- (a) Two times
 - (b) Three times
 - (c) Four times
 - (d) Five times
12. With reference to the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, consider the following statements:
1. The CAG is appointed by the President of India and holds office for a fixed term of 5 years or until the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
 2. The powers and duties of the CAG are prescribed under the Constitution of India as well as the CAG (Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service) Act, 1971.

3. After retirement, the CAG is eligible for reappointment in any Central or State government office.
4. The procedure for removal of the CAG is the same as that of a Supreme Court judge.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

- 13.** With reference to the Euthenasia in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court of India has recognised the 'right to die with dignity' as a part of Article 21 of the Constitution.
2. Both Active and Passive euthanasia in India are legal only if the patient has a "living will".

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.** Which one of the following explicitly prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 years?

- (a) Article 15
- (b) Article 21A
- (c) Article 24
- (d) Article 45

- 15.** Consider the following statements:

1. The Committee on Public Accounts was established in 1931 following the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms.
2. The Public Accounts Committee has 25 members who are chosen annually from Lok Sabha.

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

1. It is a Parliamentary Committee constituted in 1950 on the recommendation of John Mathai.
2. It consists of 30 members, elected every year from the Lok Sabha only.

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

17. Which of the following are benefits enjoyed by Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs) in India?
1. Tax exemption for donations received under Section 13A of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
 2. Allotment of a common election symbol for contesting general elections.
 3. Right to nominate up to 10 star campaigners during elections.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
18. Which state became the first in India to introduce mobile app-based e-Voting in municipal and by-elections?
- Telangana
 - Maharashtra
 - Bihar
 - Odisha

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: While some protection may arise indirectly from IPR laws, personality rights are not exclusively protected under the Copyright Act, and the Act does not specifically define them.

Statement 2 is correct: The Supreme Court and various High Courts have recognised the right to publicity as distinct from the right to privacy, and held it to be inheritable, especially in the Krishna Kishore Singh v. Sarla A. Saraogi (2021) case.

2. (c)

In News:

- The **foundations of the present format** of the civil services examination can be traced to the **Macaulay Report of 1854** which introduced **selection by merit** and designed an examination on the principle of '*transferability of academic talent to administration*'.
- Kothari Committee (1975)** introduced the **three-tier system**—comprising a preliminary exam, main examination, and an interview.
 - It has remained largely **unchanged**, several modifications have been made to enhance transparency and inclusivity.
- Arun Nigvekar Committee (2013)** proposed restructuring the General Studies papers, covering diverse subjects such as Indian Polity, Governance, Economy, and Science & Technology.

3. (b)

In News : The government will move an impeachment motion against Justice Yashwant Varma of the Allahabad High Court in the upcoming Monsoon Session.

- The move follows a committee report indicting him after unaccounted cash was found at his residence following a fire.

Statement 1 is not correct : Articles 124 and 217 of the Constitution allow the President to remove Supreme Court or High Court judges for 'proved misbehaviour' or 'incapacity' after both Houses of Parliament pass a motion with a special majority.

- While these terms aren't defined in the Constitution, the Supreme Court interprets misbehaviour as misconduct like corruption or moral wrongdoing, and incapacity as a physical or mental medical condition.

Statement 2 is correct : The Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968 outlines the removal process for judges.

- A removal motion must be signed by at least **50 Rajya Sabha or 100 Lok Sabha members**.

4. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: High Courts generally do not have original jurisdiction in criminal cases, including those where the death penalty is involved. Criminal cases are tried in Sessions Courts, and the High Court typically has appellate jurisdiction in such cases.

Statement 2 is correct: High Courts do have original jurisdiction to issue writs under Article 226 for the enforcement of Fundamental Rights and for other purposes. This is a significant aspect of the High Court's powers.

Statement 3 is correct: The High Courts of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras have original jurisdiction over matters related to admiralty law, stemming from their historical jurisdiction under the colonial legal system.

Statement 4 is not correct: Disputes involving two or more states fall under the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court as per Article 131 of the Indian Constitution, not the High Courts.

5. (a)

Sixth Schedule of the Constitution

- The Sixth Schedule was adopted under **Article 244** of the Constitution with provisions for formation of autonomous administrative divisions within a state.
 - The Sixth Schedule is applicable to what are officially called as '**tribal areas**' in the States of **Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura**. There are 10 such 'tribal areas' at present in these four States.
 - These divisions, in the form of **Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)**, were granted certain **legislative, judicial and administrative autonomy** within the state.
- **Composition:** According to the **Sixth Schedule**, the ADCs administering a region within a state have **30 members** with a term of **five years**.
 - The Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam is an exception to this with more than 40 members and rights to make laws on 39 issues.
- **Jurisdiction:** ADCs can make laws, rules and regulations with regard to land, forest, water, agriculture, village councils, health, sanitation, village and town level policing, inheritance of property, marriage and divorce, social customs, and mining, among other issues.
 - ADCs also have powers to form courts to hear cases where both parties are members of Scheduled Tribes and the maximum sentence is less than **5 years** in prison.

6. (a)

Census in India

- **A census is a survey of the population** of an area that includes collecting details of a country's demographics including **age, sex and occupation**.
- **History:** Under **W.C. Plowden**, the Census Commissioner of India, the first synchronous decennial (every ten years) census was conducted in **1881**.

- **Independent India's first census** was held in **1951** and since then it has happened in the first year of every decade.
- **The Constitution mandates** that enumeration is carried out but the **Census of India Act of 1948** does not specify its timing or periodicity.
- The population census is conducted by the **Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India** under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.

What is a Caste Census?

- A caste Census involves collecting **data on the population size and socio-economic conditions** of various caste groups.
- **First detailed caste Census** conducted in 1871-72 across major regions like Bengal and Madras.
 - However arbitrary classification led to confusion, as noted by W. Chichele Plowden in the 1881 Census report.
- **1931 Caste Census:** It identified **4,147 castes**, exposing challenges like different identities claimed by the same caste in different regions.
- **Post-Independence:** 2011 Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) identified over **46.7 lakh castes/sub-castes** with significant errors.

7. (d)

About Quality Council of India (QCI)

- QCI is an autonomous body established in 1997 under the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- The chairperson is appointed by the **Prime Minister** based on recommendations from the industry.
- Its mandate is to develop and manage the **National Accreditation Structure (NAS)** for conformity assessment bodies across sectors like health and education, and to promote quality.
- QCI has two primary **accreditation boards**:
 - National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB)
 - National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)

8. (a)

In News: The Indian government is preparing to implement a 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, aiming for the 2029 general elections.

Statement 1 is correct

- The **Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023 (aka Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam)** mandates 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies including Delhi, aiming to enhance female representation in governance.
- Currently, women constitute **only about 15% of the Lok Sabha** and **less than 10% in many state assemblies**.

Statement 2 is not correct

- The quota extends to seats already reserved for SCs and STs women.
- The reservation aims to **take effect after the next Census and subsequent delimitation exercise**, ensuring fair seat allocation.
- The quota aims **to remain in place for 15 years**, with the possibility of extension through Parliamentary action.

9. (a)

Lokpal

- **About:** It is an anti-corruption authority or ombudsman in India that was established to address grievances regarding corruption in public offices.
- **Legal Status:** The Lokpal is not a constitutional body but a statutory body created through legislation Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act 2013.
- **Chairperson:** Retired Chief Justice of India or a Supreme Court judge
- **Appointment of Lokpal:** Appointed by a selection committee consisting of Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India (CJI), Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in Lok Sabha & One Eminent Jurist (appointed by the above members).
- **Tenure:** The Lokpal is appointed for a 5-year term or until they attain the age of 70 years.
- **Powers and Functions:** To investigate and prosecute corruption cases against public servants, including government officials, ministers, and the Prime Minister (except on matters related to national security).
 - The Lokpal has supervision over CBI's investigations in corruption cases.

10. (c)

Context

- The Allahabad High Court's **June 12, 1975** verdict invalidating then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's 1971 election for electoral malpractices led to the **proclamation of National Emergency on June 25, 1975**.

Constitutional Provisions for National Emergency

- **Grounds for Proclamation:** As per **Article 352**, a National Emergency can be declare by the President if the security of India or any part is threatened by;
 - **War and External aggression** (External Emergency)
 - **Armed rebellion** (Internal Emergency): Internal disturbance was substituted with **Armed rebellion** by the **44th Amendment Act, 1978**.

11. (b)

Context

- The Allahabad High Court's **June 12, 1975** verdict invalidating then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's 1971 election for electoral malpractices led to the **proclamation of National Emergency on June 25, 1975**.

Constitutional Provisions for National Emergency

- **Grounds for Proclamation:** As per **Article 352**, a National Emergency can be declare by the President if the security of India or any part is threatened by;
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Historical Instances of National Emergency in India

Grounds	Duration
External aggression (China)	1962-1968
External aggression (Pakistan)	1971-1977
Internal disturbance	1975-1977

12. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The CAG holds office for 6 years or until the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier (not 5 years).

Statement 2 is correct: The CAG's powers and duties are indeed defined both in the Constitution and the 1971 Act.

Statement 3 is not correct: The CAG is not eligible for reappointment to any office under the Central or State government post-retirement.

Statement 4 is correct: The removal of the CAG follows the same procedure as that of a Supreme Court judge, i.e., impeachment by Parliament.

13. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Supreme Court had in **2018 legalised passive euthanasia**, contingent upon the person having a "living will".

- SC held that the '**right to die with dignity**' forms a part of the **right to life under Article 21** of the Constitution of India.
- A **living will is a written document** that specifies the **actions to be taken if the person is** unable to make their own medical decisions in the future.
- **Only Passive euthanasia is legal in India. Hence, Statement 2 is not correct.**

14. (c)

In News: Recently, the **Centre for Legal Action and Behaviour Change (C-LAB)**, in partnership with the **Just Rights for Children (JRC) network**, released a report related to **child labour rescues in 2024–25**.

- **Article 24 (Prohibition of Child Labour):** It **explicitly prohibits** the employment of children below the age of 14 in factories, mines, or any other hazardous employment.
 - It is a **direct constitutional safeguard** against exploitative labour.
- **Article 15(3) (Protective Discrimination):** It empowers the State to make special provisions for children, recognizing their need for additional safeguards and support.
- **Article 21A (Right to Education):** It guarantees **free and compulsory education** for all children aged 6 to 14 years.
 - It was **added by the 86th Constitutional Amendment (2002)**, is central to preventing child labour by ensuring access to schooling.
- **Article 45 (Early Childhood Care and Education):** It directs the State to provide early childhood care and education for all children below the age of six, laying the foundation for long-term development and protection.

15. (d)

The Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) criticized the **Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS)** for ignoring repeated recommendations to improve services, particularly regarding the outdated drug procurement policy.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : The Committee on Public Accounts was first set up in **1921 in the wake of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms**.

- It is a key parliamentary committee in India responsible for auditing the government's revenue and expenditure.

- It has **22 members**—**15 from the Lok Sabha and up to 7** from the Rajya Sabha—elected annually through proportional representation.
 - Members cannot be ministers, and the chairperson is appointed by the Lok Sabha Speaker.

16. (c)

Context

- A two-day national conference of Estimates Committees of Parliament and state/UT legislative bodies is being held in Mumbai to mark the 75th anniversary of the Committee on Estimates.

About

- **The Committee on Estimates**, is a Parliamentary Committee constituted in **1950** on the recommendation of **John Mathai**, the then finance minister.
- It consists of **30 members**, elected every year by the **Lok Sabha from amongst** its Members.
 - The **Rajya Sabha has no representation** in this committee.
- **The Chairperson** of the Committee is appointed by the **Speaker** from amongst its members.
 - **A Minister cannot be elected** as a member of the Committee and if a member becomes a Minister, they cease to be on the Committee.
- **The term** of office of the Committee is **one year**.

17. (a)

Context

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has initiated steps to **de-list 345** Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs) that have not contested elections in the last six years and whose offices could not be physically located.

Political Party Registration in India

- **Constitutional and Legal Basis: Article 19(1)(c)** of the Indian Constitution guarantees the right to form associations, which includes the formation of political parties.
 - The Representation of the **People Act, 1951**, under **Section 29A**, empowers the Election Commission of India (ECI) to register political parties.
- **Procedure for Registration:** A political party seeking registration must:
 - Submit its **constitution/memorandum** within **30 days** of formation.
 - **Pledge allegiance to the Constitution** of India and to the principles of socialism, secularism, democracy, sovereignty, unity, and integrity.
 - **Ensure internal democracy**, including regular elections for office bearers.
- Upon registration, such parties are classified as **Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPPs)** unless they fulfill the criteria for recognition as national or state parties.

Benefits Enjoyed by RUPPs

- Tax exemption for donations received under **Section 13A of the Income Tax Act, 1961**,
- A common symbol for contesting general elections to the Lok Sabha/State Assemblies, and
- Right to nominate up to **20 star campaigners**.

18. (c)

Context

- **Bihar** has become the **first state** in the country to launch **e-Voting facilities** using **mobile applications** in municipal bodies elections and by-polls.

About

- Polling is taking place in **Six Nagar Panchayat and 36 different other municipal bodies**.
- The facilities are available for those people **who are unable to go to polling booths to cast their votes**.
 - Senior citizens, disabled people and pregnant women can avail this option.
- Voters have to install the **E-SECBHR app** which is now currently available only for Android users.

■■■■



GEOGRAPHY

1. Birch Glacier, recently in news due to a massive ice break, is located in which country?

- (a) Switzerland
- (b) Norway
- (c) Canada
- (d) Austria

2. Consider the following statements about Paraguay:

- 1. It is a landlocked country located in South America.
- 2. The Equator passes through Paraguay.
- 3. It is a member of the MERCOSUR trade bloc.

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

3. Consider the following statements regarding Mount Etna:

- 1. It is classified as a shield volcano due to its fluid basaltic lava and non-explosive eruptions.
- 2. Mount Etna is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- 3. It holds one of the longest recorded histories of active volcanism in the world.

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 only

4. Consider the following statements regarding the Kerch Strait:

- 1. It serves as a vital shipping lane connecting the Sea of Azov with the Black Sea.
- 2. Russia's control over the Kerch Strait was established after the 2014 annexation of Crimea.

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. Consider the following statements regarding the Northeast Passage (NSR):

1. The Northeast Passage (NSR) offers a reduction in travel time of 10-14 days for voyages between Asia and Europe when compared to the Suez Canal route.
2. The primary reason for the NSR's shorter distance is its direct path through the Bering Strait, linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

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 Volcanoes, Consider the following pairs :

Volcanoes		Place
1. Mount Etna	:	Italy
2. Kīlauea	:	Hawaii Island
3. Mount Merapi	:	Indonesia

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

7. Consider the following statements:

1. The Brahmaputra River originates in the Kailash ranges as Yarlung Tsangpo.
2. In India, its basin spans across Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, and Sikkim.

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. Which of the following countries share a border with Kyrgyzstan?

1. Kazakhstan
2. China
3. Tajikistan
4. Uzbekistan
5. Turkmenistan

Select the correct option:

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

9. Which of the following statements about the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is/are correct?
1. IMEC was launched during India's G20 presidency in 2023.
 2. IMEC is a land-only transport corridor connecting India to Europe.

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
10. Which of the following countries shares borders with Vietnam?
1. Thailand
 2. Laos
 3. Cambodia
 4. China

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
11. With reference to the Brahmaputra River, which of the following pairs are correctly matched?

Tributary	Bank (Left/Right)
1. Lohit	Right-bank
2. Kopili	Left-bank
3. Subansiri	Left-bank
4. Dibang	Right-bank

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
 - (c) 2 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
12. The 'Etalin Hydel Project', sometimes appeared in the news, is located in:
- (a) Ziro Valley
 - (b) Dibang Valley
 - (c) Sangti Valley
 - (d) Dirang Valley

13. Consider the following statements regarding Yemen's Hodeidah Port:
1. It is situated on Yemen's eastern coast, along the Persian Gulf.
 2. Historically, it was involved in the Italo-Ottoman War and has been a focal point in regional power struggles.

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. The Sutlej River enters India from Tibet through which of the following?

- (a) Nathu La
- (b) Lipulekh Pass
- (c) Shipki La
- (d) Rohtang Pass

15. Consider the following statements regarding the Strait of Hormuz:

1. It connects the Persian Gulf with the Arabian Sea.
2. It is bordered by Iran to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south.
3. It is considered the world's most important oil chokepoint.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

16. Which among the following nations shares a border with Suriname?

1. Peru
2. French Guiana
3. Bolivia
4. Brazil

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

17. With reference to Cyprus, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is an island in the eastern Mediterranean sea near Turkey.
2. It is a member of the European Union.

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

18. Which of the following seas and gulfs surround the Arabian Peninsula?

1. Red Sea
2. Gulf of Aden
3. Gulf of Oman
4. Persian Gulf

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

19. With reference to the Strait of Hormuz, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a critical narrow waterway between Iran and Oman, and connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea.
- 2. Approximately 50% of the world's oil supply passes through it.

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. Consider the following statements with reference to Mount Denali

- 1. It is the highest mountain in North America
- 2. It is situated in the Papua New Guinea

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. Which of the following countries share a land border with Croatia?

- 1. Hungary
- 2. Slovenia
- 3. Bosnia & Herzegovina
- 4. Serbia

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

22. Which of the following locations in India host the currently operational Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) facilities?

- 1. Visakhapatnam
- 2. Mangaluru
- 3. Padur
- 4. Chandikhol

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

23. With reference to the Seine River, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The River originates from the Langres Plateau in northeastern France.
2. The Banks of the Seine in Paris were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991.

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

24. With reference to the 'Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC)', consider the following statements:

1. It is primarily caused by temperature and salinity differences.
2. It transports warm surface waters from the tropics northward, and helps distribute heat and nutrients.

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. Consider the following pairs

City	Countries
1. Natanz	Somalia
2. Bushehr	Egypt
3. Isfahan	Iran

How many of the pairs are correctly matched?

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

26. With reference to the Formosa Strait, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It separates mainland China's Fujian Province from the island of Taiwan.
2. It connects the South China Sea to the East China 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

- 27.** The Cook Islands, recently seen in the news, are located in which of the following Oceans?
- (a) Atlantic Ocean
 - (b) Indian Ocean
 - (c) Pacific Ocean
 - (d) Arctic Ocean

- 28.** Which of the following countries share a land border with Iran?
- 1. Armenia
 - 2. Afghanistan
 - 3. Azerbaijan
 - 4. Syria

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - (b) 1 and 4 only
 - (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
- 29.** Recently, places like Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan were in the news. They are known for;
- (a) Major oil refineries in Saudi Arabia
 - (b) Ancient cultural sites in Turkey
 - (c) Strategic military bases in Iraq
 - (d) Nuclear facilities in Iran
- 30.** Hundru Waterfall is formed by which of the following rivers?
- (a) Damodar
 - (b) Brahmani
 - (c) Subarnarekha
 - (d) Godavari
- 31.** With reference to the Subarnarekha River, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- 1. It originates from the Amarkantak Plateau in Madhya Pradesh.
 - 2. The river flows through Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha before emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
- 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
- 32.** Al Udeid, the largest U.S. military base in the Middle East, is located in which of the following countries?
- (a) Oman
 - (b) Saudi Arabia
 - (c) Qatar
 - (d) United Arab Emirates

33. Which of the following countries is completely landlocked within South Africa?
- Botswana
 - Lesotho
 - Eswatini
 - Zimbabwe
34. South Asia regional centre of the Peru-based International Potato Center (CIP), is being established in which of the following Indian States?
- Uttar Pradesh
 - West Bengal
 - Bihar
 - Punjab
35. With reference to Manasarovar Lake, consider the following statements:
- It is located in India near the Indo-Tibetan border.
 - It is the highest freshwater lake in the world.
 - The Sutlej River originates near this lake.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
36. Headquarters of the National Turmeric Board has been established in which of the following Indian States?
- Andhra Pradesh
 - Odisha
 - Assam
 - Telangana

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Context

- A massive section of the Birch Glacier broke off, crashing down into the valley and partially destroying the village of Blatten.

About

- Birch Glacier** is a mountain glacier situated in the Lötschental Valley, in the canton of Valais, northern **Switzerland**.
- It lies near the alpine village of Blatten, a region known for its scenic beauty and glacial landscapes.

2. (b)

In News

- Paraguay President Santiago is on a state visit to India.

About Paraguay

- It is a **landlocked country** in South America.
- It is bordered by Argentina to the south and southwest, Brazil to the east and northeast, and Bolivia to the northwest.
- Geographically, the **Tropic of Capricorn passes through Paraguay**.
- Paraguay is a member of **MERCOSUR**, the South American trade bloc that includes **Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay**.
- India has a **Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with MERCOSUR**, and Paraguay is keen to enhance trade, investment, and technology exchanges under this framework.

3. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Mount Etna is a stratovolcano, not a shield volcano. Stratovolcanoes have cooler, viscous lava and produce explosive eruptions, unlike the gentle lava flows of shield volcanoes. The Valle del Bove is a large depression on the eastern flank of Mount Etna, a result of structural collapse and volcanic activity.

Statements 2 and 3 are correct: Mount Etna, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, holds one of the world's longest documented records of continuous volcanic activity—spanning nearly 2,700 years.

4. (c)

In News: Ukraine says it hit **Kerch Strait Bridge** also known as the **Crimean Bridge** with underwater explosives.

- **Opened in 2018**, the **Kerch Bridge** is a road and rail bridge that connects the Russian mainland with Crimea, crossing **over the Kerch Strait**.

About Kerch Strait

- **Location:** The Kerch Strait is a narrow waterway that connects the Sea of Azov to the Black Sea.
- **Geography:** It is approximately 4 kilometers wide at its narrowest point and serves as a crucial shipping lane.
- **Control and Access:** Since Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, it has gained control over the entire Kerch Strait area, including the waters and surrounding infrastructure, including the Kerch Bridge.

5. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Northeast Passage (NSR) offers a significant reduction in travel time around 10–14 days compared to the traditional Suez Canal route for shipping between Asia and Europe, particularly between ports like Shanghai and Rotterdam.

Statement 2 is not correct: The NSR does not link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans via the Bering Strait directly. The Bering Strait connects the Pacific Ocean (via the Bering Sea) to the Arctic Ocean, not the Atlantic. The Northeast Passage runs along the Russian Arctic coast from the Kara Sea (linked to the Atlantic side) to the Bering Strait, reaching the Pacific.

6. (c)

Context

- The recent eruption of Mount Etna in Sicily, Italy highlights the dynamic processes beneath the Earth's crust.

Mount Etna

- Mount Etna, is an active stratovolcano on the east coast of Sicily, Italy.
- It is Europe's most active volcano and one of the largest in the world.

Kīlauea

- Kīlauea is an active shield volcano in the Hawaiian Islands.
- The volcano is between 210,000 and 280,000 years old and emerged above sea level about 100,000 years ago.
- Historically, it is the most active of the five volcanoes that together form the island of Hawaii.

Mount Merapi

- Mount Merapi, is an active stratovolcano located on the border between the province of Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- It is the most active volcano in Indonesia and has erupted regularly since 1548.

7. (c)

In News: India is closely monitoring Chinese infrastructure projects on the Brahmaputra, mainly hydropower developments with minimal storage located far upstream, posing little immediate impact on Arunachal Pradesh or Assam.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : The Brahmaputra River originates in the Kailash ranges at 5,150 m elevation, flows 2,900 km in total, including 916 km in India.

- It originates as Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet.
- Its basin spans across Tibet (China), Bhutan, India, and Bangladesh.
- In India, it covers Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Sikkim.
- It enters India near Gelling in Arunachal Pradesh.

8. (a)

Context

- India and Kyrgyzstan have signed the **Protocol and exchanged the Instrument of Ratification** of their **new Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)**, replacing the previous agreement enforced on **12 May 2000**.

About Kyrgyzstan

It is a **landlocked country** in central Asia and has borders with **Kazakhstan, China, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**.

The Tien Shan Mountains cover over 80% of the country, with the remainder made up of valleys and basins.

Issyk-Kul Lake in the north-eastern Tien Shan is the **largest lake** in Kyrgyzstan and the second largest mountain lake in the world after Titicaca.

The **highest peaks** are in the Kakshaal Too range, which constitutes the Chinese border. At an elevation of 7439 m, **Jengish Chokusu** (Pobeda Peak) is the highest point.



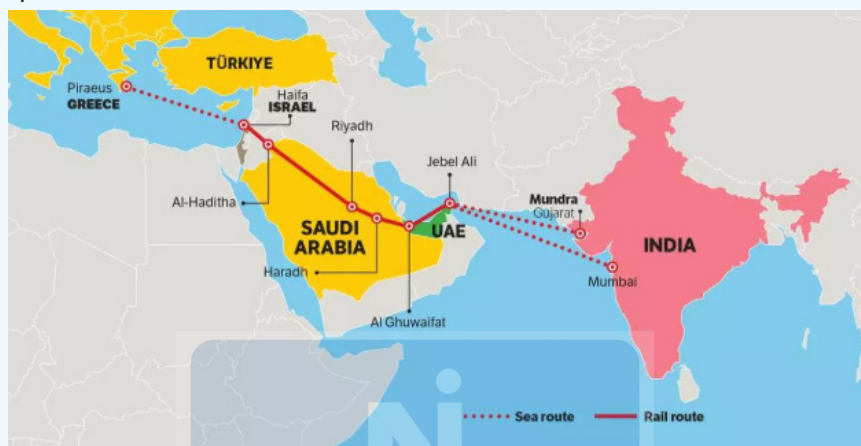
9. (b)

In News

- The ongoing crisis in the Middle East could pose an obstacle to the completion of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)

- IMEC was launched during **India's G20 presidency in 2023**.
- It is a proposed corridor spanning ship, ship-rail, and road networks to connect India to the **Gulf region and the Gulf region to Europe**.
- It aims to integrate India, Europe, the Middle-East through UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and the European Union.



10. (c)

Context: India and Vietnam have agreed to **step up cooperation** in the media and entertainment sector during a meeting between the Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and a delegation from Vietnam.

About Vietnam

- Viet Nam is located on the Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia.
- It has a long land border of 4,550 km, bordering **China** to the North, **Laos** and **Cambodia** to the West, and the Eastern Sea (South China Sea) of Pacific Ocean to the East.



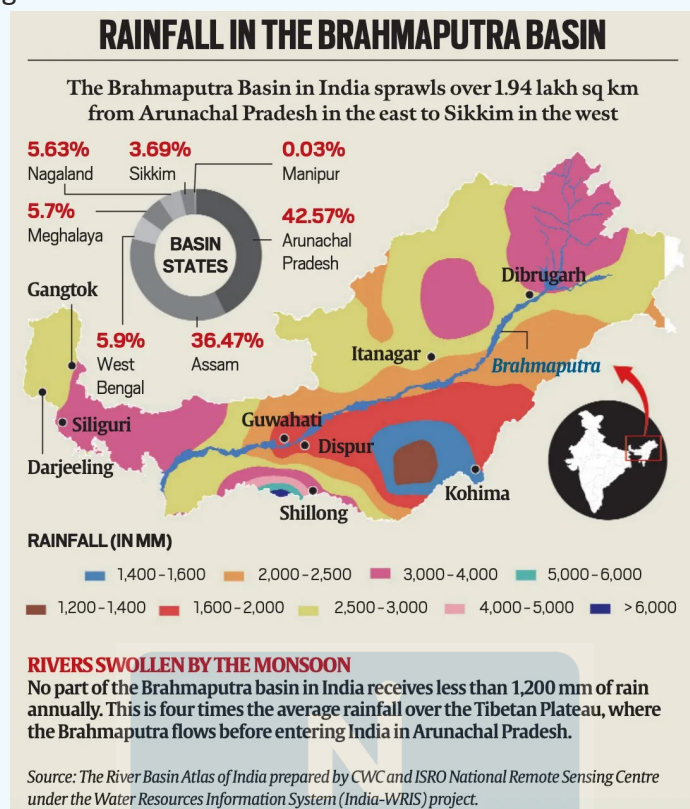
11. (b)

In Context

- India is closely monitoring Chinese infrastructure projects on the Brahmaputra River, particularly hydropower developments, due to their potential impact on downstream regions such as Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.

Brahmaputra River System

- The **Brahmaputra River** originates in the **Kailash ranges** at 5,150 m elevation, flows 2,900 km in total, including 916 km in India.



- It originates as **Yarlung Tsangpo** in Tibet .
- Its basin spans across **Tibet (China), Bhutan, India, and Bangladesh**.
- In India, it covers Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Sikkim.
- It enters India near Gelling in Arunachal Pradesh.
 - The river, which is called **Siang in Arunachal**, is joined by many tributaries in Assam as it flows down the plains before entering Bangladesh, where it is called **Jamuna**.
- Tributaries:** Key right-bank tributaries include the **Lohit, Dibang, Subansiri, and Teesta**.
 - Left-bank tributaries include the Burhidihing and **Kopili**.
- River-Linking Projects:**
 - Manas-Sankosh-Teesta-Ganga Link:** Connects Brahmaputra to Ganga via Sankosh & Teesta.
 - Jogighopa-Teesta-Farakka Link:** Links Brahmaputra via Jogighopa Barrage to Farakka on Ganga.

12. (b)

The Etalin Hydel Project is a **proposed 3097 MW hydroelectric project** in the **Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh**.

- It aims to harness the region's hydro potential to contribute to India's renewable energy goals.

13.(b)

About Hodeidah Port

- Location:** Yemen's Hodeidah Port is situated on the western coast of Yemen, along the Red Sea on the Tihāmah coastal plain.
- Historical Context:** The port has historical significance, having been shelled during the Italo-Ottoman War (1911–1912). Its location along the Red Sea has made it a focal point in regional power struggles

- **Significance:** Hodeidah Port is the largest and most vital seaport for Yemen, facilitating the import of essential goods, including humanitarian aid, fuel, and commercial imports.



14. (c)

Context

- Recently, the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh launched border tourism activities at **Shipki-La**.

About Shipki La

- **Location:** A high-altitude motorable **mountain pass (3,930 m)** in Kinnaur district, Himachal Pradesh, on the India-China border.
- **Strategic & Cultural Significance:**
 - Situated on the **ancient Silk Route**, blending geopolitical importance, cultural heritage, and Himalayan landscapes.
 - Historically served as a **trade route between India and Tibet**, until it was **closed for trade in 2020**.
 - The **Sutlej River** (Tibetan name: **Langqen Zangbo**) enters India through this pass.
- **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Potential:** Shipki La has been proposed by the Himachal Pradesh government as the **easiest route for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra**, pending approval from the Centre.

15. (a)

In News: Israel's recent strikes on Iran pose a serious threat to maritime trade through the strategic chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman, which then leads into the Arabian Sea. So technically, it doesn't directly connect to the Arabian Sea.

Statement 2 is not correct: Iran lies to the north of the strait, that's right. But to the south, it is not Saudi Arabia, but the United Arab Emirates and Oman. Saudi Arabia doesn't directly touch the Strait.

Statement 3 is correct: Around 20% of the world's petroleum passes through it daily. So yes, it's basically the jugular vein of global oil shipping.

16. (c)

Context

- India has dispatched the second and final batch of machinery for Passion Fruit Processing to Suriname under the SEEDS (Supply of Equipment for Efficient Development of SMES) initiative.

Suriname

- Suriname is a small country on the **northern coast of South America**.
- **It is bordered by:** Atlantic Ocean to the north, French Guiana to the east, Brazil to the south and Guyana to the west.
- **Capital:** Paramaribo
- **Official Language:** Dutch
- It is known for its vast **tropical rainforests**, which cover over **90%** of the country.



17. (c)

In News

- Recently, the Prime Minister of India visited Cyprus, marking the first visit by an Indian PM to the country in over 20 years.

Cyprus

- It is an island in the **eastern Mediterranean near Turkey and Syria**, is a **European Union** member despite being geographically in **Asia**.



- It gained independence from **Britain in 1960**, but tensions between its Greek and Turkish communities led to violence and the deployment of UN peacekeepers.
- **In 1974**, a coup by **Greek Cypriots** to unite with Greece prompted a Turkish invasion.
- Although the government in **Nicosia** was restored, Turkish forces remained, and the island's northeast declared itself the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, recognized only by Turkey.

18. (d)

In News

- New research supports the **'Green Arabia' hypothesis**, showing that the **Arabian Peninsula** experienced several humid phases over the last 8 million years.
 - These wet periods, confirmed by **mineral cave formations (speleothems)**, turned the **desert into a lush landscape**, allowing animals and early humans to migrate between Africa and Eurasia.

Arabia Peninsula

- It is a piece of land in **southwestern Asia**. It is the original homeland of the Arab people. It is also the birthplace of the religion of Islam.
- It also includes **Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Bahrain**, and parts of Jordan and Iraq.
- It is bordered by the **Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Persian Gulf**.
- The Arabian Desert covers almost all of the peninsula.

19. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Strait of Hormuz is a critical **narrow waterway** between **Iran and Oman**, and connects the **Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea**.

- A strait is a narrow passage of water that **connects two larger bodies of water**.

Statement 2 is not correct: Approximately **20% of the world's oil supply** passes through it with **nearly 83% of it destined for Asian markets**.

- **It is the main shipping route for energy exports** from major producers like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE.
- **Much of India's oil from key West Asian suppliers** like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE reaches Indian ports via the Strait of Hormuz.
 - A bulk of India's LNG imports, which come predominantly from Qatar, also come through this vital choke point.
 - The importance of the chokepoint for India's energy supply and security cannot be understated.

20. (a)

In News: Sheikh Hasan Khan is stranded at 17,000 ft on Mount Denali in North America due to a severe snowstorm.

Statement 1 is correct but statement 2 is not correct : The name "Denali" stems from "deenaalee," which is from the Koyukon language traditionally spoken on the north side.

- It is also known as Mount McKinley and it is the **highest peak in North America**.
- It is located near the center of the Alaska Range, with two summits rising above the Denali Fault, in **south-central Alaska, U.S.**

21. (d)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded his visit to Croatia, where he held talks with the Balkan nation's top leadership on a range of issues to boost bilateral ties.

Significance of the Engagement

- **Evolving European Strategy:** PM Modi's visit reflects **India's expanding European outreach beyond traditional Western partners**.

- The focus is on **newer EU members like Croatia** that influence the EU's consensus-driven decision-making.
- **Importance of Croatia in India's Strategic Vision:** Croatia's neutral stance on major global conflicts and tech cooperation willingness align with India's values.
 - Minimal dependence on China and skepticism toward BRI make Croatia ideal for India's vision of democratic, sustainable development.
- **Eastern & Central Europe Access:** Croatia shares borders with Hungary, Slovenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, and Serbia.
 - Strengthening ties offers a **gateway to Central European markets and emerging sectors.**
 - Enhances India's regional presence in the Balkans and Central Europe.



22. (b)

Strategic Petroleum Reserves

- The government of India, through a Special Purpose Vehicle called **Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Limited (ISPRL)**, has established **Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) facilities** with a total capacity of **5.33 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT)** of crude oil at **3 locations**.
- **The locations are as;**
 - Visakhapatnam (1.33 MMT),
 - Mangaluru (1.5 MMT) and
 - Padur (2.5 MMT) capacity.
- GoI 2021, had also approved the establishment of **two additional commercial-cum-strategic petroleum reserve facilities** with total storage capacity of **6.5 MMT** at;
 - **Chandikhol (4 MMT)** in Odisha and
 - **Padur (2.5 MMT)** in Karnataka.

23. (c)

Context

- Paris is leveraging an underground cooling system that uses water from the Seine River to cool over 800 buildings.

About

- **Origin:** The Seine River originates from the **Langres Plateau** in northeastern **France**.
- **Length:** Approximately **777 kilometers** long.

- **Major Tributaries:** Aube, Marne, Yonne, Oise, and Eure rivers.
- **Navigability:** The river is navigable for about 560 kilometers, supporting both commercial and recreational transport.
- The Banks of the Seine in Paris were inscribed as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in 1991.

24. (c)

In News: Recently, a climate study found that if the **Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC)** collapses, Europe could face a dramatic and prolonged winter freeze, even in a world warmed by greenhouse gas emissions.

Statement 1 is correct: **Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC)** is one of the most powerful and complex systems **driving Earth's climate**.

- It is often likened to a giant **conveyor belt** that transports **warm surface waters** from the tropics northward and **returns cold**, dense water southward at depth.
- It is primarily caused by **Thermohaline** (*temperature and salinity*) gradients.

Statement 2 is correct: It regulates **temperatures across the Atlantic basin** and plays a vital role in **global climate stability, sea-level patterns, and marine ecosystems**.

- **Warm, salty water** flows **northward** via currents like the **Gulf Stream**. As it reaches higher latitudes, it cools and becomes denser, sinking into the deep ocean and flowing back south.
- It helps **distribute heat and nutrients** across the globe, influencing weather patterns from the Amazon to the Arctic.

25. (a)

In News : Russian nuclear chief Alexei Likhachev stated that the situation at Bushehr nuclear plant is "normal" and controlled.

- Israel claimed it had struck Bushehr, along with other nuclear sites in Isfahan and Natanz.

Pair 1 and 2 are incorrectly matched : **Bushehr** is located in southern **Iran** along the Persian Gulf and 750 km south of Tehran.

- It is Iran's only operating nuclear power plant and was built by Russia.
- **Natanz :** **Iran's** main enrichment site is its nuclear facility at Natanz, located on the Central Plateau, around 220 kilometres southeast of Tehran.
 - The Natanz site is home to two enrichment plants that were operational when Israel began its attacks.

Pair 3 is correctly matched : **Iran's** nuclear complex at **Isfahan**, located 350 km southeast of Tehran, is home to three Chinese research reactors and labs under the Iranian atomic programme.

26. (c)

Context

- Taiwan detected 50 Chinese military aircraft around the island, days after a British naval vessel sailed through the sensitive Taiwan Strait.

About Taiwan Strait

- **Location:** The Taiwan Strait also known as the **Formosa Strait or the Tai-hai (the Tai Sea)** separates mainland China (Fujian Province) from the island of Taiwan.
 - It connects the **South China Sea to the East China Sea** and is a vital shipping lane.
 - It is approximately **180 kilometers** wide at its narrowest point.
- **Geopolitical Tensions:** China views Taiwan as a renegade province and asserts its claim over the island and the strait.

27. (c)

Context

- New Zealand had suspended millions of dollars in aid to the Cook Islands over concerns about the latter's deepening ties with China.

About the Cook Islands

- **Political Status:**
 - A self-governing nation in free association with **New Zealand**. It was formerly a dependent New Zealand colony from **1901 to 1965**.
 - Citizens of the Cook Islands are also citizens of New Zealand.
- **Administrative Centre:**
 - **Avarua**, located on the island of **Rarotonga**.
- **Geography:**
 - Situated in **Polynesia, Oceania**, in the **South Pacific Ocean**.
 - Located **northeast of New Zealand**, between **American Samoa** and **French Polynesia**.
 - It comprises **15 islands**, formed by **volcanic activity**, with a total land area of approximately **236.7 sq km**.

28. (a)

In News

Operation Midnight Hammer, launched by the USA, struck Fordo, Isfahan, and Natanz — three key nuclear sites in Iran.

**About Iran**

- Iran is a mountainous, arid, and ethnically diverse country of southwestern Asia.
- The capital is Tehrān.
- Iran is bounded to the north by **Azerbaijan, Armenia**, Turkmenistan, and the Caspian Sea, to the east by Pakistan and **Afghanistan**, to the south by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, and to the west by Türkiye and Iraq.
- **Mountains** : Elburz Mountains and Zagros Mountains
 - ♦ Iran's highest point, **Mt. Damavand**

29. (d)

Context

- The United States attacked **three key nuclear installations** in Iran—**Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan**.

About

- The strikes, known as **Operation Midnight Hammer**, mark the first direct U.S. military intervention targeting Iran's nuclear infrastructure amid its war with Israel.
- The operation was coordinated with Israeli forces.

30. (c)**Context**

- Over 50,000 people were affected after a flash flood in the Subarnarekha River, which led to water entering several villages in Balasore district of Odisha.

About Subarnarekha River

- **Origin:** Near Nagri village, Ranchi district, Jharkhand, on the **Chotanagpur Plateau**.
- **Course:** It is an **east flowing river** that flows through **Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Odisha** before emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
 - **It drains into the Bay of Bengal** near Talsari in Odisha.
- **Hundru Falls:** A major waterfall where the river drops from a height of 98 metres near Ranchi.
- **Length:** ~395 km.
- **Major tributaries:** Kharkai, Roro, Kanchi, Harmu Nadi, Damra, Karu, Chinguru, Karakari, Gurma, Garra, Singaduba, Kodia, Dulunga and Khaijori.
- **Important Towns on the River:** Ranchi, Jamshedpur, Ghatshila (Jharkhand), and Baleshwar (Odisha).

31. (d)**Context**

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32. (c)**In News**

- Iran launched missile attacks on the **al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar** and the **Ain al-Assad base in Iraq** in retaliation for U.S. strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities.
 - Al-Udeid Air Base is the largest U.S. military hub in the Middle East and a key part of the U.S.-Qatar defence ties.

Qatar (Doha (Al-Dawḥah))

- It is an independent emirate on the west coast of the **Persian Gulf**.

- It shares a border with eastern **Saudi Arabia** where the peninsula connects to the mainland and is north and west of the **United Arab Emirates**.
- The island country of Bahrain lies some 25 miles (40 km) northwest of Qatar.



- The **economy of Qatar** is based largely on the production and export of petroleum and natural gas.
- **Qatar's official religion is Islam and Sharia** forms the foundation of all State legislation.
 - However, Qatar is home to a diverse population practicing various faiths.
- **Arabic is the official language** but English is widely used as a second language across the country.

33. (b)

Context

- India and South Africa signed two agreements in the domain of submarine cooperation during the **9th Joint Defence Committee (JDC)** meeting held in **Johannesburg, South Africa**.



34. (a)

The Centre cleared a proposal to set up the **South Asia regional centre of the Peru-based International Potato Center (CIP)** in India.

- **The CIP-South Asia Regional Centre (CSARC)** will come up in **Agra, Uttar Pradesh**.
- It will not only serve farmers in **potato-belt states like UP, Bihar and West Bengal** but also cater to **South Asian countries**.

- **Objective:** To increase food and nutrition security, farmers income, and job creation by improving potato and sweetpotato productivity, post-harvest management and value-addition.
- **China set up its regional CIP centre eight years ago** known as the **China Center for Asia Pacific (CCCAP)** serving the entire East Asia and the Pacific region.

35. (c)

In News: Six years after the last Kailash Mansarovar yatra (pilgrimage) was held, Indian pilgrims conducted the arduous trek around Mount Kailash and took in the waters at the Mansarovar lake.

Statement 1 is not correct: Manasarovar Lake is located in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, close to the border with India. It is not in India.

Statement 2 is not correct: Ojos del Salado Crater Lake in Argentina is the highest freshwater lake in the world.

Statement 3 is correct: The Sutlej River originates from the Rakas Lake, which is located very close to Lake Manasarovar.

36. (d)

Union Home Minister, inaugurated the **headquarters of the National Turmeric Board in Nizamabad, Telangana.**

- It is a **dedicated body established in 2025**, to promote turmeric cultivation, research, and exports, ensuring holistic growth in the turmeric sector.
- **Headquarters:** Nizamabad, Telangana.
- **Ministry:** Operates under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Aim:** To enhance turmeric production.
 - Support farmers and improve their livelihoods.
 - Boost global exports of turmeric and value-added products.
- **Functions:** The Board will also look into creating awareness on the essential and medical properties of turmeric, ways to increase its yield and boost logistics and supply chain to foster trade into newer markets.



GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. With reference to the NAKSHA (National geospatial Knowledge-based land Survey of urban Habitations) programme, consider the following statements:
1. It was announced during the 2024-25 budget and is led by the Ministry of Rural Development.
 2. The programme is aimed at updating digitised land records of both rural and urban India.

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

2. With reference to the BharatGen, consider the following statements:
1. It was developed under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS).
 2. It aims to revolutionize public service delivery and citizen engagement in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

3. With reference to DHRUVA Initiative, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:
1. It is being developed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
 2. Its primary goal is to provide a unique digital address for every home in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

4. 'ECINET App' recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following organisations?

- (a) Election Commission of India
- (b) Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)
- (c) Reserve Bank of India
- (d) Securities and Exchange Board of India

5. With reference to the 'Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS) Program', consider the following statements:
1. It is a central sector scheme aimed at promoting adult education and lifelong learning.
 2. It seeks to enhance literacy rates across the country.

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 Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA), consider the following statements:
1. It was launched by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare in 2016.
 2. It aims to provide free, comprehensive, and quality antenatal care universally to all pregnant women during their first trimester.

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. Jal Jeevan Mission emphasizes which of the following strategies?
1. Source sustainability
 2. Greywater management
 3. Capacity building of gram panchayats
 4. Providing bottled water to households

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

8. With reference to the CROPIC initiative recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:
1. CROPIC aims to collect real-time crop data using field photographs.
 2. It is implemented by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
 3. The pilot study will be conducted during kharif 2025 and rabi 2025–26 seasons.

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. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY):
1. It aims to empower women by providing LPG connections to adult women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households.
 2. It was launched in 2016 by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- 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 Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), consider the following statements:
1. It is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
 2. It has both Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Scheme components.
 3. The scheme is limited to marine fisheries and excludes inland fisheries.
- 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
11. With reference to the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) of India, consider the following statements:
1. AAIB functions under the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to ensure prompt investigation of aircraft accidents.
 2. It was established to fulfill India's obligations under Annex 13 of the Chicago Convention, 1944.
 3. It investigates all accidents and serious incidents involving aircraft with an all-up weight of more than 2,250 kg or turbojet aircraft.
- 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. Regarding the 'Gyan Post' service, consider the following features:
1. Parcels must be marked "Gyan Post" and are subject to inspection.
 2. It allows for the inclusion of personal communication or handwritten letters inside the parcels.
 3. Each book must carry the printer/publisher's name and be free of promotional content.
 4. Tracking facilities are not available to keep the service highly subsidized.
- Which of the features given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 4 only
(d) 1, 3 and 4

- 13.** With reference to the Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) Scheme, consider the following statements:
1. The scheme was launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
 2. Its primary aim is to establish public Wi-Fi hotspots, especially in urban areas, without requiring a license or registration fee for providers.
 3. Local shops and establishments are encouraged to participate in providing last-mile internet delivery under this scheme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 14.** With reference to the India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It was launched by the Ministry of Power.
2. ICAP seeks to reduce cooling energy requirements by 25% to 40% by 2037-38.

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.** Consider the following statements regarding PM JANMAN (Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan):

1. It is a flagship initiative aimed at the holistic development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).
2. It was launched on Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas in 2023.

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.** With reference to the Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2.0, consider the following statements:

1. The Ministry of Education launched it in 2017 and revamped it as PGI 2.0 in 2021.
2. The highest achievable Grade is Daksh, which is for Districts scoring more than 90% of the total points in that category or overall.

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. Which of the following operations was launched by India to evacuate its nationals from Iran due to the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel?
- Operation Kaveri
 - Operation Ganga
 - Operation Sindhu
 - Operation Raahat

18. Consider the following statements regarding BHASHINI (National Language Translation Mission):

- BHASHINI is developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to enable real-time translation in Indian languages.
- It aims to promote inclusive, multilingual e-governance, particularly for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).
- BHASHINI uses AI-based tools to bridge language barriers across digital public platforms.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
19. Match the following Indian civilian evacuation missions with their corresponding contexts:

Mission Name	Context
A. Operation Devi Shakti	1. Sudan civil war
B. Operation Kaveri	2. Afghanistan regime fall
C. Operation Ganga	3. Russia-Ukraine conflict
D. Operation Ajay	4. Israel-Hamas conflict

Select the correct match using the code below:

- A-2, B-1, C-3, D-4
 - A-1, B-2, C-4, D-3
 - A-3, B-4, C-1, D-2
 - A-4, B-3, C-2, D-1
20. With reference to India Post Payments Bank (IPPB), consider the following statements:
- It is a 100% Government of India-owned entity which works under the Ministry of Finance.
 - It was launched as a pilot project in 2020 in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh.
 - It achieved 1st Position among Payments Banks in India in the Performance Index for Financial Year 2024–25.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 3 only
- 1 and 2
- 2 and 3

- 21.** With reference to the Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), consider the following statements:
1. The first phase of the PMGSY was launched in 2000 to improve rural infrastructure through road construction.
 2. It is a Central Sector Scheme funded completely by the Union Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).

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
- 22.** The recently launched UMEED Portal is associated with which of the following objectives?
- (a) Promotion of skill development among tribal youth
 - (b) Digital mapping and efficient management of Waqf properties
 - (c) Creation of a digital database for minority artisans and craftsmen
 - (d) Registration of minority institutions under government schemes
- 23.** With reference to Nurturing Aspirations through Vocational Training for Young Adolescent Girls (NAVYA) initiative, consider the following statements.
1. It is aimed at improving the child sex ratio and promoting girls' education.
 2. It is launched by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with NITI Aayog.

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 AMRUT Mission, consider the following statements:
1. The Mission initially covered all urban local bodies (ULBs) in India.
 2. It is a centrally funded scheme with 100% assistance from the Union Government.
 3. AMRUT has a specific focus on the reuse and treatment of faecal sludge and septage.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 3 only
 - (b) 1 and 2 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1 and 3 only
- 25.** With reference to the Jiyo Parsi Scheme, consider the following statements:
1. It is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
 2. It is a unique Central Sector Scheme aimed at arresting the population decline of the Parsi community.
 3. The scheme has three components: Medical Assistance, Advocacy, and Health of the Community.

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. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: The Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development, is going to conduct the **second phase** of the **NAKSHA (NAtional geospatial Knowledge-based land Survey of urban HABitations)** programme.

- **It was announced in the 2024-25 Budget.**
- **Aim:** To standardise record-keeping, simplify processes and bring transparency in land transactions.

Statement 2 is not correct:

- **Features:**
 - Creating updated digitised land records in 150 cities across the country in 1 year.
 - To link each land parcel with details about the owner of the land and the type of development on it.
 - Cover the entire urban area in the country within a period of 5 years.
 - **The program is focused on urban areas only, not on rural areas.**

2. (c)

In News: India has taken a significant leap in AI-driven language technology with the **launch of BharatGen**, the **India's first** indigenously developed, government-funded multimodal **Large Language Model (LLM)**.

Statement 1 is correct

- BharatGen is developed under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS), the project aims to create multilingual and multimodal AI models that cater to India's diverse linguistic landscape

Statement 2 is correct

- BharatGen is a pioneering AI initiative designed to revolutionize public service delivery and citizen engagement.
- It integrates text, speech, and image processing, making it a versatile AI tool.
- It is designed to work across 22 Indian languages, ensuring inclusivity.

3. (b)

Context

- The **Department of Posts** has released a comprehensive policy document titled **DHRUVA** (Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address), aimed at establishing a national Digital Address Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).

What is DHRUVA?

- **About:** DHRUVA is a **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) project** being developed by the **Department of Posts (DoP)** in India. Its primary goal is to provide a unique digital address for every home in India.
- **Objectives:** To establish address information management as a foundational public infrastructure.
 - To enable effective governance, inclusive service delivery, and enhanced user experience through accurate address sharing.

4. (a)

Due to the **alleged discrepancies** in the **voter turnout data**, the Election Commission of India has introduced a new streamlined and **tech-driven system to provide such data**.

- **The new one-stop platform, ECINET**, will integrate and reorient **over 40 of ECI's existing mobile and web applications**.
 - It will have an aesthetic User Interface (UI) and a simplified User Experience (UX) by providing a **singular platform for all electoral-related activities**.
- **The Presiding Officer** of each polling station **will enter the turnout figures** on the **new ECINET app every two hours** on polling day in order to reduce the time lag.
 - This will be **automatically aggregated at the constituency level**.

5. (b)

In News:

Statement 1 is not correct: The **Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS) Program** is a **centrally sponsored scheme** by the **Union Ministry of Education** aimed at promoting adult education and lifelong learning.

Statement 2 is correct: It aligns with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** and seeks to **enhance literacy rates across the country**.

- It aims to educate 5 crore learners over five years, fostering self-sufficiency and skill development among adults who missed formal schooling.
- It encourages community participation and digital literacy, ensuring that learners can access essential resources.

6. (a)**About Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA)**

- **Launched in June 2016**, it is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- It was designed to provide **assured, comprehensive, and quality antenatal care (ANC) services free of cost** to all pregnant women on the 9th of every month, particularly during the **second and third trimesters**.
- The PMSMA aligns with the broader goals of the **Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health plus Nutrition (RMNCAH+N) strategy** under the **National Health Mission (NHM)**.
- This has led to a significant improvement in **India's Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)**, which declined from 130 per lakh live births in 2014-16 to 80 per lakh live births in 2021-23—a notable reduction of 50 points.

KEY FEATURES OF PMSMA

- Monthly antenatal checkups on the 9th of every month at public health facilities.
- Services provided by OBGY specialists, radiologists, physicians, with private sector support.
- Minimum package for every woman: essential investigations (including 2nd trimester ultrasound) and medicines (IFA, calcium).
- Single window system for all ANC services and investigations.
- Special focus on:
 - Unregistered or missed ANC women
 - Dropouts
 - High-risk pregnancies
- Distribution of Mother and Child Protection Cards and safe motherhood booklets.
- High-risk pregnancy identification:
 - Green sticker: no risk
 - Red sticker: high risk

7. (b)**Context**

- The **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India** has launched its first **performance audit of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- It was launched by the Prime Minister in **2019**.
- **Concerned Ministry:** It comes under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- **Aim:** To provide tap connections to about **16 crore rural households** to achieve **saturation coverage by 2028 (earlier 2024)**.
- **Mandatory components include:** Source sustainability, Greywater management, Water conservation and Rainwater harvesting.
- **Mission Objectives:**
 - **Empowering Women:** Reduces the burden on women of fetching water. Improves health, education, and socio-economic status of women.
 - **Ease of Living:** Enhances the dignity and quality of life of rural families.

Key features

- **Community Approach:**
 - Focus on Information, Education, and Communication (IEC).
 - Aims to create a janandolan (people's movement) for water.
- **Source sustainability:** It includes steps like groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting, watershed management to ensure long-term availability of water sources.
- **Greywater management:** JJM promotes reuse and recycling of wastewater (greywater) from households for agricultural or gardening use.
- **Capacity building of gram panchayats:** The mission encourages local self-governance and empowerment of gram panchayats and Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs).

8. (c)**Context**

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare plans to launch CROPIC, a study to gather crop information using field photographs and AI-based models.

What is CROPIC?

- **CROPIC stands for** Collection of Real Time Observations & Photo of Crops.
 - It is an innovative digital initiative aimed at revolutionising how India monitors its crops and assesses losses.

- **Implemented by:** Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- The study will be carried out for two seasons initially, **kharif 2025 and rabi 2025-26**.

9. (a)

In News

- India marked the ninth anniversary of the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)**.

About PMUY

- **Launched:** In 2016 by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.
- **Objective:** To provide LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) connections to women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households to reduce the health risks associated with traditional cooking methods.
- **Target Group:** Adult women from BPL households, with a focus on women's empowerment and improving their living standards.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** Women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households, with priority given to SC, ST, PMAY (Gramin) families, forest dwellers, and tea garden workers. Migrant households can avail self-declaration for address proof.

10. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana** is the flagship scheme of the **Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying**, and **was launched in 2020**.

- It has been approved to be implemented **over a period of 5 years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25**.
- **Aim:** To give momentum to the 'sunrise' fisheries sector through **consolidated efforts from various schemes and initiatives**.

Statement 2 is correct: The PMMSY is an umbrella scheme with **two separate components** namely **Central Sector Scheme (CS)** and **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)**.

- The Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) Component is further segregated into **Non-beneficiary oriented and beneficiary orientated subcomponents/activities**:
 - Enhancement of Production and Productivity.
 - Infrastructure and Post-harvest Management.
 - Fisheries Management and Regulatory Framework.

Statement 3 is not correct: The scheme covers both inland and marine fisheries.

11. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is not under DGCA. It functions as an independent attached office under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, separate from DGCA to ensure objective investigations.

Statement 2 is correct: AAIB was established to fulfill India's obligations under Annex 13 of the Chicago Convention, which deals with investigation of accidents.

Statement 3 is correct: AAIB investigates accidents/serious incidents involving aircraft with All-Up Weight > 2250 kg or turbojet aircraft.

12. (b)

In News: The Department of Posts under the Ministry of Communications, has introduced 'Gyan Post', a dedicated postal service for affordable delivery of educational, cultural, social and religious books.

Statement 1 is correct: Parcels must be marked “Gyan Post” and are subject to inspection by postal officials.

Statement 2 is not correct: No personal communication or handwritten letters are allowed inside.

Statement 3 is correct: Each book must carry the printer/publisher’s name and be free of promotional content.

Statement 4 is not correct: Tracking is enabled, with optional add-ons like Proof of Delivery and Insurance.

13. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: The PM-WANI scheme was launched by the Department of Telecommunication, not the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

Statement 2 is not correct: While the scheme aims to enhance the proliferation of public Wi-Fi hotspots and providers do not require a license or charge a registration fee, its focus is specifically on “robust digital communications infrastructure in the country, especially in rural areas,” not urban areas.

Statement 3 is correct: The scheme encourages local shops and establishments to provide Wi-Fi for last-mile internet delivery.

14. (b)

Context

- The Indian government is planning to adopt new standards to cap air conditioner (AC) temperature settings between **20 and 28 degrees Celsius** to reduce peak power demand.

Rising Cooling Demand in India

- **Cooling Demand Statistics:** Cooling accounts for around 50 GW, or nearly 20% of India’s peak power demand.
- **Growth in AC Usage:** India currently has 10 crore ACs, with 1.5 crore units added every year.
- **Energy-Saving Potential:** Each **1°C increase** in AC temperature leads to **6% electricity savings**.

India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP)

- It is a first-of-its-kind policy document from any country, aimed at addressing the rising cooling demand in a climate-sensitive and energy-efficient manner.
- It was launched by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** in **2019**.
- The India Cooling Action seeks to;
 - Reduce cooling demand across sectors by 20% to 25% by 2037-38,
 - Reduce refrigerant demand by 25% to 30% by 2037-38,
 - Reduce cooling energy requirements by 25% to 40% by 2037-38,
 - Recognize “cooling and related areas” as a thrust area of research under national S&T Programme,
 - Training and certification of 100,000 servicing sector technicians by 2022-23, synergizing with Skill India Mission.

15. (c)

In News

- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched a major outreach campaign in over 500 districts to cover 1 lakh tribal villages, focusing on **doorstep delivery of welfare through two flagship schemes — PM JANMAN and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan**.

Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)

- It was announced by the Prime Minister on the **Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas in 2023**.
- It is a flagship initiative aimed at the holistic development of **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**.
- It comprises Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes and reflects the government's commitment to inclusive growth and social justice, contributing to the vision of **Viksit Gaon, Viksit Bharat**.
- It aims to provide basic facilities such as safe housing, clean drinking water and improved access to education, health and nutrition, road and telecom connectivity, electrification of unelectrified households and sustainable livelihood opportunities in 3 years.

Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan

- It was launched on October 2, 2024, aligns with **Prime Minister Modi's vision** of inclusive development by ensuring governance benefits reach every tribal citizen.
- It builds on **PM-JANMAN's success** and it is a **multi-sectoral initiative** involving 17 ministries and 25 interventions to transform tribal villages into centers of opportunity and dignity, placing tribal communities at the heart of India's development.

16. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The Ministry of Education released the latest assessment of the **Performance Grading Index (PGI) 2.0 report for 2023-24**.

- The PGI was introduced in **2017**, and the ministry **revamped it as PGI 2.0 in 2021**.
- **It is an assessment of school education along six domains** – learning outcome and quality, access, infrastructure and facilities, equity, governance processes, teacher education, and training.
- **The latest report, covering the years 2022-23 and 2023-24**, draws data from the National Achievement Survey 2021, the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+), and information on the mid-day meal programme (PM-POSHAN).
- PGI grades the districts into ten grades viz., **Highest achievable Grade is Daksh**, which is for Districts **scoring more than 90% of the total points** in that category or overall.
 - **The lowest grade in PGI-D is called Akanshi-3** which is for scores upto 10% of the total points.

17. (c)**Context**

- India has launched Operation Sindhu to evacuate its nationals from Iran in view of the deteriorating situation due to the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel.

About

- More than 4,000 Indian nationals are said to be living in Iran — and half of them are students.
- India has conducted more than thirty evacuation operations across Africa, Asia, and Europe, including its largest-ever civilian airlift of over 100,000 people from the Persian Gulf in 1990.

18. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: BHASHINI is developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) — not the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. However, MoPR is a collaborating ministry via MoU for rural e-governance, not the developer.

Statement 2 is correct: One of the stated goals is to create a multilingual, inclusive e-governance ecosystem, especially helping PRIs (Panchayati Raj Institutions).

Statement 3 is correct: BHASHINI is powered by AI-based language translation tools, making real-time communication across languages possible on digital platforms.

19. (a)

Context

- India has launched **Operation Sindhu** to evacuate its nationals from both **Iran and Israel**, amid the escalating conflict between the two countries.

Other India's Civilian Evacuations Missions

Mission Name	Context	Year
Vande Bharat Mission	COVID-19 global repatriation	2020
Operation Devi Shakti	Afghanistan regime fall	2021
Operation Ganga	Russia-Ukraine conflict	2022
Operation Kaveri	Sudan civil war	2023
Operation Ajay	Israel-Hamas conflict	2023
Operation Sindhu	Iran conflict escalation	2025

20. (b)

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) was set up under the **Department of Post, Ministry of Communication** with 100% equity owned by the Government of India.

- IPPB was launched as a pilot project on 30 January 2017 in **Ranchi (Jharkhand) and Raipur (Chhattisgarh)**, with the objective of being present across India by the FY 2018-2019. It was launched to provide accessible, affordable, and trusted banking for all.

Statement 3 is correct : India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) **achieved 1st Position among Payments Banks in India in the Performance Index for Financial Year 2024-25** & received 'Special Mention' award for the Financial Year 2023-24. This leap reflects the IPPB's robust capabilities and its unwavering commitment to delivering inclusive, technology-led, citizen-centric banking solutions with a purpose.

21. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Recently, the **Union Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** asked states to **attach QR codes on all maintenance information display boards** for roads built under the **Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)**.

- The first phase of the PMGSY** was launched in **2000** to improve **rural infrastructure through road construction**.

Statement 2 is not correct: Funding: Starting as a totally Centrally Sponsored Scheme, the funding pattern was modified **from 2015-16 to 60:40** between the Centre and states (except for northeastern and Himalayan states).

22. (b)

Context

- The Minority Affairs Ministry actively engages with States and Union Territories to ensure effective implementation of the UMEED portal, ensuring all **Waqf properties** are uploaded within **six months**.

About UMEED Portal

- The portal is developed by the **Ministry of Minority Affairs** to manage Waqf properties efficiently across India.

- The UMEED Central Portal, short for **Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development Act, 1995** will serve as a **centralized digital platform** for real-time uploading, verification, and monitoring of Waqf properties.
- **Key Features of the Portal are:**
 - Creation of a digital inventory with geo-tagging of all Waqf properties
 - Online grievance redressal system for better responsiveness
 - Transparent leasing and usage tracking
 - Integration with GIS mapping and other e-Governance tools
 - Public access to verified records and reports.

23. (d)

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)**, in collaboration with the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** launched the **NAVYA (Nurturing Aspirations through Vocational Training for Young Adolescent Girls)** initiative.

- It is a pilot initiative aimed at **skilling girls aged 16–18 years (with at least a Class 10 education) in non-traditional job roles.**
- It is being Implemented in 27 districts across 19 States, including Aspirational districts and North-Eastern States, reflecting an inclusive, targeted approach.

24. (a)

In News: India marks a significant milestone as the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) completes 10 years.

- AMRUT 2.0 was launched on 1 October 2021.

About AMRUT

- **Launch:** In 2015, the mission aimed to enhance the quality of life in 500 cities and towns by focusing on fundamental infrastructure and services.
- **Type:** Centrally Sponsored Scheme (Shared between Centre and States/UTs based on urban population and number of statutory towns).
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)
- **Coverage:** Initially 500 cities and now includes all ULBs under AMRUT 2.0
- **Objectives:** Universal coverage of tap water and sewerage
 - Improve urban mobility and reduce pollution
 - Enhance green spaces and urban amenity value
 - Empower Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) through reforms and capacity-building
 - Reuse and treatment of faecal sludge and septage

25. (b)

Context

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs conducted a one-day biometric authentication drive for beneficiaries of the Jiyo Parsi scheme in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

About Jiyo Parsi scheme

- **Launched:** 2013–14
- **Type:** Central Sector Scheme
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Minority Affairs

- **Objective:** To address the sharp demographic decline of the **Parsi (Zoroastrian)** community and ensure its long-term survival and cultural continuity.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Medical Assistance** – Provides financial aid for infertility treatments such as IVF, ICSI, surrogacy, and post-conception care.
 - **Health of the Community** – Offers monthly financial support to Parsi couples with children as well as to dependent elderly members.
 - **Advocacy** – Promotes timely marriage, fertility awareness, and family support within the community.

■■■■



DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. With reference to the Andaman & Nicobar Command, consider the following statements:
1. It is the first integrated theatre command in India with headquarters at Port Blair.
 2. It is headed by a Commander-in-Chief Andaman and Nicobar Command, a post held by a Lieutenant General of Army 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
2. Dharma Guardian, recently seen in the news, is a joint military exercise between India and which of the following countries?
- (a) United States
 - (b) France
 - (c) Japan
 - (d) Australia
3. 'Nomadic Elephant' is a joint military exercise between India and which of the following countries?
- (a) Indonesia
 - (b) Oman
 - (c) Mongolia
 - (d) Saudi Arabia
4. Which of the following statements is correct regarding 'Khaan Quest' exercise?
- (a) It began as a bilateral initiative between the United States and the Mongolian Armed Forces.
 - (b) It is a joint military exercise conducted by the Indian and Indonesian armies.
 - (c) It is a multinational anti-submarine warfare drill to strengthen maritime security in the Indo-Pacific region.
 - (d) It is the world's largest international maritime exercise.
5. Exercise Shakti is a joint military exercise between India and which one of the following countries?
- (a) France
 - (b) Russia
 - (c) United States
 - (d) United Kingdom

6. Which of the following statements regarding Rudrastra is correct ?
- (a) It is an anti-aircraft missile defense system developed by Russia
 - (b) It is a hybrid vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) drone for precision strikes
 - (c) It is a medium-range surface-to-air missile system designed to protect vital areas from aerial attacks
 - (d) It is a twin-jet fighter aircraft able to operate from both an aircraft carrier and a shore base.
7. With reference to the INS Arnala, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- 1. It is India's first Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC).
 - 2. It has been designed and constructed by only the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

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
8. Which of the following statements are correct about HF-24 Marut?
- (a) It is India's first indigenously designed fighter jet.
 - (b) It is a ramjet-powered supersonic cruise missile.
 - (c) It is a long-range surface-to-air missile system.
 - (d) It is the fifth-generation stealth fighter aircraft.
9. 'GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator/MOP', recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) A new satellite-based navigation system.
 - (b) A deep-penetration bunker-buster bomb.
 - (c) A next-generation hypersonic glide vehicle.
 - (d) A ballistic missile defense radar system.
10. With reference to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), consider the following statements:
- 1. The CDS holds operational command over all three armed forces.
 - 2. The CDS is the Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (CoSC).
 - 3. The CDS heads the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) under the Ministry of Defence.

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. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) is the **first integrated theatre command** in India with **headquarters at Port Blair** and set up in **2001**.

- It integrates the **Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard** to safeguard national interests in the **strategically vital Indian Ocean Region**.

Statement 2 is not correct: It is headed by a Commander-in-Chief Andaman and Nicobar Command (CINCAN), a **rotational post among three services (Army, Navy, Air Force)**.

- Typically held by a Lieutenant General, Vice Admiral, or Air Marshal.

2. (c)

In News: India and Japan have formally agreed to deepen maritime relations, reaffirming their shared commitment to regional cooperation in the maritime sector.

Strategic Partnership between India and Japan

- **Indo-Pacific Vision:** Both nations share the vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) and “Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI),” crucial for regional peace, stability, and prosperity.
- **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad):** India and Japan are key members of the Quad, alongside the United States and Australia, which aims to promote security and stability in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI):** They work together under the SCRI framework to diversify supply chains and reduce reliance on single sources, particularly to counter China’s dominance.
- **Defense Cooperation:** This includes **joint military exercises (e.g., JIMEX, Dharma Guardian)**, 2+2 dialogues (ministerial-level discussions), and agreements like the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) for logistics support. There’s a growing focus on co-production of defense equipment, such as the UNICORN mast system.

3. (c)

The **17th edition** of the joint military exercise ‘**Nomadic Elephant**’ is being held at the **Special Forces Training Centre in Mongolia**.

- It is an **annual event** conducted **alternatively** in India and Mongolia.
- The first edition of the exercise was conducted in **2004**.
- The last edition of the same exercise was conducted at **Meghalaya in 2024**.
- The exercise is aimed at **enhancing interoperability between the two forces**.

4. (a)

In News : The Indian Army contingent arrived in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia to participate in the multinational military **Exercise Khaan Quest**, scheduled to be conducted from June 14 to 28.

Exercise ‘Khaan Quest’

- It began as a bilateral initiative between the **United States** and the **Mongolian Armed Forces** in 2003, evolved into a multinational peacekeeping endeavour from 2006 onwards.
- It is an **annual exercise** that brings together military forces from across the globe to collaborate and enhance their peacekeeping capabilities.
 - The previous edition of Khaan Quest was held in Mongolia from July 27 to August 9, 2024.

5. (a)

Context

- The 8th edition of Exercise Shakti-2025, a bilateral joint military exercise between India and France, will be held from 18th June to 1st July at La Cavalerie, France.

About the Exercise:

- **Exercise SHAKTI** is a biennial Indo-French joint military exercise, launched in **2011**. The **7th edition** was held in May 2024 in **Meghalaya, India**.

- The aim of the exercise is to enhance the joint military capability of both sides to undertake multi-domain operations in a sub-conventional scenario under **Chapter VII** of the **United Nations Mandate**.

6. (b)

Rudrastra is India's new indigenous vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) drone, successfully tested by the Indian Army.

Rudrastra is capable of vertical takeoff like a helicopter and long-range flight like an aircraft.

- It is Designed for precision anti-personnel strikes, it can hit targets over 50 km away and has a full range of 170 km.

7. (a)

Context

- The Indian Navy is set to commission **INS Arnala**, the country's first **Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC)**, at the Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam.

About INS Arnala

- INS Arnala is the **first of 16 ASW-SWC vessels** being inducted into the Indian Navy.
- It is named after the historic **Arnala Fort** off the coast of **Maharashtra**, which was strategically important during the **Maratha and Portuguese eras**.
- **Designed** by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, in collaboration with L&T Shipbuilders.
 - Over **80% indigenous content**, aligning with the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.
- **Features:** The ship measures **77.6 meters** in length, displaces over **1,490 tonnes**, and is the largest Indian naval vessel powered by a **diesel engine-waterjet propulsion system**.
- **Role and Capabilities:** It is designed for **subsurface surveillance, search and rescue operations and low intensity maritime operations (LIMO)**; alongside its primary role in anti-submarine warfare.
 - It is further equipped with **mine-laying capabilities**.

8. (a)

In News : India's Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) stealth fighter marks a major aerospace milestone, but engine dependency and past setbacks like the **HF-24 Marut** urge caution.

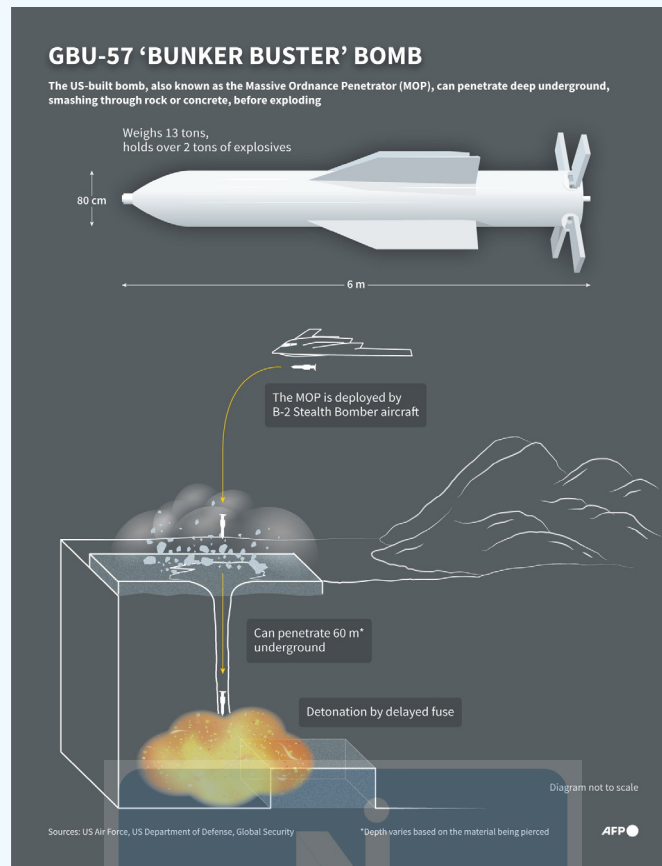
HF-24 Marut was developed by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** in the **1950s** under **German engineer Kurt Tank**.

- It was **India's first indigenous fighter jet** and symbolized the country's ambition for self-reliance.
- It never reached its full potential due to its **underpowered British engines**, despite being well-designed.

9. (b)

The American military has completed airstrikes on three sites in Iran, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict with Israel.

- **Located 300 feet beneath a mountain, Fordo** is where Iran has allegedly **tried to enrich uranium for weapons** purposes and stockpile the enriched uranium.
- The **GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator** is the largest **non-nuclear bomb** in the US inventory.
- Built by **Boeing and guided by GPS**, it is engineered specifically to target deeply buried and hardened bunkers. MOP measures **20.5 feet in length and 31.5 inches in diameter, and weighs just under 30,000 pounds**—including 5,300 pounds of high-explosive material.



- The bomb can **burrow more than 200 feet through reinforced concrete before detonating**. Its casing, made from high-performance steel alloy, helps it withstand the **immense impact forces upon penetration**.
- **Any country other than the US**, does not have any non-nuclear weapon systems that can penetrate a site as deep as Fordo.

10. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The CDS does not exercise direct military command over the three Service Chiefs. The Service Chiefs retain full operational command over their respective forces. The CDS's role is more advisory and focused on bringing about jointness in operations, logistics, training, etc., and administering tri-service organizations.

Statement 2 is correct: The CDS was appointed to be the Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, replacing the earlier system where the senior-most chief held the position by rotation.

Statement 3 is correct: The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) was created within the Ministry of Defence, and the CDS heads it as its ex-officio Secretary. The DMA deals with matters exclusively pertaining to the armed forces.

■■■■

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Consider the following statements about the Asian Development Bank (ADB):
1. The ADB was established in 1966 with its headquarters in Manila, Philippines.
 2. Japan and China are the largest shareholders of the ADB, each holding 15.6% of shares.
 3. The ADB currently has 69 members, with the majority from within Asia and the Pacific region.

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

2. With reference to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), consider the following statements:
1. The principal decision-making body of NATO is the North Atlantic Council.
 2. NATO decisions are made by majority vote among member countries.
 3. Finland was the 31st country to join NATO.

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 BRICS, consider the following statements:
1. South Africa was part of the original grouping formed in 2006.
 2. Argentina recently joined BRICS as a full time member.

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. Consider the following statements regarding the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS):
1. It was established in 1975 through the Lagos Treaty.
 2. It is headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria.
 3. Currently, it has 15 member states including Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso.

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

5. Consider the following statements regarding the Shangri-La Dialogue:

1. It is Asia's premier defence and security summit, hosted annually by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS).
2. It is named after the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore, where it has been held since its inception in 2002.

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

6. Consider the following statements with reference to the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS).

1. It is a formally affiliated body of the United Nations and works for public administration.
2. India has been a Member State of the IIAS since 2005, represented by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):

1. It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, established in 1945.
2. ECOSOC has 193 member countries, equivalent to the number of UN General Assembly members.

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. Recently, which one of the following countries has agreed for the '*Double Contribution Convention*' with India?

- (a) United Kingdom (UK)
- (b) United States of America (USA)
- (c) China
- (d) France

9. With reference to the International Criminal Court (ICC), consider the following statements:
1. The ICC's jurisdiction extends to crimes of aggression, in addition to genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
 2. It prosecutes both individuals and states for the most serious crimes of international concern.
 3. India is a founding member of the International Criminal Court.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3
10. With reference to the G7 Summit, consider the following statements:
1. The G7 was formed in response to the global economic crisis of the 1970s.
 2. The 2025 G7 Leaders' Summit will be held in Biarritz, France.
- 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
11. India aims to scale *Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)* across its coastline with the collaboration of:
- (a) Sweden
(b) United Kingdom
(c) France
(d) Norway
12. The European Court of Justice recently ruled against which country's 'Golden Passport' scheme that granted citizenship in exchange for investment?
- (a) Greece
(b) Cyprus
(c) Portugal
(d) Malta
13. Consider the following statements regarding the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA):
1. IALA was established in 1957 as an intergovernmental body, responsible for standardizing marine aids to navigation.
 2. Its headquarters are located in Paris, France
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

14. Consider the following statements regarding Interpol:

1. Interpol was initially established as the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) in Vienna.
2. India is not the founding member of Interpol.
3. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) functions as India's National Central Bureau (NCB) for Interpol.
4. The BHARATPOL portal is an online platform developed by Interpol to streamline global police cooperation.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

15. With reference to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), consider the following statements:

1. ICAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations established under the Chicago Convention of 1944.
2. ICAO has 193 member states and is headquartered in Mumbai, India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

16. With reference to the BRICS, consider the following statements:

1. Vietnam has become the 10th BRICS partner.
2. The partner country category was created at the 2024 BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia.

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. Which among the following countries is a party to the 'Cyprus Question'?

1. Turkiye
2. Egypt
3. Greece
4. Lebanon

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

- 18.** With reference to Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is a treaty-based organization with enforcement powers like the International Criminal Court (ICC).
 2. Its recommendations are legally binding on all members.

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
- 19.** Consider the following statements regarding the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA):
1. It is a multi-country, multi-agency coalition formed exclusively by big cat range countries.
 2. The IBCA aims to conserve all 7 major big cat species, including the Puma and Cheetah.
 3. India holds the position of the host country and the Secretariat for the IBCA.
 4. The Alliance was launched in 2023 to commemorate 50 years of India's Project Elephant.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1, 3 and 4 only
 - (d) 2, 3 and 4 only
- 20.** Consider the following statements about the Group of Seven (G7):
1. The G7 was formed in response to the global financial crisis of 2008.
 2. Russia was a founding country of the original G7 group.
 3. These countries represent about 10% of the world's population and nearly 30% of the global economy by GDP.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 3 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 21.** With reference to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), consider the following statements:
1. It has 9 member states including Russia and Belarus.
 2. The SCO's official languages are Russian and Chinese.
 3. The supreme decision-making body of the SCO is the Council of Heads of States (CHS) which meets once a year.

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

22. The Energy Transition Index (ETI), which assesses countries on their progress towards cleaner energy systems, is published by:
- International Energy Agency (IEA)
 - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 - World Economic Forum (WEF)
 - International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

23. With reference to the *Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Treaty*, consider the following statements:

- It bans all nuclear explosions for both civilian and military purposes.
- India, Pakistan, South Sudan and Israel never joined the treaty.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

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

- It was founded by five countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Singapore and Thailand.
- ASEAN currently consists of 10 member countries including Brunei and Cambodia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

25. With reference to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), consider the following statements:

- It was established in 1969 and is headquartered in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- India is not a member despite having the third-largest Muslim population globally.
- The official languages of the OIC are Arabic, English, and French.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

26. With reference to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which of the following statements is/are correct?

- NATO was established in 1949 through the Washington Treaty.
- Finland and Sweden became the 31st and 32nd members of NATO respectively.

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. With reference to the UN80 Initiative, consider the following statements:

1. The UN80 Initiative seeks to review and possibly eliminate outdated UN mandates to streamline the organization's functions.
2. One of the key aims of the initiative is to reduce administrative costs and overlaps through automation and structural realignment.

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)

In News

- Asian Development Bank (ADB) has pledged **\$10 billion in financial assistance** to support India's urban development and metro rail network expansion.

About Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- **Mission:** The ADB supports inclusive, resilient, and sustainable growth across Asia and the Pacific.
- **Membership:** Established in 1966 with 31 members, it has expanded to 69 members, with 50 from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 from outside the region.
- **Headquarters:** Manila, Philippines.
- **Largest Shareholders (as of 31 December 2023):** Japan and the USA (each 15.6%), China (6.4%), India (6.3%), and Australia (5.8%).

2. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a **military alliance of countries**.

- **The North Atlantic Council**, which includes the ambassadors of all member countries, is the **principal political decision-making body**.

Statement 2 is not correct: Decisions within NATO are made on the basis of **consensus among member countries**.

Statement 3 is correct: Members: It has **32 member countries**, **Finland** and **Sweden** became the 31st and 32nd members respectively.

- On signing the Treaty, countries voluntarily commit themselves to participating in the political consultations and military activities of the Organization.

3. (d)

Both the statements are not correct: **BRICS** is an acronym that refers to a group of **five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**.

- The term was originally coined by economist **Jim O'Neill** in **2001**.
- **Origin:** As a formal grouping, BRIC started after the meeting of the Leaders of Russia, India and China in St. Petersburg on the margins of the **G8 Outreach Summit in 2006**.
 - The grouping was formalized during the 1st meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers on the margins of **UNGA in New York in 2006**.
 - Initially, the grouping was termed BRIC as **South Africa was inducted in 2010** and from there on it has been referred to as **BRICS**.
- **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates** have joined BRICS as new full members.
 - **Argentina hasn't joined the grouping yet.**

4. (a)

Context

- According to a recent study, 54% of Togolese citizens believe their country would benefit from exiting the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** to join the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

About: ECOWAS

- Also known as **CEDEAO** in French and Portuguese, it is headquartered in **Abuja, Nigeria**.
- It was established in **1975** through the **Lagos Treaty** to promote economic integration among its members. ECOWAS has also worked to address some security issues by developing a peacekeeping force for conflicts in the region.
- It initially had **15 members**: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. However, in **January 2025**, the **military-led governments of Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso** formally **withdrew** from ECOWAS, reducing the bloc to **12 members**.

5. (d)

Context

- Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan attended the **22nd Shangri-La Dialogue (2025)** to enhance defence diplomacy and engage with global military leadership.

About the Dialogue

- Hosted annually by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (**IISS**).
- Named after the **Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore**, where it has been held since its inception in **2002**.
- It is **Asia's premier defence and security summit** that brings together defence ministers, military chiefs, policy makers and strategic experts across the globe.
- The 22nd edition witnessed participation from **40 nations**, focusing on emerging security challenges in the **Indo-Pacific region**.

6. (d)

In News : India has won the Presidency of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) for the 2025–2028 term.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : The International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) is a global federation comprising 31 Member Countries, 20 National Sections, and 15 Academic Research Centres, collaborating on scientific research in public administration.

- **Key member countries** include India, Japan, China, Germany, Italy, Korea, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Mexico, Spain, Qatar, Morocco, and Indonesia, among others.

- **India** has been a Member State of the IIAS since **1998**, represented by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances**.
- It is **not** a **formally affiliated body of the United Nations**, it actively engages with the UN's work in the field of public administration.
 - It maintains a close working relationship with the United Nations, and participates in the UN's Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) and the UN Public Administration Network (UNPAN).

7. (a)

In News

- Recently, India was elected to the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** of the United Nations for the period from **2026-28**.

About Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

- Established in **1945 by the UN Charter** as one of the six principal organs of the **United Nations**.
- It is the **United Nations' main body** for coordinating and reviewing policies on economic, social, and environmental issues, as well as overseeing the implementation of global development goals.
- It serves as a **central platform for UN system activities** in these fields, supervises subsidiary and expert bodies, and fosters debate and innovation on sustainable development.
- It has **54 Members**, elected by the General Assembly for **overlapping three-year terms**.

8. (a)

In News:

- The **Double Contribution Convention** is a bilateral agreement that prevents Indian workers, temporarily posted to the UK for up to three years, from having to pay social security contributions in both countries simultaneously.
- It applies to both the worker and their employer. It is a broader agreement that includes a FTA with the UK, **recently concluded FTA**, benefiting **99% of Indian exports from tariff reductions**.
 - India's exports to the U.K. reached **\$12 billion** in FY2024.
 - It aims to make it easier for British firms to export whisky, cars, and other products to India, boosting overall trade.

9. (a)

In News: The U.S. recently sanctioned ICC judges over investigations into Israeli officials.

Statement 1 is correct: The ICC was established by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, a multilateral treaty adopted on July 17, 1998. The ICC's jurisdiction does include the crime of aggression, which was activated in 2018 in addition to genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

Statement 2 is not correct: The ICC prosecutes individuals, not states or groups. States are subject to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), while individuals are subject to the ICC.

Statement 3 is not correct: India is not a member of the International Criminal Court.

10. (a)

Context: Canada is hosting this year's G7 Summit, and Mark Carney's invitation to PM Modi comes at a time when India-Canada ties remain deeply strained.

About

- The G7, formed in response to the 1970s global economic crisis, is an informal bloc of advanced economies: France, the US, the UK, Germany, Japan, Italy, and Canada, as well as the EU.

- Despite not being a G7 member, India has been invited to past summits since 2019 — reflecting its growing global influence.

11. (d)

In News: Recently, **India and Norway** reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation in **marine planning, Arctic research, and the Blue Economy** at the **Monaco Marine Conference (MCC)**.

- **Marine Spatial Planning (MSP):** India aims to scale **MSP across its coastline** reinforcing its leadership in sustainable ocean management.
- **MSP** is a science-based framework for optimizing ocean resources, protecting biodiversity, and ensuring coastal livelihoods, **under the Indo-Norwegian Integrated Ocean and Research Initiative**.
- It has already yielded visible outcomes, particularly through **pilot projects in Puducherry and Lakshadweep**.

12. (d)

Context

- The European Court of Justice ruled that Malta may no longer sell citizenship through its 'golden passports' scheme, as it is contrary to European law.

About

- Launched in **2014**, Malta's **Individual Investor Programme (IIP)**, known as the **Golden Passport scheme**, allowed wealthy foreigners to acquire Maltese citizenship, and by extension **EU citizenship**, through financial contributions.
- Applicants were required to:
 - Contribute **€600,000–€750,000** to Malta's national development fund.
 - Purchase or lease real estate in Malta.
 - Make a **€10,000** donation to a registered NGO.
- It attracted investors from **Russia, China, the Middle East**, and others, including politically exposed persons and celebrities.

Why the Scheme Was Controversial

- **Security concerns:** Citizenship grants included access to the EU's visa-free Schengen Area, raising risks of money laundering and infiltration by criminal networks.
- **Lack of transparency:** Many successful applicants remained unnamed.

13. (b)

In News

- India, as the Vice President of the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA), actively participated in the 2nd Session of the IALA Council, held in Nice, France.

Statement 1 is not correct: IALA was established in 1957 as a non-governmental organization (NGO). It transitioned to an intergovernmental organization (IGO) on August 22, 2024, after a convention was ratified by 30 states.

Statement 2 is correct: IALA's headquarters are located in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, near Paris, France.

14. (b)

About Interpol Origin: Formed as the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) at the 2nd International Police Congress, Vienna, 1923.

	Red Notice To seek the location and arrest of wanted persons with a view to extradition or similar lawful action.		Yellow Notice To help locate missing persons, often minors, or to help identify persons who are unable to identify themselves.
	Blue Notice To collect additional information about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a crime.		Black Notice To seek information on unidentified bodies.
	Green Notice To provide warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries.		Orange Notice To warn of an event, a person, an object or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.
	INTERPOL–United Nations Security Council Special Notice Issued for groups and individuals who are the targets of UN Security Council Sanctions Committees.		Purple Notice To seek or provide information on modus operandi, objects, devices and concealment methods used by criminals.

- Became INTERPOL after the adoption of its Constitution in 1956 during its 25th General Assembly.
- **Membership:** 196 countries, India is a founding member.
- **Headquarters:** Lyon, France.
- **National Central Bureau (NCB):** Every member state has one and India's NCB is the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
- **Organizational Structure:** General Assembly (Supreme governing body; meets annually), Executive Committee (supervises execution of GA decisions) & General Secretariat (Permanent staff handling day-to-day operations)

BHARATPOL Portal

- BHARATPOL is a dedicated online portal developed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
- It facilitates international police cooperation between Indian law enforcement agencies and INTERPOL.

15. (a)

Context

- The **Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)** has initiated a formal investigation into the Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad.

About: International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)

- ICAO is a specialized agency of the **United Nations** that coordinates the principles and techniques of **international air navigation**, and fosters the **planning and development of international air transport** to ensure safe and orderly growth.
- **History:** The Convention on International Civil Aviation (**Chicago Convention**), drafted in **1944**.
 - The convention was ratified by the required number of nations, leading to the official inauguration of ICAO on **April 4, 1947**.
- **Member States:** 193 (India is a member of the ICAO)
- **Headquarters:** Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- **The Air Navigation Commission (ANC)** is the technical body within ICAO. The commission is composed of **19 commissioners**, nominated by the ICAO's contracting states and appointed by the ICAO Council.

16. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Vietnam has officially joined BRICS as a partner country.

- Vietnam has now become the **10th BRICS partner**.
- The partner country category was created at the **2024 BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia**.
- **The current list of partners includes** Vietnam, Belarus, Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.

17. (b)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks with the Cyprus President while renewing India's support for the **unity of Cyprus and "peaceful resolution" of the "Cyprus question"**.

- **Background:** Cyprus was a **British colony** until it gained independence in **1960**.
 - Its constitution was designed to **balance power** between **Greek Cypriots (majority)** and **Turkish Cypriots (minority)**.
 - Tensions emerged between the two communities over governance.
 - Greek Cypriots favored Enosis (union with Greece), while Turkish Cypriots sought Taksim (partition).
- **Coup:** A Greek-backed coup attempted to **annex Cyprus to Greece**.
 - In response, Turkey invaded Cyprus, citing its rights as a guarantor power under the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee.
 - Turkey occupied about **37% of the northern part of the island**.
- **Since 1974** Cyprus has been divided between **Turkiye-backed Northern Cyprus** and the **internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus**, and the dispute has been known as the **Cyprus question**.
- **Since 1974, Cyprus remains de facto divided:**
 - **Republic of Cyprus in the south** (internationally recognized, EU member since 2004).
 - **Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)** in the north which is **only recognized by Turkey**.

18. (d)

Context

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has condemned the Pahalgam terror attack, saying the attack could not have occurred without financial backing.
 - This is the first time that **"state-sponsored terrorism"** is being acknowledged by FATF as a funding source.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- **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.
 - **In 2001**, the FATF expanded its mandate to also combat terrorist financing.
- **Members:** FATF currently has **39 members**, including **two regional organizations** (European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council).
 - **India** became a member in **2010**.
 - FATF suspended membership of the Russian Federation on 24 February 2023. (Earlier there were 40 members).

- **Secretariat:** It is located at the **OECD Headquarters in Paris**.
- **Mandate:** 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.
- **Both the statements are incorrect:** FATF is **not a treaty-based body**, and its recommendations are **not legally binding**.

19. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The IBCA is a multi-country, multi-agency coalition of 95 big cat range countries and non-range countries with an interest in big cat conservation. It is not formed exclusively by range countries.

Statement 2 is correct: The Big Cats included are Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar & Puma.

Statement 3 is correct: India is the host country & Secretariat for the IBCA.

Statement 4 is not correct: The Alliance was launched in April 2023 on the occasion of “50 years of India’s Project Tiger,” not Project Elephant.

20. (b)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi held **productive exchanges with G7 leaders** on key global challenges during the **G-7 Outreach Summit at Kananaskis in Canada**.

Group of Seven (G7)

- The Group of Seven (G7) is an **informal grouping of 7** of the world’s advanced economies and the European Union.
- Its members **meet annually** at the G7 Summit to **discuss global economic and geopolitical issues**.
- The G7 was founded in **1975** in response to the **oil crisis**, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States formed the **Group of Six**.
 - Canada joined in 1976, forming the G7.
 - These countries represent about **10% of the world’s population** and nearly **30% of the global economy by GDP**.
 - **The European Union has observer status**, and is **excluded from the rotating chairmanship**.
 - **With the inclusion of Russia in 1998**, the group temporarily became the **G8**.
 - **In 2014, the group returned to the G7 format**.

21. (b)

Shanghai Five emerged in **1996** from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks between **4 former USSR republics and China**.

- **Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan** were members of the **Shanghai Five**.
- With the accession of **Uzbekistan** to the group in **2001**, the Shanghai Five was renamed the **SCO**.
- **Objective:** To enhance regional cooperation for efforts to curb terrorism, separatism, and extremism in the Central Asian region.
- **Members: It has 10 members**, China, Russia, India (2017), Pakistan, Iran, Belarus and the four Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. **Hence, Statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Statement 2 and 3 are correct: Language:** The SCO’s official languages are Russian and Chinese.

- **Structure:** The supreme decision-making body of the SCO is the **Council of Heads of States (CHS)** which meets once a year.
- **The Organization has 2 standing bodies** — the Secretariat in Beijing and the Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.

22. (c)

In News

- India ranked 71 on the **World Economic Forum (WEF)'s Energy Transition Index (ETI) 2025**, dropped from rank 63 in 2024.

Key Findings

- Sweden, ranked first in the Index followed by Finland, Denmark and Norway.
- China topped the “Emerging Asia” category.

About ETI

- The ETI is a tool developed by the WEF, an international non-profit for public-private cooperation set up in 1971 to quantify the yearly progress of nations in energy transition.
- The energy transition means moving from high carbon-emitting fuels such as coal to what are generally considered cleaner and renewable fuels such as solar power.
- It is based on 43 indicators from various global data sources.

23. (b)

In News: Recently, **Iran's Foreign Ministry** has confirmed that **its Parliament is drafting legislation to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Treaty**.

- **Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Treaty** is one of the most widely adhered-to arms control agreements **signed in 1968** and entered **into force in 1970**. It was **extended indefinitely in 1995**

Statement 1 is not correct

- NPT has the provision of **Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy** under IAEA safeguards.
- However, the **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), 1996 bans all nuclear explosions for both civilian and military purposes**.

Statement 2 is correct

- A total of 191 States have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States.
- **India, Pakistan, South Sudan and Israel never joined** the treaty, however they are **known or believed to possess nuclear weapons**.
- **North Korea** joined the NPT in 1985 but **withdrew in 2003**.

24. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** was established in **1967 in Bangkok, Thailand**.

- **It was founded by five countries:** Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

Statement 2 is correct: Current Member States: ASEAN currently consists of **10 member countries:** **Brunei, Cambodia**, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

25. (b)

Context

- India has categorically rejected references to the country at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers' Meeting and termed them as unwarranted and factually incorrect.

- India condemned the OIC's silence on terrorism emanating from Pakistan, calling it a disregard for global anti-terror consensus.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

- **Objective:** The organisation claims to be “the collective voice of the Muslim world” and works to “safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony.
- **Members: 57 member states** (primarily Muslim-majority countries)
 - **India is not a member** despite having the third-largest Muslim population globally.
- **Official Languages:** Arabic, English, and French
- **Headquarters:** Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
- OIC is an **intergovernmental organisation** founded in **1969**.

26. (c)

Context

- NATO leaders, at a summit in The Hague, are set to endorse a new defence spending target of **5% of GDP** amid rising threats from Russia and concerns over U.S. commitment to European security.

About NATO

- NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a military alliance of countries.
- **Establishment:** It was founded in **1949** with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty, more popularly known as the **Washington Treaty**.
- **Aim:** To ensure the security and defense of its member countries through collective defense.
- **Founding Members:** The original members of NATO were **Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and the United States**.
- **Collective Defense:** The cornerstone of NATO is **Article 5** of the North Atlantic Treaty, which states that an armed attack against one or more of its members is considered an attack against all members.
- **Decision-Making:** Decisions within NATO are made on the basis of consensus among member countries.
 - **The North Atlantic Council**, which includes the ambassadors of all member countries, is the principal political decision-making body.
- **Members:** It has **32 member countries**, **Finland and Sweden** became the 31st and 32nd members respectively.
 - On signing the Treaty, countries voluntarily commit themselves to participating in the political consultations and military activities of the Organization.

27. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The UN80 Initiative is a flagship reform drive launched by UN Secretary-General António Guterres ahead of the UN's 80th anniversary in 2025. It aims to modernize the United Nations system to make it more efficient, accountable, and aligned with today's complex global challenges. The focus is on execution, not deletion.

Statement 2 is correct: It's key to ensuring the UN remains relevant in a multipolar world with rising geopolitical tensions, climate challenges, digital threats, and humanitarian crises. A core goal is efficiency and cost reduction—eliminating overlap, cutting admin costs, and increasing automation across departments.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1. With reference to Polio, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. It is a highly contagious viral disease caused by the poliovirus.
 2. According to the WHO, Somalia and Ethiopia are the only countries in the world where polio remains endemic.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
2. With reference to Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) dating, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. It is a technique used to measure the decay of the radioactive isotope Carbon-14 in archaeological samples.
 2. The results of AMS dating are calibrated using annual growth rings in trees.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 Narco-analysis, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. It involves the administration of sodium pentothal to induce a sedated state in the subject.
 2. The technique guarantees scientifically accurate and legally admissible evidence.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
4. The Axiom-4 (Ax-4) mission, recently seen in the news, comprises astronauts from which of the following countries?
 - (a) India, Russia, Germany, United States
 - (b) India, Poland, Hungary, United States
 - (c) India, France, Japan, United States
 - (d) India, Brazil, Italy, United States

5. What is the primary function of a black box in an aircraft?
- Navigation assistance
 - Recording flight information for investigation
 - Weather prediction
 - Fuel efficiency optimization
6. With reference to the methods of DNA analysis used for identifying unidentified human remains, consider the following statements:
- Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis is useful for matching remains through the maternal lineage due to its mode of inheritance.
 - Y-Chromosome STR analysis can be used to identify an individual using only the father's Y chromosome.
 - Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) analysis can utilize personal items of the victim for reference DNA when other sources are unavailable.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
7. Which one of the following best describes the term 'Biomanufacturing'?
- It is an act of acquiring and controlling biological resources and traditional knowledge.
 - It involves the use of living cells and biological systems to produce commercial goods.
 - It is the process of systematically searching for and discovering new products derived from biological resources.
 - It is a process to extract valuable metals from a low-grade ore with the help of microorganisms.
8. Which one of the following is *not* correct for a *Hydraulic system*?
- It uses incompressible fluids to transmit force efficiently.
 - The applied pressure transmits force evenly in all directions.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
9. Consider the following statements
- Sickle cell disease is an inherited blood disorder that affects hemoglobin.
 - The National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission aims to eliminate sickle cell disease as a public health issue by 2030.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

- 10.** With reference to the quantum communication, consider the following statements:
1. Quantum communication uses quantum physics, especially quantum entanglement, to create ultra-secure channels for sending information.
 2. Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) allows secure exchange of encryption keys using quantum mechanics.

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

- 11.** Consider the following statements:

1. India is the first country globally to start commercial production of Nano Urea.
2. Nano fertilizers contain nutrient particles typically larger than 100 nanometers to enhance absorption.
3. Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) is setting up its first overseas nano fertiliser plant in Brazil.

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.** 'Wegovy' recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) A newly discovered exoplanet in the habitable zone.
- (b) A weight-loss drug approved for treating obesity.
- (c) A satellite navigation system developed by the European Union.
- (d) An AI-based tool for disaster prediction and management.

- 13.** What is the role of lipid nanoparticles (LNPs) in in vivo CAR T-cell therapy?

- (a) To activate immune checkpoints
- (b) To integrate DNA randomly into host cells
- (c) To carry mRNA to specific T-cells
- (d) To kill cancer cells directly

- 14.** Consider the following countries:

1. Poland
2. India
3. France
4. USA
5. Japan
6. Hungary

Which of the above countries participated in the recent *Axiom-4 Mission*?

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

15. Oxaliplatin, cyclophosphamide, and leucovorin, recently seen in the news, are related to which of the following?

- (a) Chemotherapy drugs used in cancer treatment
- (b) Pesticides banned under international conventions
- (c) Anti-diabetic medicines used under Ayushman Bharat
- (d) Antibiotics used in treating drug-resistant infections

16. AlphaGenome, a new AI model has been developed to predict the functional impact of genetic mutations in human DNA. Which of the following statements correctly describes this AI model?

- 1. It can analyze extremely long DNA sequences, up to 1 million base pairs.
- 2. It is capable of predicting the effects of both common and rare genetic variants.
- 3. It is currently approved for clinical diagnosis and therapeutic use.

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

18. Which of the following pairs of characteristics accurately describes Fungi?

- (a) The presence of vascular tissues for water transport.
- (b) The presence of chlorophyll for photosynthesis.
- (c) Exclusive reliance on parasitic relationships for nutrient acquisition.
- (d) Eukaryotic cells and a cell wall containing chitin.

19. Which of the following substances are commonly used for cloud seeding to induce artificial rain?

- 1. Silver iodide (AgI)
- 2. Potassium iodide
- 3. Sodium chloride
- 4. Dry ice (CO₂)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

What is Polio?

- **Polio (poliomyelitis)** is a highly contagious **viral disease** caused by the poliovirus.
- It **primarily affects children** under the age of 5 and can lead to severe complications such as **paralysis, disability, or even death**.
- **Spread:** Polio spreads mainly through **fecal-oral transmission**.
 - It can also be spread via **respiratory droplets** from coughing or sneezing.
- **Symptoms:** Most cases are mild or asymptomatic.
 - A smaller percentage of infected individuals develop paralytic polio, which can cause paralysis, usually affecting the legs or respiratory muscles.
- **Vaccination:** There is **no cure** for polio, it can only be prevented.
 - Polio vaccine, given multiple times, can protect a child for life.
 - **Vaccines available:** Oral polio vaccine and inactivated polio vaccine. Both are effective and safe.
- **There are three types** of wild poliovirus (WPV): type 1, type 2, and type 3.

State of Polio Eradication

- **Eradication:** **Type 2** wild poliovirus was declared eradicated in **September 2015** and **Type 3** wild **poliovirus** was declared eradicated in October 2019.
 - **Only type 1** wild poliovirus remains.
- **The WHO South-East Asia Region** was declared free of poliovirus in **2014** and the **WHO African Region** was certified free of wild poliovirus (WPV) in **2020**.
 - **India** was certified polio-free in **March 2014** and continues to be so.
- According to the WHO, **Pakistan and Afghanistan** are the only countries in the world where polio remains endemic.

2. (c)

Context

- The study by the researchers of the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar (IITGN), has uncovered archaeological evidence that pushes back the human presence in this region by at least 5,000 years prior to the arrival of Harappans.

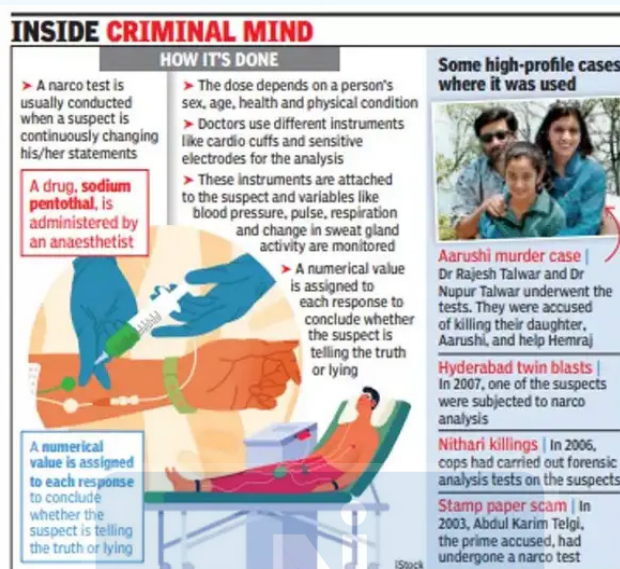
Method to determine the age of the sites

- The research team used **Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS)** dating of shell remains, a highly precise technique that measures the **radioactive isotope Carbon-14 (C-14)** absorbed by living organisms.
- After death, C-14 begins to decay and is **reduced by half every 5,730 years**.
- As atmospheric C-14 levels have varied over time, the results were calibrated using tree-ring data.
 - **Trees form one ring per year**, and these tree-ring sequences can be matched and extended back over thousands of years, allowing scientists to construct an accurate reference timeline of atmospheric C-14.

3. (a)

Context

- The Supreme Court has ruled that narco-analysis tests cannot be conducted on accused persons without their free and informed consent, reaffirming that such practices violate fundamental rights under the Indian Constitution.
- Narco-Analysis** It involves the injection of a drug called **sodium pentothal** into the accused, inducing a hypnotic or sedated state.



- The assumption is that a subject in such a state is **less inhibited** and is more likely to divulge information.
 - However, Narco-analysis is **not foolproof**.

Supreme Court ruling

- The Court held that the use of involuntary narco-analysis:
 - Violates Article 20(3):** Protection against self-incrimination.
 - Violates Article 21:** Right to life and personal liberty, including the right to privacy.
- The Court emphasized that **technological advancement** in investigation **cannot override constitutional protections**.
- Earlier in 2010, the SC** in the case of **Selvi v. State of Karnataka** ruled that no lie detector tests should be administered “**except on the basis of consent of the accused**” in accordance with the fundamental right against self-incrimination as enshrined under **Article 20(3)** of the Constitution.

4. (b)

In News

- The launch of the Axiom-4 mission has been postponed again due to a technical issue with SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket.

Falcon 9 is a reusable, two-stage rocket designed and manufactured by SpaceX for the reliable and safe transport of people and payloads into Earth orbit and beyond.

The Axiom-4 (Ax-4) mission

- It will spend 14 to 21 days on the ISS, conducting over 60 experiments in collaboration with 31 countries, covering fields like biomedical research, Earth observation, and materials science.
- Some experiments involve **ISRO**, offering India key insights for its upcoming Gaganyaan mission, now expected in 2027.

- The Ax-4 crew comprises astronauts from **India, Poland, Hungary, and the United States**.
 - **Shubhanshu Shukla** will be India's second national astronaut to go to space since **1984**.
- The mission highlights Axiom Space's role in advancing international access to low-Earth orbit.

5. (b)

Context

- The **Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)** has initiated a formal investigation into the Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad.

What is a Black Box?

- A black box is a small **machine that records information** about an aircraft during its flight.
- It is a **bright orange or yellow rectangular box** crafted to withstand explosions, fire, water pressure, and high-speed crashes.
- **Discovered by Australian scientist David Warren**, it is used to discover the cause of a plane crash.

6. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Depending on the quality of the collected DNA, scientists can choose between a number of different methods of analysis.

- **Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) Analysis:** Found in mitochondria (outside the nucleus), this method is used when nuclear DNA is degraded or unavailable.
 - mtDNA is passed down by the mother, unchanged, to all her children. This means that samples from a **person's remains can be matched with the maternal line of inheritance**.
 - **Advantage:** Easier to recover from degraded samples due to multiple copies per cell.

Statement 2 is not correct: Y-Chromosome STR Analysis: Analyses STRs on the Y chromosome.

- **Inheritance:** Passed from father to son.
- **Application:** Matches possible with **any paternal line male relative** (e.g., father, brother, paternal uncle).

Statement 3 is correct: Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) Analysis: It is based on the variation at a single base (A, C, G, T).

- It is applied when DNA is highly degraded.
- **Sources for reference:** Victim's personal items like toothbrushes or hairbrushes.
- **Limitation:** Less effective than STR analysis.

7. (b)

In News: As global industries increasingly leverage AI for precision-driven bioproduction, India's efforts are becoming more evident, though challenges remain, particularly in policy frameworks and innovation.

- **Biomanufacturing** involves the **use of living cells and biological systems** to produce commercial goods — ranging from life-saving vaccines and biologics to biofuels, enzymes, biodegradable plastics, and advanced materials.
 - The convergence of **synthetic biology, artificial intelligence, and industrial biotechnology** has expanded its scope across sectors including **healthcare, energy, food processing, and materials science**.
- **Biopiracy** is the act of acquiring and controlling biological resources and traditional knowledge, often through patents, without the consent of the originating communities and without fair compensation.

- **Bioprospecting** is the process of systematically searching for and discovering new products derived from biological resources, such as plants, animals, and microorganisms, for commercial or other purposes.
- **Biomining (or Bioleaching)** is a process in mining and biohydrometallurgy that extracts valuable metals from a low-grade ore with the help of microorganisms such as bacteria or archaea.

8. (d)

In News: Hydraulic systems convert power into smooth, flexible mechanical movement, making heavy lifting and precision tasks possible.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct

- Hydraulic systems use **incompressible fluids to transmit force** efficiently, making them **ideal for heavy-duty applications**, based on **Pascal's Law**.
- **Pascal's law** states that when there is an increase in pressure at any point in a confined fluid, there is an equal increase at every other point in the container.
 - **Pneumatic systems** use compressible fluid, such as air, in their operation.
- Hydraulic systems allow a **small force** applied over a small area to **generate a much larger force** over a larger area.
- They operate by **applying pressure to a fluid**, which then **transmits force evenly in all directions**.
- In this system, **forces perpendicular everywhere to the surface**; force per unit area (pressure) same everywhere.

9. (b)

In News : World Sickle Cell Awareness Day, observed recently (on June 19th).

- The theme of World Sickle Cell Day 2025 is, '**Global Action, Local Impact: Empowering Communities for Effective Self-Advocacy**'.

Statement 1 is correct : **Sickle cell disease** is a group of inherited blood disorders caused by a genetic mutation that leads to abnormal **haemoglobin** in red blood cells.

- This results in red blood cells becoming sickle-shaped, rigid, and sticky, which blocks blood flow and reduces oxygen delivery to organs, causing pain and complications.

Statement 2 is not correct: The **National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission**, introduced in the Union Budget 2023, aims to address the significant health challenges Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) poses, particularly among India's tribal populations. It was launched with the aim **to eliminate sickle cell disease as a public health problem in India before 2047**.

10. (c)

Both the statements are correct: **Quantum communication** uses quantum physics, especially quantum entanglement, to create ultra-secure channels for sending information.

- **Quantum Entanglement:** When two photons are entangled, measuring one instantly determines the state of the other — even if they are far apart.
- **Main purpose:** To make communication leak-proof. Any eavesdropping attempt will disturb the entangled state, revealing the intrusion.
- **Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)** allows secure exchange of encryption keys **using quantum mechanics**.
 - **Uses photons (light particles)** as information carriers.
 - Quantum entanglement-based QKD is **highly secure** — any hacking attempt disturbs the system and gets detected.

11. (c)

Context

- Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) is setting up its **first overseas nano fertiliser Plant in Brazil**.
 - It will be producing **4.5 million litres of nano-fertilisers annually**.

Nano Fertilizer

- A nano fertilizer is a type of fertilizer that contains **nutrient particles in nanometer size (typically less than 100 nanometers)**.
- These fertilizers are designed to deliver **nutrients to plants more efficiently, due to their small size, high surface area, and better absorption**.
- Nano fertilizers are part of **precision agriculture**, aiming to reduce nutrient loss and improve productivity.
- India became the first country globally to start commercial production of Nano Urea** in 2021.
 - Nano urea is being promoted to reduce the use of conventional urea, which is heavily subsidized and overused.

12. (b)

Danish pharma giant Novo Nordisk launched its **weight loss drug Wegovy as a once-a-week injection in India**.

- The **delivery device will contain four doses**. The 0.25 mg, 0.5 mg and 1 mg doses will be priced at Rs 17,345 a month, translating to a weekly cost of Rs 4,366.
- Wegovy is made of **semaglutide, a GLP 1A receptor agonist**, which mimics the naturally occurring hormone GLP-1, responsible for regulating blood sugar, reducing appetite and slowing down gastric emptying.
- It is approved for weight loss but **only if you are above a certain weight called morbid obesity**.
 - Morbid obesity, also known as class III obesity**, is a severe, life-threatening form of obesity.
 - Body Mass Index (BMI) $\geq 40 \text{ kg/m}^2$.
- Studies have shown that people on Wegovy **lost nearly 15% of their body weight on average**.

13. (c)

Context

- Researchers have demonstrated that CAR T-cells, one of the most advanced forms of cancer immunotherapy, can now be created directly inside the body (in vivo) using mRNA and lipid nanoparticles (LNPs).

What Is CAR T-Cell Therapy?

- CAR T-cell therapy is a type of immunotherapy where a patient's own immune cells, specifically **T-cells, are genetically engineered** to fight cancer.
- These cells are modified to express **chimeric antigen receptors (CARs)**, synthetic molecules that allow T-cells to identify and destroy cancer cells.

Limitations of Conventional CAR T-Cell Therapy

- High cost:** Treatment can cost ₹3–5 crore per patient.
- Complex infrastructure:** Requires specialized labs, viral vectors, and highly trained personnel.
- Time-consuming process:** Typically takes several weeks from cell extraction to infusion.
- Side effects:** Includes risks such as **cytokine release syndrome (CRS)** and neurological complications.

- **Access constraints:** Available only in a few advanced hospitals, making it inaccessible for most cancer patients in developing countries.

In Vivo CAR T-Cell Engineering

- **Lipid nanoparticles (LNPs)** are tiny, fat-like particles used as delivery vehicles for genetic material, particularly mRNA.
- In in vivo CAR T-cell therapy, **researchers use LNPs to encapsulate and transport mRNA** that encodes chimeric antigen receptors (CARs) directly into the patient's immune system.
- What makes this method groundbreaking is:
 - The LNPs are engineered to target CD8+ T-cells specifically by attaching to them via cell-specific antibodies.
 - Once inside these T-cells, the mRNA instructs the cells to produce CARs, enabling them to recognize and destroy cancer cells.
 - This bypasses the need for lab-based cell extraction, modification, and reinfusion — simplifying the process.

14. (c)

In News: Recently, an **Indian Astronaut (Pilot) with three others** from USA (Commander), Hungary and Poland (Mission Specialists), soared into space aboard the **Axiom-4 mission**.

- **Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla** became the **first Indian** to reach the **International Space Station (ISS)** and **only the second Indian in space** after Rakesh Sharma's 1984 mission.
- The **Axiom-4 Mission** was launched from **NASA's Kennedy Space Center**; By **Falcon 9 rocket** of SpaceX.
- It is the **fourth private astronaut mission** to the ISS, **organized by Axiom Space** in partnership with **NASA and SpaceX**.
- It is the **first time India, Poland, and Hungary** have sent astronauts to the ISS, and only the second human spaceflight for each country in over 40 years.

15. (a)

Context

- A major investigation revealed that commonly used **chemotherapy drugs failed quality tests after being shipped to over 100 countries**.

About

- **Cisplatin, oxaliplatin, cyclophosphamide, doxorubicin, methotrexate and leucovorin** — are the most commonly used drugs in the chemotherapy treatments.
- These drugs work by **targeting cancer cells** while **minimising harm to normal cells**, but also cause **severe side effects** like kidney damage, immune suppression, and heart risk.

17. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Google DeepMind has released a new tool called **AlphaGenome**.

- This is a new AI model that is specifically tuned to **accurately predict how individual mutations in human DNA affect their functions**.
- It can **analyze extremely long DNA sequences** (up to 1 million base pairs) and predict how genetic variants affect gene regulation.

Statement 2 is correct: It is capable of analyzing **both common and rare genetic variants**, across diverse **cell types and biological processes**, using a **single unified model**.

Statement 3 is not correct: It is trained using **large public genomic datasets**.

- **Availability:** Currently available via Application Programming Interface (API) for non-commercial, research-focused use.
 - **Not approved for clinical diagnosis yet.**

18. (d)

Statement (a) is not correct: Fungi do not have vascular tissues like xylem or phloem — that's exclusive to higher plants. Fungi absorb water and nutrients directly through their hyphae, like sponges soaking up soup.

Statement (b) is not correct: Fungi are non-photosynthetic. They don't have chlorophyll, so they can't make their own food like plants.

Statement (c) is not correct: Fungi come in many nutritional styles:

- Saprophytic: Decompose dead matter (like mushrooms on a rotting log).
- Parasitic: Feed on living hosts (like ringworm, yikes).
- Mutualistic: Form symbiotic relationships (e.g., lichens = fungi + algae).

Statement (d) is correct: Fungi are made of eukaryotic cells (they have a true nucleus and organelles). Fungi have a cell wall, but unlike plants (which use cellulose), fungi use chitin.

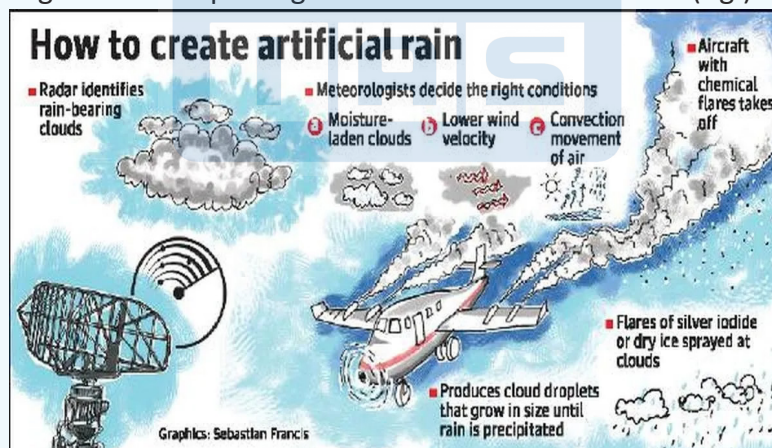
19. (d)

In News

- Delhi is set to launch its first-ever cloud seeding trial to combat its persistent air pollution through artificial rain. The initiative is coordinated by IIT Kanpur and IMD Pune.

What is Artificial Rain?

- Artificial rain refers to inducing precipitation by injecting certain chemicals into clouds to accelerate the process of raindrop formation.
 - Cloud seeding involves dispersing substances like: Silver iodide (AgI)



- Potassium iodide
- Sodium chloride
- Dry ice (CO_2)
- These act as condensation nuclei, attracting water droplets, which then combine to form rain.
- **Conditions Required:** Potential rain-bearing clouds, sufficient humidity and atmospheric instability & Favorable wind and temperature conditions.



ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. Which of the following states are traversed by the Western Ghats?

1. Gujarat
2. Maharashtra
3. Karnataka
4. Rajasthan
5. Tamil Nadu

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

2. Phytoplankton play a crucial role in the 'Biological Carbon Pump' primarily by:

- (a) Decomposing organic matter on the ocean floor.
- (b) Releasing oxygen into the atmosphere through respiration.
- (c) Transferring carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to the ocean.
- (d) Facilitating nutrient cycling in marine ecosystems.

3. Khichan and Menar, recently designated as new Ramsar Sites, are located in which Indian state?

- (a) Gujarat
- (b) Rajasthan
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Maharashtra

4. 'Greater Flamingo Sanctuary' has been declared in which of the following Indian States?

- (a) Gujarat
- (b) Meghalaya
- (c) Odisha
- (d) Tamil Nadu

5. With reference to the agricultural pathogen *Fusarium graminearum*, consider the following statements:

1. It produces Vomitoxin (Deoxynivalenol), which is harmful to humans and livestock.
2. It primarily affects only fruit crops and has no impact on cereals.

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 Stratospheric Aerosol Injection (SAI), consider the following statements:
1. It involves injecting aerosols into the troposphere to increase cloud formation and precipitation.
 2. Sulfur dioxide is the most commonly proposed aerosol for SAI.
 3. One of the proposed delivery methods of aerosols is through high-altitude aircraft.

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

7. With reference to the 30x30 target, consider the following statements:
1. It is one of the 30 goals under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
 2. It aims to conserve and manage at least 30% of terrestrial, inland water, marine, and coastal areas.

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. Which of the following statements regarding Parasitic Wasps is/are correct?
1. They are found only in the family Ichneumonidae.
 2. They play an important role in controlling pest populations.
 3. They are social insects and live in colonies.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

9. With reference to Amoeba, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is a type of single-celled microscopic organism that belongs to the group protozoa.
 2. They reproduce asexually through binary fission, where the cell splits into two.

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

- 10.** What is cryptobiosis in tardigrades?
- Rapid cell division under stress
 - Production of toxins for defense
 - A survival strategy where metabolic activity nearly stops
 - Process of rapid reproduction
- 11.** Which of the following statements about Project Cheetah is/are correct?
- It is the world's first intercontinental large wild carnivore translocation project.
 - The project has actively involved local communities, providing direct and indirect employment opportunities.
 - It operates under the umbrella of Project Tiger.
- Select the correct answer using the code below:
- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
- 12.** With reference to ocean acidification, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- It is caused by the absorption of carbon dioxide by seawater.
 - It leads to an increase in ocean pH, making the oceans more alkaline.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 13.** With reference to Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) in India, consider the following statements:
- They are notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
 - All human activities, including agriculture and organic farming, are prohibited in ESZs.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 14.** Consider the following statements with reference to Emperor Penguins
- They are the biggest of the 18 species of penguin.
 - They are found in Ross Sea and Weddell Sea.
 - The IUCN Red List of threatened species classifies them as Vulnerable.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All the three
 - None

15. Consider the following statements regarding Lake Natron:

1. Lake Natron's extreme alkalinity is primarily due to volcanic activity from Ol Doinyo Lengai.
2. The lake is a significant breeding ground for flamingos and is recognized under the Ramsar Convention.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

16. With reference to Passion Fruit (*Passiflora edulis*), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a tropical fruit native to South America.
2. Brazil is the world's largest producer of passion fruit.

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

17. With reference to Flue Gas Desulphurisation (FGD) systems used to reduce pollution from thermal power plants, consider the following statements:

1. Flue gas is emitted as a byproduct of combustion of fossil fuels containing only the sulphur dioxide (SO₂).
2. The wet limestone treatment method involves adding a powdered sorbent like limestone to the flue gas, where it reacts with SO₂.

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

18. Researchers in southern India have recently discovered a new species "Spartaeus karigiri" which is related to:

- (a) Frogs
- (b) Ants
- (c) Spiders
- (d) Butterflies

19. With reference to the 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought', consider the following statements:

1. It was established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1992.
2. The theme for 2025 is 'Restore the Land. Unlock the Opportunities'

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. Consider the following statements:

1. India is home to only two main kinds of crocodile species – the gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*), and the saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*).
2. The saltwater crocodile is listed as vulnerable under the IUCN red list of 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

21. Which of the following statements correctly describes Agarwood?

- (a) It is primarily used as a construction material due to its strong timber.
- (b) It is created when trees are wounded and infected by fungi.
- (c) It is a fragrant resinous wood derived from trees of the Pinaceae family.
- (d) It is a natural product of the tree's healthy growth.

22. With reference to the United Nations Oceans Conference (UNOC), consider the following statements:

1. It aims to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.
2. The third UNOC (2025) was held in France and co-hosted by Costa Rica.

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

23. Which of the following sanctuaries is/are related to the conservation of Gharials in India?

1. Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary
2. National Chambal Sanctuary
3. Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary

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

24. In which of the following regions are King Cobras *not* typically found in India?

- (a) Western Ghats
- (b) North Indian Terai
- (c) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- (d) Central India's dry deciduous forests

25. The phrase '*Baku to Belem Roadmap*', sometimes appeared in the news, is primarily related to:
- (a) Microplastics
 - (b) Climate Finance
 - (c) Deforestation
 - (d) Sea Level Rise

26. With reference to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), consider the following statements:

1. This document outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets.
2. The SDGs are universal, applying to all nations and are legally binding.

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
27. The "Polluter Pays Principle," which is a cornerstone of international environmental law, was formally introduced by which of the following international agreements?
- (a) Kyoto Protocol, 1997
 - (b) Stockholm Declaration, 1972
 - (c) Rio Declaration, 1992
 - (d) Paris Agreement, 2015

28. *Candida tropicalis*, recently seen in the news, is:

- (a) A newly discovered species of butterfly
- (b) A fungal pathogen showing rising resistance to common antifungal drugs
- (c) A bacterial pathogen responsible for typhoid outbreaks in tropical regions
- (d) A plant species identified as an invasive threat in Indian wetlands

29. With reference to the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT), consider the following statements:

1. It is a collaboration between the UNDP, BirdLife International, and World Wildlife Fund.
2. It provides access to biodiversity data useful for early risk screening and assessing business impacts on nature.
3. The tool supports progress tracking under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

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. With reference to the dhole (Asiatic wild dog), consider the following statements:

1. They are found only in India and Bhutan.
2. Dholes are classified as endangered on the IUCN Red List.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

31. With reference to secondary air pollution, consider the following statements:

1. Secondary pollutants are formed in the atmosphere through chemical reactions.
2. Carbon monoxide and sulfur oxide are examples of secondary air pollutants.

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. (a)

In News: Karnataka's Minister of Forest, Ecology, and Environment has ordered a study on the carrying capacity of the Western Ghats following landslips in Dakshina Kannada, Kodagu, and other areas during pre-monsoon rains.

Western Ghats are older than the Himalayas and are a mountain range of immense global importance.

- They are known for their unique geomorphic, ecological, and climatic influence on the Indian subcontinent.
- They affect monsoon weather patterns and moderate the tropical climate.
- They are recognized as one of the **world's eight 'hottest hotspots'** of biodiversity.
- They pass through the states of **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu**, and Kerala.
- They are an example of **Block Mountains** formed as land warped into the Arabian Sea.
- They are a biodiversity hot spot, a biologically rich but threatened region, and a **UNESCO World Heritage site**.

2. (c)

Phytoplankton are microscopic, photosynthetic organisms found in the sunlit upper layers of oceans. They play a crucial role in the 'Biological Carbon Pump', which is a key process in the global carbon cycle. Phytoplankton absorb carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere and convert it into organic carbon through photosynthesis, releasing oxygen in the process. When phytoplankton die or are consumed by zooplankton and higher organisms, the organic matter can sink to the deep ocean, taking the carbon with it — effectively sequestering CO₂.

3. (b)

Context

- Two wetlands from Rajasthan—**Khichan and Menar**—were designated as **new Ramsar Sites**, taking India's total sites to 91.
 - Now **Rajasthan** now has **four Ramsar sites**, while **Tamil Nadu** continues to lead with the **highest number (20 sites)** in India.

Newly Designated Ramsar Sites in Rajasthan

- Menar Wetland, Udaipur:** A freshwater monsoon wetland complex comprising:
 - Three ponds:** Braham Talab, Dhand Talab, and Kheroda Talab
 - Seasonal agricultural lands** that flood during monsoon.
 - Biodiversity:** White-rumped vulture, Long-billed vulture, Indian flying foxes.
- Khichan Wetland (Phalodi) Jodhpur:** Located in the northern **Thar Desert**. It comprises; **Ratri Nadi (river), Vijaysagar Talab (pond)**, Riparian zones and scrublands.
 - Biodiversity:** It supports **150+ bird species** and is notable for migratory **demoiselle cranes** with over **22,000 individuals** arriving each winter.

4. (d)

The Tamil Nadu government has officially declared a **Greater Flamingo sanctuary at Dhanushkodi in Ramanathapuram district**.

- The sanctuary **spans 524.7 hectares** and **encompasses both revenue and forest lands within Rameshwaram taluk**.
- The designated area, part of the **ecologically sensitive Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve**, is home to a **variety of ecosystems**, including mangroves, sand dunes, mudflats, and marshes and is a critical stopover along the **Central Asian Flyway**.
 - It is a **key migratory route** for birds traveling, covering a large continental area of Eurasia between the Arctic and Indian Oceans and the associated island chains.
- According to the recent 2023-2024 wetland bird survey**, the Dhanushkodi region recorded over **10,700 wetland birds**, representing **128 species** including herons, egrets, sandpipers, and both Greater and Lesser Flamingos.
- Significance:** The sanctuary status is expected to encourage responsible ecotourism, generate local employment, and raise public awareness about wetland conservation.

5. (a)

In News

- Two Chinese nationals had been charged in the US for allegedly smuggling an agricultural pathogen **Fusarium graminearum** into the United States.

About

- It is an ascomycete fungus responsible for **Fusarium head blight (FHB)**—a devastating disease affecting cereal crops such as wheat, barley, maize, oats, and rice. It produces **Vomitoxin (Deoxynivalenol)**, harmful to humans and livestock.
- This pathogen not only reduces crop yields and quality but also contaminates grains with harmful mycotoxins, posing significant risks to both animal and human health.

6. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: It is a proposed form of **geoengineering** aimed at **cooling the Earth by reflecting a portion of sunlight back into space**.

- It involves the **deliberate release of aerosols** (tiny reflective particles) into the **stratosphere**, typically **10–50 km above the Earth's surface**.
- **Aerosols Used:**
 - Most commonly proposed is **sulfur dioxide (SO₂)**.
 - **Alternatives:** calcium carbonate, titanium dioxide, or alumina.
- SAI targets the stratosphere (not the troposphere) to reflect sunlight, not to increase precipitation.

Statement 2 and 3 are correct: Aerosols Used: Most commonly proposed is **sulfur dioxide (SO₂)**.

- **Alternatives:** calcium carbonate, titanium dioxide, or alumina.
- **Delivery Methods:**
 - **High-altitude aircraft;**
 - Stratospheric balloons;
 - Artillery shells or rockets (less feasible).

7. (b)

Context

- A new report has revealed that the world needs to **invest \$15.8 billion** annually to meet the **30x30 target**.

About the 30x30 Target

- The 30x30 target is **one of 23 goals** outlined in the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**, adopted by 196 countries in 2022, to halt and reverse nature loss.
- It aims to conserve and manage at least **30 per cent** of terrestrial, inland water, marine, and coastal areas through protected areas (PA) and **other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)**.
- The 30x30 target is more ambitious than its predecessor **Aichi Target 11**, which aimed for the protection of **17% of land and 10% of coastal and marine areas**.

8. (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: Parasitic wasps belong to multiple families within the insect order Hymenoptera, including Ichneumonidae, Braconidae, Chalcidoidea, and others. Hence, they are not restricted to one family.

Statement 2 is correct: Parasitic wasps are natural biological control agents. They lay their eggs inside or on the bodies of other insects (often pests), and the developing larvae eventually kill the host, helping control invasive or harmful insect populations.

Statement 3 is not correct: Unlike bees and ants, most parasitic wasps are solitary, not social. They do not form colonies, and each female typically hunts and parasitizes hosts independently.

9. (c)

Context

- Kerala's State Public Health Laboratory (PHL) has developed **molecular diagnostic kits** to detect five species of free-living amoeba (FLA) that can cause **amoebic meningoencephalitis**.

What is an Amoeba?

- Amoeba is a type of **single-celled microscopic organism** that belongs to the group **protozoa**.
- It is one of the simplest forms of life and is found in water, soil, and other moist environments.

- **Key Characteristics:**

- **Eukaryotic:** It has a well-defined nucleus.
- **Shape-shifting:** Amoebae have no fixed shape; they constantly change shape by extending parts of their body called **pseudopodia (false feet)**.
- **Movement and Feeding:** Pseudopodia help them move and engulf food particles (a process called phagocytosis).
- **Reproduction:** They reproduce asexually through binary fission, where the cell splits into two.

10. (c)

Context

- ISRO is sending tardigrades to the International Space Station (ISS) under the **Voyager Tardigrades experiment** as part of the **Axiom-4 mission** to study their survival in space.

About

- **Tardigrades, also called water bears or moss piglets**, are micro-animals known for their extraordinary resilience to extreme environmental conditions.
 - They can withstand temperatures as low as **minus 272.95 degrees Celsius** or as high as **150 degrees Celsius**; endure ultraviolet radiation of space and pressures of **40,000 kilopascals**.
- They were first discovered in **1773 by German zoologist Johann August Ephraim Goeze**.
- **Characteristics:** These creatures are usually between **0.3 mm to 0.5 mm long**.
 - They have **eight legs with claws** and segmented bodies protected by a cuticle.
 - Tardigrades can **survive extreme temperatures**, and can endure high radiation, desiccation, vacuum of space, and even intense pressure.

Why are tardigrades so resilient?

- **Cryptobiosis:** A survival strategy in which metabolic activity is nearly halted.
- **In anhydrobiosis**, they lose over 95% of body water, enabling survival without moisture.
- **Protective Proteins:** Tardigrades produce **Cytoplasmic Abundant Heat Soluble (CAHS) proteins**.
 - These proteins form a glass-like matrix, stabilizing cellular components during stress.

11. (d)

In News

- Wildlife officials and scientists from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) published a paper defending **Project Cheetah against ongoing criticism**, calling some objections ideologically biased.

Project Cheetah

- Project Cheetah is a landmark wildlife conservation initiative launched on September 17, 2022 aimed at reintroducing cheetahs to India after their extinction in the late **1940s and early 1950s**.
- It is the world's first intercontinental large wild carnivore translocation project.
- It operates under the umbrella of **Project Tiger and aligns with the Cheetah Action Plan to restore and conserve the species**.
 - Efforts are underway to expand suitable habitats, ensuring long-term survival and ecological balance in India's grassland ecosystems.

Key Achievements

- In September 2022, eight cheetahs from **Namibia** were translocated to Kuno National Park, followed by twelve cheetahs from **South Africa in February 2023**.

- The majority of these **cheetahs have adapted** well to their new environment, exhibiting natural behaviours such as hunting, territory establishment, and mating.
- Notably, a female cheetah gave birth to cubs on Indian soil after 75 years, with one surviving cub reported to be six months old and showing normal growth patterns as of September 2023.
- On 3rd January, 2024 three cubs were born to Namibian Cheetah Aasha at the Kuno National Park.
- The **project has actively involved local communities**, providing direct and indirect employment opportunities.
 - Over 350 '**Cheetah Mitras' (Cheetah Friends)** from surrounding villages have been engaged to educate the public on cheetah behaviour and human-wildlife conflict mitigation, fostering peaceful coexistence.

12. (a)

Context

- A recent study has revealed that ocean acidification has breached its planetary boundary, posing grave threats to marine ecosystems and global climate stability.

What is Ocean Acidification?

- Ocean acidification refers to the ongoing **decrease in the pH of Earth's oceans**, caused by the **uptake of carbon dioxide (CO₂)** from the atmosphere.
- When CO₂ dissolves in seawater, it forms **carbonic acid**, which **lowers ocean pH** and reduces calcium carbonate levels – essential for many marine organisms.

13. (a)

Context

- A municipal solid-waste incinerator set up in **Gangotri** (Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand) within the **Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone (BESZ)** has triggered criticism among **environmental activists**.

What are Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs)?

- Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) are areas notified by the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** under the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**.
- ESZs are designated areas around protected areas like national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.
- Their primary purpose is to **protect the fragile ecosystems** of these protected areas by regulating human activities in the surrounding areas.
- The extent of ESZ can go up to **10 km** around the protected area. In exceptional cases, even beyond 10 km.
- Activities in ESZs are classified as:
 - **Prohibited:** commercial mining, setting up of major hydroelectric projects, setting up of polluting industries (red category).
 - **Regulated:** construction, tourism, tree felling, vehicular traffic.
 - **Permitted:** agriculture, organic farming, local community use.
- **In June 2022**, the Supreme Court of India mandated that all national parks and wildlife sanctuaries within protected forests must have a minimum Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) of **1 km**.

14. (b)

In News : Climate change is causing this ice to melt early, threatening the survival of **Emperor penguins**.

- A study from 2009–2024 shows a 22% decline in population at 16 colonies, a loss rate 50% worse than previous estimates.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct : Emperor penguins (*Aptenodytes forsteri*) breed at about 54 colonies around Antarctica, with the largest colonies in the **Ross Sea and Weddell Sea**.

- They are the **biggest of the 18 species of penguin** found today, and one of the largest of all birds.

Statement 3 is not correct : They are cold-adapted seabirds that live exclusively in Antarctica. They breed during winter, rely mainly on land-fast sea ice for breeding, and use surrounding pack ice as their feeding grounds.

- **IUCN Red List Status** : Near Threatened

15. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: Ol Doinyo Lengai is the only active carbonatite volcano in the world and releases sodium carbonate-rich material, which contributes to the lake's high alkalinity.

Statement 2 is correct: Lake Natron is one of the most important breeding grounds for lesser flamingos and is listed as a Ramsar wetland site of international importance.

16. (c)

Context

- India has dispatched the second and final batch of machinery for Passion Fruit Processing to Suriname under the SEEDS (Supply of Equipment for Efficient Development of SMES) initiative.

Passion Fruit (*Passiflora edulis*)

- It is a **tropical fruit** native to **South America**, particularly southern **Brazil, Paraguay, and northern Argentina**.
 - It was introduced to **Europe in 1553** by **Spanish and Portuguese** colonists.
- **Nutritional Value**: Rich in Vitamin A, Vitamin C, dietary fiber, and antioxidants.
- **Brazil** is the world's **largest producer** of passion fruit.

17. (d)

Both the statements are not correct: Flue gas is emitted as a **byproduct** of **combustion** of fossil fuels. It mainly contains pollutants such as **carbon dioxide (CO₂)**, **sulphur dioxide (SO₂)**, **nitrogen oxides**, **particulate matter**, etc.

- **There are three common types of FGD systems** around the world — **dry sorbent injection**, **wet limestone treatment**, and **using sea water to remove SO₂**.
 - **The dry sorbent injection method** involves adding a **powdered sorbent** like **limestone** to the flue gas, where it reacts with SO₂.
 - **The wet limestone treatment method** also uses limestone to remove SO₂, but instead of using it in a powdered form, it uses a **limestone slurry**.
 - ♦ Passing SO₂ through this slurry results in the **formation of gypsum**, which is a stable compound and has wide applications in industries **like construction**.
 - ♦ This is the commonly used technology, and has **very high efficiency**

18. (c)

Researchers in southern India have discovered a new species of jumping spider, *Spartaeus karigiri*, marking the first time the genera **Spartaeus** and **Sonoita**.

Jumping spiders belong to the Salticidae family which is the largest spider family with over 5,000 species.

- They are small to medium-sized spiders known for their dense iridescent scales and large front median eyes.

- The study found male spiders hiding in rocky crevices in Karnataka's Karigiri region and females guarding eggs, with additional specimens spotted in Tamil Nadu.
- It marks the first time that the genera *Spartaeus* and *Sonoita* (specific groups within a subfamily) have been found in India.
 - It was previously known only from Southeast Asia and Africa.

19. (b)

In News: Recently, India joined the global community in **observing the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought**, reaffirming its commitment to sustainable land management and climate resilience.

Statement 1 is not correct: The 'World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought' was established by the **United Nations General Assembly in 1994**, observed **annually on June 17**.

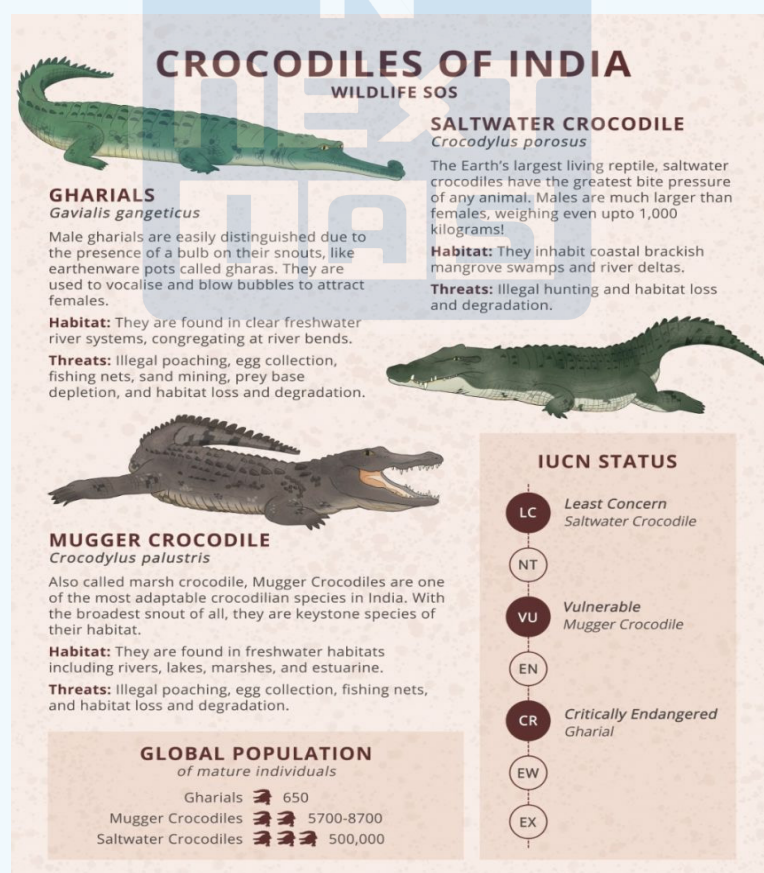
- It highlights the urgent need for sustainable land management and global action against desertification.

Statement 2 is correct: Theme (2025): 'Restore the Land. Unlock the Opportunities.'

20. (d)

Both the statements are not correct: India is home to three main kinds of crocodile species – the gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*), the saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), and the mugger (*Crocodylus palustris*).

- The saltwater crocodile is listed as **least concern (LS)** under the IUCN red list of threatened species.



21. (b)

Agarwood (also known as Oud or Gaharu) is a highly valuable fragrant wood that forms in the heartwood of *Aquilaria* trees only when they are infected by a specific type of mold or fungi (often *Phialophora parasitica*).

The tree responds to the infection by producing a dark aromatic resin, which saturates the heartwood, creating agarwood.

- It is not a naturally occurring part of the healthy tree — rather, it is a defense mechanism.

22. (b)

Context: Recently, the **third** United Nations Oceans Conference (UNOC), held in **Nice, France**, concluded with commitments aimed at **safeguarding the planet's marine ecosystems**.

Background: United Nations Oceans Conference (UNOC)

- **1st UNOC (2017):** In New York, Co-hosted by Sweden and Fiji; To support **SDG 14: Life Below Water**.
- **2nd UNOC (2022):** In Lisbon, Co-hosted by Portugal and Kenya; To emphasize the **need for science-based solutions** and innovative partnerships.
- **3rd UNOC (2025):** In Nice, France, and co-hosted by Costa Rica
 - **Theme:** Accelerating action and mobilizing all actors to conserve and sustainably use the ocean.

23. (d)

Context

- Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, launched the Gharial Species Conservation Programme by releasing Gharial hatchlings into the **Gerua River at Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary**, Uttar Pradesh.

About Gharials (*Gavialis Gangeticus*)

- **Characteristics:**
 - The name “Gharial” originates from the **Hindi word ghara (pot)**, referring to the **bulbous knob (narial excrescence)** present at the tip of a mature male’s snout. Though, this feature is **absent in females**.
 - They show **Sexual Dimorphism** means males and females differ significantly in size and appearance.
 - Unlike other **crocodiles**, gharials feed exclusively on **warm-blooded species** and are **not man-eaters**.
- **Habitat Distribution:**
 - Gharials are strictly **riverine species**, requiring **deep, clear**, fast-flowing waters with steep, sandy riverbanks.
 - Mainly found in **Chambal River, Gerua River, Ken River, Yamuna River, Brahmaputra River, Ghaghara River, Bhagirathi-Hooghly River**.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Status:** Critically Endangered
 - It is listed under **Schedule 1** of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

Protected Areas for Gharials

- **Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary :** Gerua River (Uttar Pradesh)
- **National Chambal Sanctuary** spread across MP, UP, and Rajasthan; a key breeding site.
- **Son Gharial Sanctuary:** Madhya Pradesh
- **Satkosia Gorge Sanctuary:** Odisha

24. (d)

Context

- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister is keen on “reintroducing” king cobras as an antidote to spiralling snakebite deaths and has also proposed a snake census to assess the population of venomous species.

About King Cobras

- **World’s Longest Venomous Snake:** Can grow up to 15 feet in length.
- **Habitat Preference:**
 - It prefers humid, dark forests with thick undergrowth, cool swamps, and bamboo patches across diverse habitats — from highland evergreen and semi-evergreen forests to estuarine mangroves with high rainfall.
- **Geographical Range in India:**
 - **Present:** Western Ghats, North Indian Terai, Northeast India, the mangrove coastlines of West Bengal and Odisha, Andaman and Nicobar, and parts of the Eastern Ghats.
 - **Absent:** No reliable historical record of king cobras in the **dry deciduous forests** of central India (including Madhya Pradesh).
- **Conservation Status:**
 - Listed as “**Vulnerable**” by the IUCN
- **Unique Traits:**
 - **Only snake species** known to build nests for its eggs
 - **Poor breeders in captivity**, making conservation challenging

25. (b)

In News: India has emerged as a vocal leader among developing nations, reigniting the debate over climate finance obligations, at the **ongoing climate talks in Bonn, Germany**.

- At COP29 in Baku, the global community **adopted the Baku to Belém Roadmap (B2B Roadmap)** as part of the **New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)** on climate finance.
- It aims to scale up climate finance to **\$1.3 trillion annually by 2035**, a significant leap from the **unmet \$100 billion annual pledge** made in 2009.
 - **Rio Declaration (1992)** formally introduced the **polluter-pays principle**.

26. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Adoption: The United Nations General Assembly, during its **70th Session in 2015**, adopted the document titled “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

- This document outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets.
- The SDGs, also known as the Global Goals, **came into force with effect from 1st January 2016**.

Statement 2 is not correct: Legality: The SDGs are **not legally binding**, but they have effectively become international obligations and have the potential to reorient domestic spending priorities in countries.

- Countries are expected to take ownership and develop a national framework to monitor these goals.

27. (c)

Context

- India has emerged as a vocal leader among developing nations, reigniting the debate over climate finance obligations, at the **ongoing climate talks in Bonn, Germany**.

Roadmap of Climate Finance

- At **COP29 in Baku**, the global community adopted the **Baku to Belém Roadmap (B2B Roadmap)** as part of the **New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)** on climate finance.
- It aims to scale up climate finance to **\$1.3 trillion annually by 2035**, a significant leap from the **unmet \$100 billion annual pledge** made in 2009.
 - **Rio Declaration (1992)** formally introduced the **polluter-pays principle**.

28. (b)

Context

- '**Candida tropicalis**' has been found using chromosome alterations to resist **common anti-fungal drugs** such as fluconazole and voriconazole.

About

- *Candida tropicalis* is a fungal pathogen **causing serious infections, especially in India**.
- Associated with **high mortality (55–60%)**.
- **Treated using azole antifungals** like fluconazole and voriconazole.
- **Recent rise in drug-resistant infections** has raised major public health concerns.

29. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: IBAT is a partnership of four major global conservation organizations: BirdLife International, Conservation International, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC).

Statement 2 is correct: IBAT's core function is to provide fast, easy, and integrated access to authoritative global biodiversity datasets (like the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, World Database on Protected Areas, and World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas).

Statement 3 is correct: IBAT's data and functionalities are used to support the tracking of progress towards global biodiversity targets, including those outlined in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

30. (b)

Context

- The **Dhole, or Asiatic wild dog (*Cuon alpinus*)**, once thought locally extinct, was recently seen in Assam's Kaziranga–Karbi Anglong Landscape (KKAL), according to the **Wildlife Institute of India (WII)**.
 - The last confirmed sighting of dholes in northeast India was reported from Nagaland in 2011.

About the Dhole

- **Social Behaviour:** Highly social; typically form packs of up to 30 but may hunt alone or in pairs depending on prey availability.
- **Lifespan:** 10–13 years in the wild; up to 16 years in captivity.
- **Threats:** Major threats include habitat loss, prey depletion, persecution, disease, and competition with other predators — causing population fragmentation.
- **Distribution:** Now restricted to parts of Central and Eastern Asia, including India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia.
- **Conservation Status:** It is included in CITES – Appendix II
 - Dholes are classified as **endangered** on the IUCN Red List.

31. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Secondary air pollutants: Pollutants that are formed in the lower atmosphere by **chemical reactions**. The two examples are **ozone and secondary organic aerosol (haze)**.

- Secondary pollutants are **harder to control** because they have different ways of synthesizing and the formation are not well understood.
- They form naturally in the environment and cause problems like **photochemical smog**.
- **Primary air pollutants:** Pollutants that are formed and **emitted directly from particular sources**.
 - Examples are particulates, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, and sulfur oxide. **Hence, Statement 2 is not correct.**

■■■■



MISCELLANEOUS

1. The '*SHOX Gene*', sometimes appeared in news, is primarily in the context of:
 - (a) Ageing of Human
 - (b) Protein Synthesis
 - (c) Tumor Suppressor
 - (d) Height Difference in Human
2. The Gurupadswamy Committee (1979), recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
 - (a) Agricultural pricing reforms
 - (b) Examination of the issue of child labour
 - (c) Reform in the education system of India
 - (d) Review of the juvenile justice system in India
3. Consider the following statements
 1. National Science Day is celebrated annually to honor the discovery of genetic code by P.C. Mahalanobis.
 2. P.C. Mahalanobis was a supporter of industrialisation and architect of the Fourth Five-Year Plan .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. 'Gwada Negative' recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
 - (a) A newly identified RNA virus causing hemorrhagic fever.
 - (b) A novel blood group discovered in a person of Guadeloupean origin.
 - (c) A rare mineral found in the Caribbean region.
 - (d) A unique ecosystem in Guadeloupe's rainforests.
5. '*Operation Spider's Web*' recently seen in the News, has been conducted by which of the following countries?
 - (a) Russia
 - (b) Israel
 - (c) Ukraine
 - (d) Yemen

6. Which one of the following institutions released the *Global Gender Gap Report 2025*?
- (a) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
 - (b) World Economic Forum (WEF)
 - (c) International Labour Organization (ILO)
 - (d) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
7. Consider the following statements:
1. The theme for International Day of Yoga 2025 is “Yoga for One Earth, One Health”.
 2. June 21 was chosen as the International Day of Yoga because it is the Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
- 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
8. Operation ATALANTA, recently seen in the news, is primarily associated with which of the following?
- (a) European Union (EU)
 - (b) Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
 - (c) North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
 - (d) Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)
9. Which organization is responsible for implementing the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)?
- (a) Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)
 - (b) Indian Railways
 - (c) National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB)
 - (d) National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC)
10. With reference to the *World Environment Day*, consider the following statements:
1. It was designated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1973.
 2. The theme for World Environment Day 2025 is Our Land, Our Future.
- 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
11. The Baba Kalyani Committee (2018), recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) Make in India initiative
 - (b) Special Economic Zone (SEZ) policy
 - (c) Digital India programme
 - (d) Startup India scheme

12. The *Karlsruhe Tritium Neutrino (KATRIN)* experiment, recently seen in the news, is held in which of the following countries?
- Switzerland
 - Austria
 - Germany
 - France
13. *Ejjiao*, recently seen in the news, is:
- A traditional herbal tea used in Japan
 - A mineral extracted from rare earth rocks
 - A fermented drink made from yak milk in Tibet
 - A gelatin derived from donkey skin used in traditional Chinese medicine
14. With reference to the '*Cape Town Convention and Protocol (2001)*', consider the following statements:
- It aims to establish internationally recognized interests in mobile equipment like aircraft.
 - It was acceded by India by passing the Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill (2025).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
15. Recently, India proposed a '*10-point roadmap*' to which one of the international treaties or agreements?
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
 - Convention on Biological Diversity Treaty (CBD)
 - Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement
 - Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
16. What does the term "grey routing" refer to in international trade and customs?
- Importing goods through official and transparent customs channels
 - Exporting goods under preferential trade agreements
 - Illicitly routing goods of prohibited origin through third countries to evade bans or tariffs
 - Using environmentally friendly transportation methods for shipping goods

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

In News: Recently, researchers have identified the **SHOX Gene** that contributes to the **height difference between men and women**.

- **Role of the SHOX Gene:** The SHOX gene, known for its association with height, is present on both the X and Y chromosomes. However, its expression differs between males and females:
 - **Men (XY chromosomes):** The SHOX gene is fully active on both the X and Y chromosomes.
 - **Women (XX chromosomes):** One of the two X chromosomes is partially silenced, leading to a lower overall SHOX gene effect.

- It accounts for nearly 25% of the average height gap between men and women, which is approximately 5 inches.

2. (b)

Context

- Recently, the **Centre for Legal Action and Behaviour Change (C-LAB)**, in partnership with the **Just Rights for Children (JRC) network**, released a report related to **child labour rescues in 2024–25**.

Definition of Child

- **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNHRC)**: A child as an individual who has **not attained the age of 18 years**.
 - **India** has been a **signatory** to the UNHRC since 1992.
- **International Labour Organization (ILO)**: Child is any person under 18.
 - **Child Labour (as per the ILO)** refers to work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical and/or mental development.

Do You Know?

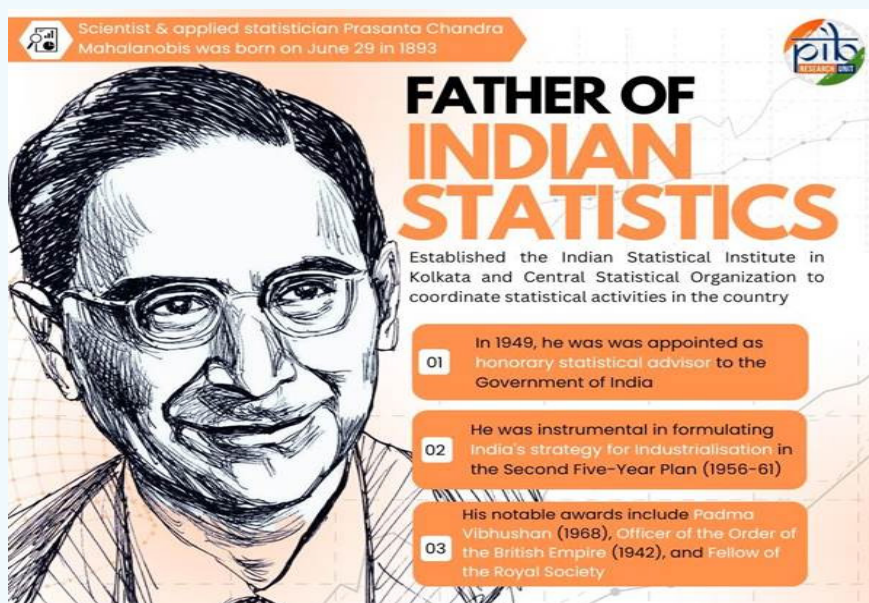
- **Gurupadswamy Committee (1979)** observed poverty is main factor for the child labour. It recommended that a **multiple policy approach** was required in dealing with the problems of working children.
- **The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act** was enacted in **1986** based on the recommendations of **Gurupadaswamy Committee**.

3. (d)

In News : The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) celebrated the 19th Statistics Day in New Delhi.

Statements 1 and 2 are not correct : **National Statistics Day** was first celebrated in 2007 to recognize the invaluable contributions of **Professor P.C. Mahalanobis** to the field of statistics and economic planning.

- He is Known as the '**Father of Modern Statistics in India**'.
- He founded the **Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)** and developed the **Mahalanobis Distance**, a widely used statistical measure.



4. (b)

France's national blood agency, the Établissement Français du Sang or French Blood Establishment (EFS), has identified a **completely new blood group system**, now officially recognised by the International Society of Blood Transfusion (ISBT).

- It is named **EMM-negative** and colloquially dubbed "**Gwada negative**" in reference to the **Guadeloupean origin of the woman who carries it**.
 - As of June 2025, **only one person** in the world is known to possess this blood type, making it the rarest ever recorded.
- **Gwada negative** is the informal name given to the **newly classified EMM-negative blood group system**, officially registered by ISBT as ISBT042.
 - It is defined by the **absence of the EMM antigen**, which is normally found on red blood cells and is considered a high-incidence antigen.
 - High-incidence antigens are present in nearly all humans, so the lack of one, as in this case, is extremely rare and medically significant.

5. (c)

Under its '**Operation Spider's Web**', Ukraine launched **first-person view (FPV) drone attacks on five airbases across Russia**.

First-person View Drones

- **FPV or first-person view drones** are smaller in size and have cameras built in on the front, which **sends live video to the operator**.
- This enables **precise flying and manoeuvrability** by the operator from a remote location, almost like an aircraft.
- These drones used **Russian mobile-telephone networks** to relay their footage back to Ukraine.

6. (b)

In News: Recently, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released its Global Gender Gap Report 2025.

- **Global Gender Gap Report** is published **annually by WEF**, assesses gender parity across various dimensions worldwide.
- It evaluates progress in closing gender gaps in **economic participation, education, health, and political empowerment**.

Global Overview: 2025

- **Overall Gender Parity:** The world has closed 68.5% of the gender gap, a marginal improvement from the previous year.
- **Top Performers: Iceland** remains the **most gender-equal country** for the **16th consecutive year**, achieving over 90% parity.
 - Other top-ranking nations include Finland, Norway and the United Kingdom etc.
 - India slipped to **131st out of 148 countries**, with a parity score of 64.1%.

7. (d)

Context

- On the occasion of the International Day of Yoga on June 21, 2025, the Archaeological Survey of India, in collaboration with the Ministry of Ayush, organised Yoga sessions at 81 centrally protected monuments.

About

- This year marks the **11th International Day of Yoga**.
- **Theme 2025:** “Yoga for One Earth, One Health”, aligning yoga with sustainability and global well-being.
- **The word “Yoga”** is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘yuj’ meaning “to join” or to **unite, symbolizing the union of body and consciousness**.
 - It is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India.

Background of International Day of Yoga

- **On December 11, 2014**, the **United Nations** proclaimed **June 21 as the International Day of Yoga**.
- The draft resolution establishing the International Day of Yoga was **proposed by India and was endorsed by a record 175 member states**.
- The date of **June 21 was chosen as it is the Summer Solstice**, the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
 - This day represents a **symbolic harmony between nature and human wellness** and is important in many cultures.

8. (a)**Context**

- The Indian Navy and the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) are planning to hold joint exercises.
 - The exercise will see participation by **Spanish Navy Ship** ESPS Reina Sofia and **Italian Navy Ship** ITS Antonio Marcegaglia from EUNAVFOR and **ships and aircraft from the Indian Navy**.

Significance of the Collaboration

- The exercise reflects the shared interest in protecting lawful trade and countering non-traditional threats, including piracy, smuggling, and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Do you know?

- The Maiden Indian Navy - European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) **Exercise in Gulf Of Aden** was held in **2021**.
- **EUNAVFOR Operation ATALANTA** is the European Union’s pioneering naval operation, launched in **December 2008**. Its primary area of operation is the Western Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.

9. (d)**Context**

- The **Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS**, also known as **NaMo Bharat**, has become operational in its first phase, significantly enhancing semi-high-speed rail connectivity in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

- The Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) is a **semi-high-speed rail-based commuter transit system** designed to improve regional mobility within NCR.
- It is implemented by the **National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC)**, a joint venture between:
 - Central Government, and
 - State Governments of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

Key Features of RRTS

- **Passenger Control Mode:** The trains are equipped with a unique 'passenger control mode', allowing doors to open only when a button is pressed by passengers.
- **Train Speed:**
 - **Average speed:** 80 km/h and
 - **Maximum speed:** 160 km/h.

10. (d)

In News: World Environment Day is celebrated every year on June 5, is a global initiative to raise awareness and drive action for environmental protection.

Statement 1 is not correct

- First UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, with the **theme of 'Only One Earth' in 1972.**
- It resulted in the adoption of the **Stockholm Declaration** and the **Action Plan for the Human Environment.**
- The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** designated 5th June of every year as **World Environment Day in 1973** to encourage global participation in addressing environmental challenges.

Statement 2 is not correct

- **World Environment Day 2025:**
 - **Host Country:** Republic of Korea
 - **Theme: #BeatPlasticPollution,** emphasizing the urgent need to **tackle plastic waste** and its devastating impact on ecosystems.

11. (b)

In News

- The Union government notified key amendments to the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Rules, 2006, to ease the **establishment of semiconductor and electronics component manufacturing units.**

About Special Economic Zones (SEZs)

- **Definition:** They are designated areas within a country that operate under different economic regulations compared to the rest of the nation.
- **Purpose:** The primary goal of establishing SEZs is to promote rapid economic growth by attracting domestic and foreign investment, boosting exports, and generating employment opportunities.
- **Legalisation:** India was one of the first countries in Asia to adopt the EPZ model in 1965 with the Kandla EPZ. The Special Economic Zones Act was passed in India in 2005 to provide a legal framework.
- **Baba Kalyani Committee (2018):** Formed to review the SEZ policy and make recommendations for its revitalization, including making it WTO-compatible, maximizing land utilization, and integrating it with other government schemes.
- **Proposed DESH Bill (Development of Enterprise and Service Hubs):** Aims to replace the existing SEZ Act.

12. (c)

Context

- The **KARlsruhe TRItium Neutrino (KATRIN) experiment** was held in **Germany** which recently published new findings related to **understanding of the neutrino's mass**.

About the Finding

- After analyzing data from five experimental runs between 2019 and 2021 — involving over 36 million electron events — researchers concluded that the **combined mass of all three known types of neutrinos** is no more than 8.8×10^{-7} times the mass of an electron.

Why does this matter?

- **Neutrinos** are known to have mass — a discovery that won the **2015 Nobel Prize** — but the **Standard Model of physics** predicts them to be massless. Measuring their mass more precisely could uncover new physics beyond our current theories, hinting at unknown forces or particles.
- Other experiments have tried similar feats using astrophysical data or rare nuclear decays, but those rely on assumptions. KATRIN's results, by contrast, are model-independent — based purely on experimental data. That makes this achievement both rare and robust.
- For a particle that barely interacts with matter and travels at near light-speed, weighing the neutrino is like catching a ghost in a hurricane. But with KATRIN's precision, physicists are finally getting closer to solving one of nature's greatest puzzles.

13. (d)

In News

- Donkey prices soar in Pakistan due to China's demand for ejiao.

About Ejiao

- Ejiao is a gelatin derived from stewing and concentrating donkey skin.
- It has long been used in traditional Chinese medicine for its anti-fatigue, immune-boosting, tumor-suppressing, and anti-anemia properties.

14. (c)

In News: The **recent crash of Air India Flight**, *en route to London Gatwick*, in **Ahmedabad** has sent shockwaves through the aviation industry and the nation demanding to address the safety related concerns.

Statement 1 is correct: The **Cape Town Convention and Protocol (2001)** is a landmark international treaty designed to **facilitate asset-based financing and leasing of high-value mobile equipment**— particularly **aircraft, aircraft engines, and helicopters**.

Statement 2 is correct: India has **acceded to the Convention and Protocol** and passed the **Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill (2025)**, giving legal effect to its provisions.

- It is expected to boost aircraft leasing and financing, supporting the country's growing aviation sector.

15. (c)

In News: Recently, the **third** United Nations Oceans Conference (UNOC), held in **Nice, France**, concluded with commitments aimed at **safeguarding the planet's marine ecosystems**.

- **India's Role and Roadmap:** India pledged to ratify the **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement** (aka **High Seas Treaty**) and proposed a **10-point roadmap** for sustainable ocean governance. It includes:
 - Expand Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
 - Scale Up the Blue Economy

- Reduce Marine Pollution
- Promote Offshore Renewable Energy
- Support the Global Plastics Treaty
- Invest in Ocean Science and Technology
- Strengthen Coastal Resilience
- Ensure Equitable Access to Marine Resources
- Pause Deep-Sea Mining
- Foster Global Partnerships

16. (c)**In News**

- Under the Operation Deep Manifest, India's Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) made a major breakthrough by seizing 1,115 metric tonnes of Pakistani-origin goods, illicitly routed via Dubai.

About

- After the Pahalgam Terror Attack, India imposed a total ban on direct or indirect import/transit of Pakistani-origin goods even if routed through third countries like UAE, Singapore, etc.
- Total bans serve as economic deterrents and signal India's zero-tolerance stance.
- The case highlights risks of "grey routing"—where goods of hostile origin are rerouted through benign intermediaries.

