

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

**DECEMBER, 2025**

**NEXT IAS**

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# HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. With reference to Kailasa Temple at Ellora, which of the following statements is/are correct?
  1. It is carved from a single monolithic block of basalt, dedicated to Lord Shiva.
  2. It incorporates elements of Dravida-style temple architecture.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. The Hornbill Festival is celebrated primarily in which of the following states?
  - (a) Manipur
  - (b) Nagaland
  - (c) Mizoram
  - (d) Arunachal Pradesh
3. With reference to Ellora Caves, which of the following statements is/are correct?
  1. They were carved between 600 CE and 1000 CE under the patronage of multiple dynasties.
  2. The site contains Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain caves, reflecting religious coexistence.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. Which of the following correctly defines a manuscript as per India's heritage conservation framework?
  - (a) Any handwritten or printed text of historical value created before 1000 CE
  - (b) A handwritten composition at least 75 years old with scientific, historical or aesthetic value
  - (c) Any literary work preserved in museums irrespective of its age
  - (d) Any text inscribed on stone, metal or clay tablets
5. 'India Divided (1946)' and 'Bapu Ke Kadmon Mein (1954)' are the literary works of;
  - (a) Mahatma Gandhi
  - (b) Jawaharlal Nehru
  - (c) Dr. Rajendra Prasad
  - (d) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
6. Consider the following statements:
  1. Göbekli Tepe is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and oldest known megalithic structures in Upper Mesopotamia.
  2. Chirand in Bihar and Burzahom in Kashmir are the two important mesolithic sites 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
7. Mahad Satyagraha (1927) is a:
  - (a) Movement for women's education in Maharashtra
  - (b) Civil rights movement of Dalits

- (c) Anti-colonial tax protest against the British
- (d) Farmers' movement for land rights

8. He launched the newspaper Mooknayaka (Leader of the Silent) to amplify the voices of the downtrodden. He established the Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha in 1923 to spread education, improve economic conditions, and address societal inequalities. He championed systemic advancements such as the foundation of Employment Exchanges, the establishment of the National Power Grid System, and pivotal projects like the Damodar Valley Project, Hirakud Dam Project, and Sone River Project

Who among the following personalities are described above?

- (a) Mahatma Gandhi
- (b) Dr. B R Ambedkar
- (c) Jawaharlal Nehru
- (d) Jyotiba Phule

9. The concept of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) under the UNESCO 2003 Convention places the greatest emphasis on:
- (a) Preservation of monuments through legal protection
  - (b) Commercialisation of traditional crafts for economic growth
  - (c) Community participation in safeguarding evolving cultural practices
  - (d) Digitisation of heritage for global accessibility

10. With reference to Vande Mataram, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. Vande Mataram was composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and first appeared in the novel Kapalkundala in 1882.
- 2. It was first sung by Rabindranath Tagore at the 1896 Indian National Congress session.

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

11. Which of the following leaders is associated with leading the Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha as a parallel to Gandhi's Dandi March, and was later awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1954?

- (a) K. Kamaraj
- (b) C. Rajagopalachari
- (c) Subramania Bharati
- (d) Dr. Rajendra Prasad

12. Which among the following is included in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity?

- 1. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh
- 2. Kalbelia Dance
- 3. Deepavali
- 4. Durga Puja

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

13. Durgeshanandini (1865), Kapalkundala (1866), and Devi Chaudhurani (1884) are works of which personality?

- (a) Rabindranath Tagore
- (b) Bankim Chandra Chatterjee
- (c) Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay
- (d) Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

14. Consider the following statements regarding the Preah Vihear Temple:

- 1. It is a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Shiva.



2. It is located on the border between Cambodia and Laos.
3. It was recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008.

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   |

15. The Bison Horn Maria dance, recently seen in news, is primarily performed in which among the following regions of India?

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| (a) Chhattisgarh | (b) Arunachal Pradesh |
| (c) Ladakh       | (d) Telangana         |

16. He headed key Constitutional Committees such as the Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, the Committee on Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas, and the Provincial Constitution Committee. He was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1991.

Which of the following personalities has been described above?

- |                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| (a) Dr B.R. Ambedkar         | (b) Jawaharlal Nehru |
| (c) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel | (d) Rajendra Prasad  |

17. He is also known as Suvaran Maran, he ruled the central regions of Tamil Nadu between the 7th and 9th centuries CE. He ruled from Tiruchirappalli for nearly four decades and that his reign was marked by administrative stability, territorial expansion, cultural patronage, and military prowess.

Which among the following rulers have been described above?

- |                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| (a) Mahendravarman I        | (b) Aparajitavarman |
| (c) Perumbidugu Mutharaiyar | (d) Aditya I        |

18. Consider the following statements:

1. Albuquerque seized Goa with help from the local chieftain Timoji in 1510.
2. Goa was the first Indian Territory to be captured by European power and last to get its independence.
3. Operation Vijay led to Goa's liberation along with Daman and Diu.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

19. With reference to the cities recently declared as *holy cities* by the Punjab Assembly, consider the following pairs:

City	Significance
1. Amritsar	Home to the Golden Temple, a major Sikh pilgrimage centre
2. Anandpur Sahib	Site where Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa Panth
3. Talwandi Sabo	Place where the Guru Granth Sahib was compiled

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

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

- 20.** The Lothal site, where the National Maritime Heritage Complex is being developed, is significant because:
- It was a Harappan inland trade centre with no maritime link
  - It contains evidence of the earliest man-made dockyard in the world
  - It served as the capital of the Indus Valley Civilisation
  - It was a Roman trading post during the early Common Era
- 21.** With reference to Chaudhary Charan Singh, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- He was the architect of the Debt Redemption Bill enacted in 1939.
  - He played a key role in framing the Land Holding Act of 1960.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
- 22.** With reference to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC+, consider the following statements:
- OPEC was established in 1960 at the Baghdad Conference by five founding members including Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.
  - Austria is a member of OPEC since the organisation is headquartered in Vienna.
  - OPEC+ was formed in 2016 following the Algiers Accord and the Vienna Agreement, partly in response to falling oil prices due to rising U.S. shale oil production.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3
- 23.** Which of the following best explains Lothal's emergence as a major trading hub of the Harappan Civilization?
- Its location near mineral-rich regions of the Deccan Plateau
  - Its proximity to the Indus River system alone
  - Integration of riverine routes with overseas maritime trade
  - Presence of fortified citadels and defensive structures
- 24.** The archaeological significance of the Boramani circular labyrinth lies in its possible association with:
- Buddhist monastic architecture
  - Harappan urban planning
  - Ancient Indo-Roman trade networks
  - Gupta-period temple rituals
- 25.** With reference to Dhanu Yatra, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:
- It is recognised as the largest open-air theatre in the world.
  - The festival dramatizes episodes from Lord Rama's life.
  - The Central Government has accorded National Festival status to Dhanu Yatra.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 3 only
  - 1 and 2 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3

**26.** With reference to Rakhigarhi, consider the following statements:

1. Rakhigarhi is the largest Harappan site in the Indian subcontinent discovered so far.
2. It is located in the Ghaggar–Hakra river plain in present-day Haryana.
3. The site was first excavated by Sir Mortimer Wheeler.

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   |

**27.** With reference to the Harappan Civilization, consider the following statements:

1. The Harappan Civilization is regarded as one of the oldest civilizations of the world, along with those of Egypt and Mesopotamia.
2. The Harappan Civilization is classified as a Bronze Age civilization due to the extensive use of copper-based alloys.
3. Iron tools were widely used during the mature phase of the Harappan Civilization.

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   |

**28.** Veer Baal Diwas pays tribute to which of the following personalities?

- (a) Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh
- (b) Sahibzada Baba Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Baba Fateh Singh
- (c) Banda Singh Bahadur and Mata Gujri
- (d) Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh

**29.** With reference to the Quality Council of India (QCI), consider the following statements:

1. It is a for-profit organisation registered under the Companies Act, 2013.
2. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is the nodal department for matters related to QCI.

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 |

**30.** In which of the following Indian states is the Makaravilakku Festival celebrated?

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| (a) Telangana | (b) Tamil Nadu |
| (c) Kerala    | (d) Odisha     |

**31.** With reference to the Arya Samaj, consider the following statements:

1. Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1875 as a Hindu reformist movement.
2. It promoted inter-caste and interfaith marriages and allowed conversions through a “shuddhi” (purification) ritual.

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 |

## EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

**Context**

- Scottish historian William Dalrymple has urged the Maharashtra government to bring greater visibility to the lesser-known heritage sites around the Ellora Caves.

**About**

- Located in **Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Maharashtra**, the Ellora Caves are among India's first UNESCO World Heritage sites.
- The cave complex was carved between **600 CE and 1000 CE**, spanning the rule of the **Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, and Yadavas**.
- **Religious Pluralism:** The complex comprises **34 major caves**, 12 Buddhist, 17 Hindu, and 5 Jain, demonstrating a unique period of interreligious harmony and artistic exchange.

**Key Architectural Features**

- **Kailasa Temple (Cave 16):** It is carved from a **single monolithic basalt rock**, dedicated to the Hindu god Lord Shiva.
- Its design replicates Mount Kailash, the abode of Lord Shiva, and integrates complex **Dravida-style architecture**, multi-level mandapas, sculptural panels, and detailed narrative friezes.

2. (b)

**In News:** The 26th edition of Nagaland's famed Hornbill Festival, known as the "Festival of Festivals," began at the Naga Heritage Village in Kisama, Kohima, coinciding with the state's Statehood Day (December 1st).

**The Hornbill Festival**

- It is held annually in the first week of December at Kisama near Kohima, and is a vibrant cultural showcase of all Naga tribes.
- It was conceived in 2000 to promote unity and preserve ethnic heritage.
- It highlights both traditional and contemporary Naga culture through music, crafts, cuisine, and folklore.
- Its venue, the Naga Heritage Village, was created to safeguard cultural traditions and boost tourism, and features seventeen indigenous Morungs (youth dormitories), each representing a distinct tribe.

3. (c)

**Context**

- Scottish historian William Dalrymple has urged the Maharashtra government to bring greater visibility to the lesser-known heritage sites around the Ellora Caves.

**About**

- Located in **Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Maharashtra**, the Ellora Caves are among India's first UNESCO World Heritage sites.
- The cave complex was carved between **600 CE and 1000 CE**, spanning the rule of the **Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, and Yadavas**.
- **Religious Pluralism:** The complex comprises **34 major caves**, 12 Buddhist, 17 Hindu, and 5 Jain, demonstrating a unique period of interreligious harmony and artistic exchange.

4. (b)

**Option b is correct:** According to the National Mission for Manuscripts (renamed Gyan Bharatam Mission), a manuscript is defined as a handwritten composition on materials like paper, bark, cloth, metal, or palm leaf that is at least 75 years old and holds significant scientific, historical, or aesthetic value. This definition focuses on age and intangible cultural importance rather than printed status, age threshold like 1000 CE, or preservation location. Manuscripts include handwritten texts, excluding printed works or inscriptions on hard surfaces like stone or metal tablets.

5. (c)

**Context:** The President of India, paid tributes to Dr Rajendra Prasad, the **first President of India**, on his birth anniversary.

#### Early Life and Education

- **Birth:** He was born in **1884** in the Siwan district of **Bihar**.
- **Education:** He joined Presidency College, Calcutta, where he pursued his undergraduate studies. In **1915**, he completed his **Master of Law (LLM)** with Honours.

#### Literary Contributions

- He documented his experiences and political insights in several influential works:
  - Satyagraha at Champaran (1922)
  - India Divided (1946)
  - Atmakatha (1946)
  - Mahatma Gandhi and Bihar, Some Reminiscences (1949)
  - Bapu Ke Kadmon Mein (1954).

6. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Göbekli Tepe is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and oldest known **megalithic structures in Upper Mesopotamia**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Burzahom (Kashmir) and Chirand (Bihar) are two important **Neolithic archaeological sites not mesolithic**.

7. (b)

**In News:** Mahad marks the birthplace of one of **India's first human rights movements** initiated by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

#### About Mahad Satyagraha (1927)

- Mahad Satyagraha, launched by **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on 20 March 1927 at Chavdar Tale**, Mahad (Maharashtra), was the **first major civil rights movement of Dalits**.
- Its objective was to **secure the right of untouchables** to access **public drinking water denied due to caste discrimination**.
- Ambedkar, along with key associates such as Anandrao Chitre, Bapu Sahastrabuddhe, Sambhaji Gaikwad and Ramchandra More, led thousands to **drink water from the public tank**, asserting that **essential resources cannot be monopolised by upper castes**.
- The movement conveyed a powerful ideological message that **water is a basic human right, not a caste privilege**, challenging the social exclusion embedded in untouchability.
- On 25 December 1927, Ambedkar publicly **burned the Manusmriti**, symbolically rejecting caste-based hierarchies.
- In 1937, the **Bombay High Court affirmed that the tank was public, validating the satyagraha**.

## 8. (b)

**In News :** President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tributes to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on Mahaparinirvan Diwas at the Parliament complex in New Delhi.

**Mahaparinirvan Diwas** is observed annually on December 6 to commemorate the death anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, fondly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. He launched the newspaper **Mooknayaka (Leader of the Silent)** to amplify the voices of the downtrodden.

- He established the **Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha (Outcastes Welfare Association)** in **1923** to spread education, improve economic conditions, and address societal inequalities.
- His leadership in historic movements such as the **Mahad March (1927)** for access to public water and the temple entry movement at **Kalaram Temple (1930)** challenged caste hierarchies and priestly dominance.
- Dr. B R Ambedkar's pivotal role in the **Poona Pact of 1932**, which replaced separate electorates with reserved seats for Dalits, marked a turning point in India's fight for social justice.
- His ideas were instrumental in framing the guidelines for the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934, and influencing the creation of the RBI itself.
- He was one of the founders of **Employment Exchanges** in our country.
- He championed systemic advancements such as the foundation of Employment Exchanges, the establishment of the **National Power Grid System**, and pivotal projects like the **Damodar Valley Project, Hirakud Dam Project**, and **Sone River Project**, showcasing his foresight in infrastructure and resource management.

## 9. (c)

**Context**

- India is hosting the 20th session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2025 in Red Fort complex, New Delhi.
  - This will be the **first time** that India hosts the ICH Committee session and **the Ministry of Culture and Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA)** are the nodal agencies for hosting the Session.

**About the Intangible cultural heritage**

- **Intangible cultural heritage**, includes the practices, knowledge, expressions, objects, and spaces that communities see as part of their cultural identity.
  - Passed down over generations, this heritage evolves, strengthening cultural identity and appreciation of diversity.
- **Historical Background:** For the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO adopted the **2003 Convention** during its 32nd General Conference in Paris.
  - India ratified the convention in **2005**.

## 10. (b)

**Context**

- India is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its national song, Vande Mataram.

**Birth of Vande Mataram**

- Vande Mataram was composed by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee** in Sanskrit and first appeared in the novel **Anandamath** in **1882**.
  - Anandamath is set against the backdrop of the 1769–73 **Bengal famine** and the **Sanyasi Rebellion**.



- First sung by **Rabindranath Tagore** at the **1896 Indian National Congress** session gave it national exposure.
- **The song celebrates** the **motherland** as an embodiment of **strength, prosperity, and divinity** and provided a poetic voice to India's awakening national consciousness.

### 11. (b)

**In News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to **C. Rajagopalachari** popularly known as **Rajaji** on his birth **anniversary (10th December)**.

#### C. Rajagopalachari

- **Early Life and Education:**
  - He was a close associate of **Mahatma Gandhi**.
  - Completed Bachelor of Law (1899) and began practicing law in Salem.
  - Early political consciousness was shaped by **Curzon's Partition of Bengal (1905)** and **Tilak's call for Swaraj**.
- **Contributions to Freedom's Struggle:**
  - He left his legal career in **1919** and went on to play a leading role in several major movements, including the protests against the Rowlatt Act, the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Vaikom Satyagraha, and the Civil Disobedience Movement.
  - Led the **Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha (1930)** in the Madras region, parallel to Gandhi's Dandi March.
  - He was imprisoned five times between 1912 and 1941 for his role in the freedom struggle.
  - After Quit India Movement, **published "The Way Out"**, proposing the C. R. Formula to resolve the constitutional deadlock with the Muslim League over Pakistan.
- **Post-Independence Contributions:**
  - Appointed Governor of West Bengal and later became the first Indian Governor-General of India (1947–1950) after independence.
  - Worked to protect India's secular fabric and integrate Muslims into the national mainstream.
  - Served as Union Home Minister after Sardar Patel's death; contributed to national integration & early planning processes, including the First Five-Year Plan.
- **Legacy:**
  - He was awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1954 for his contributions to politics, literature and public service.

### 12. (a)

#### Context

- Deepavali has been inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during the 20th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee, held in New Delhi.

#### About Deepavali

- Deepavali, also known as Diwali, is celebrated on **Kartik Amaavasya**, which typically falls in October or November.
  - Residences, thoroughfares, and temples are **illuminated with numerous oil lamps**.
- The festival opens with **Dhanteras**, when families purchase metalware or essentials as symbols of prosperity.

- It is followed by **Naraka Chaturdashi**.
- **The third day** is the highlight of Deepavali- the **sacred Lakshmi-Ganesha Puja**.

#### Other India's Intangible Cultural Heritage Inscribed by UNESCO

- To date, **16 Indian elements** have been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List.
  - Kutiyattam, Mudi yettu, Chhau, Vedic chanting, **Buddhist chanting in Ladakh**, Ramlila, Ramman, Sankirtana, metalcraft of the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, **the Kalbelia community's dynamic music and dance**, Kumbh Mela, Yoga, **Durga Puja**, and Garba, Novruz and **Deepavali**.

#### 13. (b)

**Context:** India is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its national song, Vande Mataram.

#### Historical Background

- Vande Mataram was composed by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee** in Sanskrit and first appeared in the novel **Anandamath** in **1882**.
  - The novel is set against the backdrop of the **Bengal famine of 1769–73** and the **Sanyasi Rebellion**, reflecting anti-colonial sentiment and the rise of early nationalist consciousness.

#### About Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

- Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was one of the architects of modern Indian literature.
- As a distinguished novelist, poet, and essayist, his contributions significantly influenced the development of modern Bengali prose and the articulation of an emerging Indian nationalism.
- **Other works:** Durgeshanandini (1865), Kapalkundala (1866), and Devi Chaudhurani (1884).

#### 14. (c)

**Statement 1 correct:** The temple honors Shiva as Sikhareshvara/Bhadresvara, exemplifying Angkorian architecture with five gopurams.

**Statement 2 not correct:** It lies on the Cambodia-Thailand border (Choam Khsant District, Preah Vihear Province), not Laos; ICJ's 1962 ruling awarded it to Cambodia amid Thai disputes.

**Statement 3 is correct:** UNESCO inscribed it as a World Heritage Site on July 7, 2008.

#### 15. (a)

#### Context

- The traditional Bison Horn Maria dance was performed during a village festival at Judiya Para in Bastar, Chhattisgarh.

#### About

- **Performed by:** Dandami Madia (Maria /Gaur Maria) tribes of **Bastar, Chhattisgarh**.
  - **Both men and women** perform the dance, during village festivals and major community occasions.
- **Costumes:** Male dancers wear **horn-shaped headgear** made of bamboo, decorated with bison horns, feathers, shells and bright cloth strips.
  - Women wear **brass chaplets and heavy necklaces**.
- **Instruments:** Log drums slung around the neck provide rhythmic beats.
- **Performance:** Men mimic bison charging and hunting, while women dance alongside, often with sticks, in a synchronized, ritualistic way.
- **Ritual chants** invoke deities such as **Budhadev and Danteshwari Mai**, reinforcing spiritual continuity.





16. (c)

**Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Iron Man of India**, on his **75th death anniversary** (15 December 1950).

**About**

- Born on October 31, 1875, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel served as independent India's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister.
- He is widely regarded as the architect of India's national integration and a key force behind the establishment of modern civil services, including the **Indian Administrative Service (IAS)**.
- He headed various **Constitutional Committees**, such as Advisory Committee on Fundamental Rights, Committee on Minorities and Tribal and Excluded Areas, Provincial Constitution Committee.
- He was posthumously honoured with the **Bharat Ratna**, the highest civilian award in the country in 1991.

17. (c)

A commemorative postage stamp in honour of the **king Perumbidugu Mutharaiyar II (Suvaran Maran)** was released by Vice President C P Radhakrishnan.

- **Perumbidugu Mutharaiyar (705 AD-745 AD)**, also known as **Suvaran Maran**, was a ruler of the **Mutharaiyar lineage**, feudatories of the **Pallavas**.
  - He belonged to the illustrious **Mutharaiyar dynasty**, which ruled the central regions of Tamil Nadu between the **7th and 9th centuries CE**.
- He ruled from **Tiruchirappalli** for nearly four decades and that his reign was marked by administrative stability, territorial expansion, cultural patronage, and military prowess.
- Perumbidugu Mutharaiyar is believed to have fought bravely in several battles alongside the **Pallava king Nandivarman**, and is remembered as a **great administrator**.
- **Religious Policies:** The Pallava reign saw a religious revivalism of Hinduism amid the dominance of Jainism and Buddhism.
  - As their feudatories, the **Mutharaiyars were great temple builders**.

18. (d)

**All three statements are correct: First capture (1510):** Albuquerque seized Goa with help from the local chieftain Timoji.

- **Loss of Goa:** Adil Shah's forces recaptured Goa during the monsoon.
- **Final conquest (November 1510):** Albuquerque returned with reinforcements and decisively defeated Bijapur forces.
- **Goa** was the first Indian Territory to be captured by European power and last to get its independence.

- Operation Vijay was launched by the **Indian Armed Forces** to **annex Goa and amalgamate it with the rest of India** during Jawaharlal Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister.
- **Outcome:** Portuguese forces surrendered on 19 December 1961, leading to Goa's liberation along with Daman and Diu.
- **On 30 May 1987**, the Union Territory was split, and Goa was made India's twenty-fifth state, with Daman and Diu remaining Union Territories.

#### 19. (d)

**Context:** The Punjab Assembly unanimously passed a resolution declaring Amritsar, Anandpur Sahib, Talwandi Sabo as holy cities.

##### Why these cities?

- Amritsar is home to the Golden Temple, one of the holiest shrines of Sikhism and a global pilgrimage centre.
- **Anandpur Sahib** is where **Guru Gobind Singh founded the Khalsa Panth in 1699**, shaping Sikh identity.
- **Talwandi Sabo**, also known as **Damdama Sahib**, is where the **Guru Granth Sahib was compiled**, earning it the title "*Guru ki Kashi*".

#### 20. (b)

Lothal, located in Gujarat's Dholka district, stands as a key Harappan site renowned for its advanced maritime infrastructure, including a brick-lined dockyard measuring about 215m x 37m connected to the ancient Sabarmati River course. Excavations by archaeologist S.R. Rao (1955-60) uncovered marine fossils, gypsum crystals, stone anchors, and Persian Gulf seals, confirming its role as the world's earliest known artificial dock for handling tidal trade ships.

#### 21. (c)

##### Context

- PM Modi paid tributes to former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna Chaudhary Charan Singh on his birth anniversary.

##### About

- **Early life:** Charan Singh was born in **1902** at Noorpur in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh in a peasant family.
- **Graduation:** He graduated in science in **1923**, and did his post-graduation from **Agra University in 1925**. Also trained in law, he set up practice at Ghaziabad.
  - He shifted to Meerut in **1929** and later joined the Congress.
- **Political Career:** He was first elected to the **U.P. Legislative Assembly in 1937** from **Chhaprauli**, and represented the constituency in **1946, 1952, 1962 and 1967**.
  - Known for his integrity, discipline, and pragmatism, he was the architect of major land reforms, including the **Debt Redemption Bill (1939)** and the **Land Holding Act (1960)**.
  - He served as India's fifth Prime Minister from 1979 to 1980 and was a strong advocate for farmers' rights.
  - He served as the **fifth Prime Minister of India** from **July 1979 to January 1980**.
- **Legacy:** A champion of farmers and social justice, he authored influential works on agrarian reforms, leaving a lasting legacy in rural India.
  - **His birth anniversary** has been celebrated as **Kisan Diwas since 2001** in his honor.

- **Literary Contribution:** Authored influential works on agrarian and rural reforms, including;
  - Abolition of Zamindari
  - Co-operative Farming X-rayed
  - India's Poverty and Its Solution
  - Peasant Proprietorship or Land to the Workers
  - Prevention of Division of Holdings Below a Certain Minimum.

## 22. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** is an intergovernmental organisation established in **1960** at the **Baghdad Conference** by **Saudi Arabia, Iran, Venezuela, Kuwait and Iraq**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** It is **headquartered** in Vienna, Austria, although **Austria is not an OPEC member state**.

**Statement 3 is correct:** **OPEC+ has 22 members**, made up of **10 major oil producing countries** (Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Brunei, Bahrain, Mexico, Oman, South Sudan, Sudan and Malaysia), **along with the 12 OPEC members**.

- The **OPEC+ was formed in 2016** after the adoption of the '**Algiers Accord**' by OPEC countries in 2016 and signing of the '**Vienna Agreement**' in 2016 between OPEC and other major oil exporting countries.
- The move was largely a response to sharply falling oil prices caused by a surge in U.S. shale oil production.

## 23. (c)

### Context

- India and the Netherlands have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperation in maritime heritage, marking a step toward the development of the **National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC)** at Lothal, Gujarat.

### Historical Significance of Lothal

- Lothal, meaning "**the mound of the dead**," dates back to around **2400 BCE**.
- It was one of the prominent urban centres of the **Harappan (Indus Valley) Civilization**.
- Lothal emerged as a thriving **port city and trading hub**, facilitating inland and overseas commerce.
- **Major Archaeological Features;**
  - Discovery of the **world's oldest known artificial dockyard**, over **5,000 years** old.
  - It was linked to an ancient course of the Sabarmati River, which enabled **inland riverine trade** with the Harappan hinterland.
  - Evidence of advanced urban planning, including, an acropolis and a lower town, warehouses and a bead-manufacturing factory.

## 24. (c)

The Boramani circular labyrinth, discovered in the grasslands of Solapur district, Maharashtra, dates back nearly 2,000 years to the Satavahana period.

Archaeologists link its unique design—featuring 15 concentric stone circuits resembling motifs on ancient Roman coins—to navigational or symbolic markers used by Roman merchants traveling inland from India's western coast during active Indo-Roman trade.

25. (a)

**In News:** Recently, 'Dhanu Yatra' was inaugurated at Bargarh in Odisha.

#### Dhanu Yatra

- It is the largest open-air theatre in the world and It attracts thousands of visitors from across Odisha and beyond.
- It is the eleven-day annual cultural spectacle that brings mythology, tradition and performance together in a unique celebration .
- It transforms the entire town into the mythical city of Mathura and dramatizes episodes from **Lord Krishna's life**, from his birth to the death of King Kansa.
- The Central Government has accorded **National Festival status** to 'Dhanu Yatra'.

26. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct: Rakhigarhi:** It is the largest Harappan site in the Indian Subcontinent.

- It is situated in the Hisar district of Haryana and is located in the Ghaggar-Hakra river plain.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The site was first excavated by Amarendra Nath of ASI.

27. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** The Harappan civilization is believed to be **one of the oldest world civilizations** together with Egypt and Mesopotamia.

- It was developed along the **river Indus** and for that reason it is also known as the **Indus Valley Civilization**.
- The Harappan civilization is identified as a **Bronze-age civilization** because many objects have been found that are made up of **copper based alloys**.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Iron was unknown to the **Harappans**, iron use began in India during the later Vedic/Post-Harappan period.

28. (b)

The Prime Minister addressed the national programme marking 'Veer Baal Diwas' at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

#### Veer Bal Diwas

- **Historical linkages:** Sahibzada Zorawar Singh Ji and Sahibzada Fateh Singh Ji, the two youngest sons of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru, were bricked alive and martyred at Sirhind (present-day Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab) on December 26, 1704 for refusing to abandon their faith under coercion.
  - **Veer Bal Diwas** is observed on December 26 every year in remembrance of the martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh ji's sons **Sahibzada Zorawar Singh ji and Sahibzada Fateh Singh ji**.
- The day honour the bravery of the two young heroes of the country, and help inculcate the spirit of exemplary courage and sacrifice in the youth of today.
  - The martyrdom of the Sahibzadas symbolizes faith, courage, and moral strength, reflecting the heritage and bravery of the Sikh Gurus.

29. (b)

**In News:** The Quality Council of India(QCI) announced a set of next-generation quality reforms on the eve of Sushasan Divas 2025.

#### Quality Council of India (QCI)

- It was established as a National body for Accreditation on recommendations of the Expert Mission of the EU after consultations in the Inter-ministerial Task Force, Committee of Secretaries and Group of Ministers through a Cabinet decision in 1996.

- It is a non-profit organization registered under the **Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860**.
- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry was designated as the nodal point for all matters connected with quality and QCI to structure and help implement the Cabinet decision.

30. (c)

**Context**

- The Sabarimala Ayyappa temple will reopen on 30 December for the Makaravilakku festival, marking the second phase of the annual pilgrimage season,

**About Makaravilakku Festival**

- Makara Vilakku is one of **Kerala's most sacred festivals**, celebrated annually at the **Sabarimala Ayyappa Temple**.
  - It is observed on the first day of **Makara Masam in the Malayalam calendar**, coinciding with Makara Sankranti.
- On this divine day, devotees gather to witness two powerful events:
  - **Makara Jyoti**: The bright celestial star (Sirius) appearing in the eastern sky.
  - **Makara Vilakku**: The sacred light that appears thrice from the forests of Ponnambalamedu.
- These two sightings are considered spiritually transformative, symbolizing the presence, blessings, and grace of Lord Ayyappa.

31. (d)

**Both the statements are correct: Arya Samaj was founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1875 as a Hindu reformist movement.**

- It promoted **inter-caste and interfaith marriages** and allowed conversions through a “**shuddhi**” (purification) ritual.
- **The Arya Marriage Validation Act, 1937** legally recognised such marriages, even between different castes or religions, if both parties declared themselves Arya Samajis.

# ECONOMY

1. Which of the following reasons best describes the need for frequent and evenly distributed rainfall for tea cultivation?
- (a) Prevents pest infestation
  - (b) Enhances soil alkalinity
  - (c) Ensures continuous growth of tender leaves
  - (d) Reduces labour requirements

2. Terms like '*crawl-like arrangement*', '*floating*' and '*stabilised*' are sometimes appeared in the news, primarily in the context of:
- (a) Monetary policy instruments
  - (b) Types of inflation indices
  - (c) Exchange rate regimes
  - (d) Fiscal deficit management

3. Consider the following statements about sugarcane cultivation in India:
- 1. It is mainly grown in the subtropical north and tropical south, with top producers being Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat.
  - 2. It thrives at 15°C–25°C, requires 50–100 cm rainfall, and prefers well-drained fertile soil with a cold, dry season during ripening.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. With reference to Masala Bonds, consider the following statements:
- 1. They are rupee-denominated bonds issued by Indian entities in overseas markets.
  - 2. They protect the investor from currency fluctuation risk.
  - 3. Only multilateral institutions like the World Bank and IFC can issue Masala Bonds.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 1 and 2 only
  - (c) 2 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3
5. With reference to Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs), consider the following statements:
- 1. The concept of D-SIBs was introduced in India after the 2008 Global Financial Crisis.
  - 2. D-SIBs are required to maintain additional Common Equity Tier-1 (CET-1) capital depending on the bucket they are placed in.
  - 3. The Reserve Bank of India identifies D-SIBs based on parameters such as size, interconnectedness, substitutability, and complexity.

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



6. With reference to the '*India's Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)*', consider the following statements:
1. It allows creditors or debtors to initiate insolvency proceedings.
  2. It does not guarantee full recovery.
  3. Resolution Professional (RP) takes over the company's operations during the resolution process.

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   |
7. India's first-ever scent trademark was granted for which of the following products?
- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| (a) Tyres infused with a rose scent | (b) A fragrance-based soap formulation  |
| (c) A commercial perfume blend      | (d) A naturally extracted essential oil |

8. Consider the following Acts;

1. The Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934
2. The Banking Regulation Act, 1949
3. The State Bank of India Act, 1955
4. Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970 and 1980.

How many of the above are amended by the Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025?

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| (a) 1, 2, 3 and 4 | (b) 1, 2 and 4 only |
| (c) 3, and 4 only | (d) 1, 3 and 4 only |
9. The term "Goldilocks Economy" is best used to describe which of the following economic conditions?
- (a) An economy with high growth, high inflation, and rising interest rates
  - (b) An economy with moderate growth, low inflation, and stable interest rates
  - (c) An economy experiencing deflation but maintaining high employment
  - (d) An economy undergoing rapid technological disruption with stagnant wages
10. Consider the following statements about Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs):
1. InvITs invest primarily in equity shares of infrastructure companies, similar to traditional mutual funds.
  2. InvITs are governed by the SEBI (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) Regulations, 2014.

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 '*Current Account*', consider the following statements:
1. Its deficit can reflect strong domestic demand and investment opportunities.
  2. A country can maintain or even grow reserves if capital inflows exceed the current account deficit.

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.** The term “Hindu Rate of Growth” refers to which of the following?
- High GDP growth during economic liberalisation
  - India’s low and stagnant growth rate in the decades after Independence
  - Growth rate of Hindu-majority states
  - Economic growth driven by traditional sectors
- 13.** Which of the following states together contribute over 75% of India’s oilseed output?
- Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra
  - Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, and Haryana
  - Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana
  - Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh
- 14.** Consider the following statements:
- China is the world’s largest exporter of rice due to its surplus production.
  - Thailand and Vietnam are India’s main competitors in the global rice export market.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
- 15.** Consider the following statements regarding Domestic Household Savings in India:
- Household saving refers to the difference between a household’s net disposable income and its total consumption expenditure, including taxes and debt repayments.
  - Household savings constitute around 1/4th of total domestic savings in India.
  - Domestic household savings help reduce dependence on volatile foreign capital flows.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
  - 2 and 3 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3
- 16.** Consider the following statements:
- Makhana is an aquatic crop and is mainly grown in tropical and subtropical regions.
  - In 2022, ‘Mithila Makhana’ was conferred a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
- 17.** With reference to the Minimum Support Price (MSP) system in India, consider the following statements:
- MSP is a form of market intervention by the Government to protect agricultural producers against sharp falls in farm prices.
  - MSPs are announced after the harvest season based on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2



- 18.** Ponduru Khadi, recently awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, originates from which of the following regions?
- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| (a) Andhra Pradesh | (b) Tamil Nadu |
| (c) Telangana      | (d) Odisha     |

- 19.** With reference to Trade Deficit and Balance of Trade (BoT), consider the following statements:
1. A trade deficit occurs when the total value of imports exceeds the total value of exports, resulting in a negative Balance of Trade.
  2. A country running a merchandise trade deficit cannot simultaneously have a services trade surplus.

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.** The primary economic rationale behind the existence of a commodity derivatives market is to;
- (a) Ensure government control over commodity prices
  - (b) Eliminate volatility in commodity prices
  - (c) Enable efficient price discovery and transfer of price risk
  - (d) Facilitate physical exchange of commodities across regions

- 21.** With reference to the calculation and composition of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), consider the following statements:
1. India's GDP is estimated using both the factor cost method and the expenditure method.
  2. The factor cost method assesses economic performance across eight sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, and financial services.
  3. The services sector is the largest contributor to India's GDP, followed by agriculture and then industry.

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.** With reference to the regulation and supervision of RRBs, consider the following statements:
1. RRBs are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
  2. NABARD plays a supervisory role over RRBs.
  3. RRBs are included under the purview of the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| (a) 1 and 2 only | (b) 2 and 3 only |
| (c) 1, 2 and 3   | (d) 1 only       |
- 23.** With reference to the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC), consider the following statements:
1. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India.
  2. It operates under the provisions of the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961.
  3. The insurance premium for deposit insurance is paid by depositors directly to DICGC.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**24.** Which of the following Activities Permitted under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in India ?

1. Eradicating hunger, poverty and malnutrition
2. Ensuring environmental sustainability and ecological balance
3. Protection of national heritage, art and culture
4. Measures for the benefit of armed forces veterans and war widows

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**25.** The GI-tagged *Indi Lime*, recently exported to Oman, is primarily associated with which Indian State?

- (a) Maharashtra (b) Telangana  
(c) Karnataka (d) Andhra Pradesh

**26.** With reference to the '*Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016*', consider the following statements:

1. It allows debtors to retain control of their company during insolvency proceedings.
2. It applies only to companies and not to individuals or partnerships.
3. Only financial creditors can initiate insolvency proceedings under the IBC.

Which of the above statements are *not* correct?

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

**27.** India has a Free Trade Agreement with which of the following countries?

1. United Kingdom
2. United Arab Emirates
3. Oman
4. Australia

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**28.** With reference to India's domestic aviation market, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. India is the third-largest domestic aviation market in the world.
2. IndiGo holds more than 90% of the domestic aviation market of India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**29.** With reference to the Quality Council of India (QCI), consider the following statements:

1. It is a for-profit organisation registered under the Companies Act, 2013.
2. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is the nodal department for matters related to QCI.

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 |

**30.** With reference to the Narasapuram (Narsapur) lace craft, consider the following statements:

1. It originated in the 19th century and was introduced to local women by Christian missionaries.
2. It is also known as crochet craft and uses silk threads woven on handlooms.
3. The craft is characterised by intricate floral, geometric, and paisley patterns inspired by nature.
4. It has received both the Geographical Indication (GI) tag and recognition under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**31.** With reference to the Incense Sticks (Agarbatti) Industry in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. India is the world's largest producer and exporter of Incense Sticks.
2. Recently the first Indian Standard exclusively for Incense Sticks has been notified by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

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.** With reference to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), consider the following statements:

1. It is published monthly by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
2. The IIP measures short-term changes in the volume of production of industrial products in the economy.
3. Manufacturing has the highest weight in IIP, followed by Mining and Electricity.
4. The base year of the current IIP series is 2015–16.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**33.** With reference to the Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) method in agriculture, consider the following statements:

1. It involves continuous flooding of paddy fields throughout the crop cycle.
2. It helps in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases from rice cultivation.
3. It can lead to savings in irrigation water without significantly reducing yield.

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   |

## EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

**Context**

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) issued a clarification to address misleading labelling of beverages marketed as tea.

**Regulatory Framework**

- As per **Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011**, tea must originate from **Camellia sinensis**.
- **Labelling and Display Regulations, 2020** require the food name to reflect its true nature.
- Use of the word 'tea' for other products amounts to misbranding under the **FSS Act, 2006**.

**Geographical Condition for Tea production**

- The tea plant grows well in **tropical and subtropical** climates. Tea bushes require a **warm and moist frost-free climate** all through the year.
- **Soil:** It requires deep and fertile well-drained soil, rich in humus and organic matter.
- **Temperature:** The average annual temperature for tea plants to grow well is in the range of **15-23°C**.
- **Precipitation:** The rainfall needed is between **150-200 cm**. Frequent showers evenly distributed over the year ensure **continuous growth of tender leaves**.
- **Major tea producing states** are Assam, hills of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts in West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
  - Apart from these, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura are also tea-producing states in the country.

2. (c)

**In News:** Recent rupee's depreciation against major currencies like the dollar, euro, and yen signals global volatility and deeper structural concerns.

- Terms such as '*crawl-like arrangement*', '*floating*' and '*stabilised*' describe **different exchange-rate regimes used by countries** to manage the value of their currencies.
- They indicate how tightly a currency is pegged, how often it is adjusted, or how freely it moves in the market.
  - **Floating:** currency value determined by market forces;
  - **Stabilised:** maintained within a narrow band;
  - **Crawl-like:** adjusted gradually, often to avoid sudden shocks.

3. (a)

**Context:** A recent study, "The genomic footprints of wild *Saccharum* species trace domestication, diversification, and modern breeding of sugarcane", analysed **the genomes of 390 sugarcane varieties** from **Australia, Brazil, China, France, French Polynesia, India, Japan, and the US**.

**Sugarcane Production in India**

- About 4,400 lakh tonnes of sugarcane were produced in 2024-2025, particularly **across 13 States**.
- In India, sugarcane is mainly grown in two regions: the subtropical north and the tropical south.
  - The northern belt includes Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana and Punjab, while the southern belt covers Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

- **The top five States** by production in 2018-2019 to 2023-2024 were Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Gujarat.
- India has been the **largest consumer and second largest producer** of sugar in the world.

#### Climatic Conditions

- The sugarcane prospers at temperatures between 20°C and 35°C and requires 75 to 150 cm of rain annually.
- Prefers fertile and well-drained soils and needs a lot of sunlight.
- A cold, dry season during ripening and harvesting is ideal.

#### 4. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Masala Bonds are indeed rupee-denominated bonds issued outside India by Indian entities to raise funds from overseas investors.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** In Masala Bonds, the currency (exchange rate) risk is borne by the foreign investor, not the Indian issuer, because the bonds are denominated in rupees while the investor typically invests in a foreign currency.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Masala Bonds can be issued by Indian companies, banks and other eligible Indian entities, and not only by multilateral institutions; IFC was just an early/first prominent issuer.

#### 5. (d)

##### About D-SIBs

- D-SIBs are banks considered **“too big to fail.”**
- Their collapse can trigger system-wide financial instability, so they are placed under special regulation and higher supervision.
- Concept introduced globally after the **2008 Global Financial Crisis**.
- **Based on Basel-III guidelines**, RBI released the D-SIB framework in 2014, it identifies banks based on: Size (Total exposures), interconnectedness, substitutability (difficulty of replacing services) & complexity.
- Banks are placed in different buckets (0 to 4) depending on systemic importance.
- Higher the bucket means higher **additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET-1) capital requirement**.

#### 6. (d)

**In News:** Recently, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance, in its report *‘Review of Working of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and Emerging Issues’*, warned that **systemic inefficiencies and structural delays** are undermining **India’s Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)** effectiveness.

**Statement 1 is correct:** A **Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP)** can be initiated when a corporate debtor defaults on loan repayments.

- Either the **creditor or debtor can file an application** before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
- **Minimum Default Limit:** ₹1 crore (increased from ₹1 lakh in 2020 due to the pandemic).
- **Timeline:** NCLT must admit or reject the application within 14 days.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The IBC does not guarantee full recovery. Creditors often face significant haircuts, with average recoveries around 30–40%.

- Creditors face massive losses in many cases. Average **haircut** is **80%** of claims in over **70%** of cases.

- Example: **Videocon Group** resolution saw a **95.3% haircut**, meaning creditors recovered less than 5% of their dues.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Upon admission of a case, the management is suspended and a Resolution Professional (RP) takes over the company's operations during the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP).

### 7. (a)

**Context:** India has just registered its first-ever scent trademark, and it literally smells like roses on a tyre.

#### About

- Sumitomo Rubber Industries created tyres with a rose fragrance, and this scent is now legally protected as their brand identity.
- To make this possible, the fragrance was scientifically represented as a **vector in a 7-dimensional space**, giving it a unique and identifiable digital signature.
- Sumitomo's application was registered under **Class 12**, which includes vehicles and their parts, within the **Nice Classification** system, created under the **Nice Agreement of 1957**.
- This marks a moment where **scientific innovation and legal interpretation** come together to expand the boundaries of intellectual property in India.
- India recognised traditional trademarks such as logos and symbols for decades, and in 2008 it accepted its first **sound trademark**—Yahoo's iconic yodel.
- Now, the acceptance of a **smell mark** signals a *new era* of **non-traditional trademarks** and a progressive shift in Indian IP jurisprudence.

### 8. (a)

#### Context

- India's banking sector has undergone a remarkable transformation, and Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025 is a step towards strengthening governance standards in the banking sector.

#### Banking Laws (Amendment) Act, 2025

- It contains a total of **19 amendments** across **five legislations**;
  - The Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934,
  - Banking Regulation Act, 1949,
  - State Bank of India Act, 1955 and
  - Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970 and 1980.

### 9. (b)

A "Goldilocks economy" is described as an economy that is "not too hot, not too cold" – it has steady or moderate economic growth, low and stable inflation, and generally low/stable unemployment, which allows central banks to keep interest rates relatively stable and supportive.

### 10. (b)

**Context:** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has granted **in-principle approval** for the registration of the Raajmarg Infra Investment Trust (RIIT) as a **Public Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT)**.

#### About Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs)

- An **InvIT** works like a mutual fund, but instead of investing in equities, it invests in **revenue-generating infrastructure assets** (e.g., toll roads).



- InvITs are **created by sponsors**, usually infrastructure companies or private equity firms.
  - Sponsors transfer ownership of eligible infrastructure assets to a Trust.
- InvITs are governed by **SEBI (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) Regulations, 2014**.

### 11. (c)

**In News:** Over the past 25 years, India has recorded a **structural current account deficit (CAD)** with **exceptions of only four fiscal years: 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2020-21**, reflecting **deeper structural imbalances** in trade and capital flows.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- A **current account deficit (CAD)** often occurs when a country imports more than it exports.
- It can happen if **domestic demand is strong** (leading to higher imports).
- It can signal **investment opportunities**, as foreign investors fund domestic investments, resulting in higher imports of capital goods.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- Even if a country has a **current account deficit**, its **foreign exchange reserves** can **increase** if **capital inflows (FDI, portfolio investments, borrowings, etc.) exceed the CAD**.
- It is because the **balance of payments (BoP)** overall remains positive.

### 12. (b)

**In News:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently stated that the expression “**Hindu rate of growth**” reflected a colonial mindset that unfairly associated India’s slow economic performance in earlier decades with the identity of its people.

**What is the ‘Hindu Rate of Growth’?**

- The term refers to India’s low and stagnant economic growth rate (around 3–3.5% per year) during the first three decades after Independence (1950s to 1970s).
- The phrase was coined by **economist Raj Krishna (University of Delhi)** in the late 1970s.
- As noted in paper “The New Oxford Companion to Economics in India”, Raj Krishna used it as “a polemical device” to draw attention to India’s persistently meagre growth, which appeared culturally “embedded” due to its stability across decades.
  - Importantly, the word “Hindu” does not imply a religious or communal meaning.

### 13. (a)

**Context**

- The Government of India is implementing the National Mission on Edible Oils to reduce dependence on edible oil imports and achieve self-sufficiency.

**India’s Oilseed and Edible Oil Landscape**

- India’s total **edible oil production** was recorded at **12.18 million tonnes** during 2023-24. India contributes about **5-6%** of the world’s oilseeds production.
- According to a **NITI Aayog report (August 2024)**, India **ranks first** globally in the production of **rice bran oil, castor seed, safflower, sesame, and niger**.
- The country is able to meet only **44 percent** of its domestic demand for edible oils through internal production.
- **Import dependence** on edible oils has **declined from 63.2% in 2015-16 to 56.25% in 2023-24**, reflecting an improvement in self-sufficiency from 36.8% to 43.74%.
- **Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra** together contribute over 77.68% of India’s total oilseed output.

## 14. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** China is the largest producer of rice in the world, followed by India, Bangladesh and Indonesia.

- India, along with China, accounts for **over half of the world's rice production**.
- China, however, is also the **biggest consumer of rice**, leaving little for exports.
- **India is the world's largest exporter of rice**, accounting for **33 percent** of the world's total rice exports during 2023.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Two east Asian countries—**Thailand and Vietnam**—are the two main competitors of India in the global rice market.

- In 2023, the combined rice export of these two countries was almost equal to Indian exports.

## 15. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Household saving is the difference between a **household's net disposable income and its total consumption expenditure**, including taxes and debt repayments.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Household savings form the largest component of total domestic savings in India **around 55–60%**.

**Statement 3 is correct:** They are a key source of **capital formation, financing investment and supporting long-term economic growth**.

- Domestic household savings provides a **stable alternative to volatile foreign capital flows**.

## 16. (c)

**In News :** The first board meeting of the National Makhana Board held today at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi initiated the implementation process for both the Board and the Central Sector Scheme.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** Makhana, commonly known in English as fox nut, is the dried edible seed of the prickly water lily or gorgon plant (*Euryale ferox*).

- This plant is found in freshwater ponds throughout South and East Asia.
- It is recognized for its violet and white flowers, as well as its large, round, and prickly leaves, which can often exceed a meter in diameter.
- The edible part of the Makhana plant consists of small, round seeds that have an outer layer ranging from black to brown.
  - This has led to it being referred to as the 'Black Diamond.'
- In 2022, 'Mithila Makhana' was conferred a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**.
- Makhana (Gorgon Nut or Foxnut) is an **aquatic crop and is mainly grown in tropical and subtropical regions**.

## 17. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** **Minimum Support Price (MSP)** is a form of **market intervention** by the Government to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The prices are announced by the Government at the **beginning of the sowing season for certain crops** on the basis of the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**.

## 18. (a)

**In News:** Ponduru Khadi from Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh has received Geographical Indication (GI) tag recognition.

**About**

- Ponduru Khadi is a traditional handwoven fabric made using locally grown short-staple, hill-variety, pest-resistant cotton.



- The unique cotton variety allows chemical-free cultivation, supporting sustainable agriculture and eco-friendly production practices intrinsic to the region.

19. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** A trade deficit occurs when the value of a country's imports exceeds the value of its exports during a given period, leading to a negative Balance of Trade (BoT).

**Statement 2 not correct:** A country can have a merchandise trade deficit while maintaining a services trade surplus.

20. (c)

**Context**

- A panel set up by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) will recommend easing curbs on commodity derivatives and suggest steps to make it more attractive to institutional investors in a final report to be submitted early next year.

**What is a Commodity Derivative Market?**

- The commodity derivatives market deals in financial contracts whose **value is derived from underlying physical commodities** such as crude oil, gold, silver, wheat, natural gas, copper, and aluminium.
- These contracts enable participants to **buy or sell a commodity at a predetermined price on a future date**, without necessarily engaging in physical delivery.
- The market serves two core functions: **risk management (hedging)** and **price discovery**, while also enabling speculative trading.

21. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** India's GDP is calculated using two methods: the factor cost method and the expenditure method.

- **The factor cost method evaluates** performance across **eight industries**, including agriculture, manufacturing, and financial services.
- **The expenditure method examines** spending in areas like household consumption and government costs to assess economic performance.

**Statement 3 is not correct: Contribution of Sectors:** The largest contributor to India's GDP is the services sector, which accounts for 61.5% of GDP.

- The next largest contributor was the industrial sector (23%) and then the agriculture sector (15.4%).

22. (c)

**All three statements are correct:** Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, while NABARD exercises a supervisory role under Section 35(6) of the Act.

- NABARD conducts off-site surveillance, inspections, and enforces prudential norms for RRBs, including credit monitoring and KYC/AML compliance, in coordination with RBI.
- RRBs fall under a dedicated Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework administered by NABARD, triggered by breaches in CRAR, NNPA, and ROA thresholds to enforce self-corrective and supervisory actions.

23. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct.** DICGC functions as a wholly owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India, with RBI fully subscribing its authorized capital of ₹50 crore.

**Statement 2 is correct.** DICGC operates under the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961, which governs its deposit insurance and credit guarantee functions.

**Statement 3 is incorrect.** Banks pay the deposit insurance premium to DICGC as a percentage of their assessable deposits, not depositors directly.

#### 24. (d)

**In News :** Recently, the Supreme Court ruled that corporate social responsibility (CSR) inherently includes environmental responsibility.

- The judgment arose from petitions concerning the near-extinct Great Indian Bustard (GIB) in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a management framework that integrates social and environmental considerations into business operations and stakeholder interactions, reflecting a long-term commitment to societal welfare.

- The Schedule VII of the Companies Act lists out a set of activities that firms can include within their CSR activity.
- These include Eradicating hunger, poverty, malnutrition, Promoting health care including preventive health and sanitation, Promoting education, Promoting gender equality, empowering women, Ensuring environmental sustainability, ecological balance, Protection of national heritage, art and culture, Measures for the benefit of armed forces veterans, war widows and their dependents, Project on rural development and ensuring environmental sustainability etc.
- They can also contribute to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund or any other fund set up by the Central government for socio-economic development.

#### 25. (c)

**In News**

- India's agricultural exports received a boost with the export of 3 metric tonnes of **GI-tagged Indi Lime** from Vijayapura, Karnataka, to Oman.

**Indi Lime**

- Indi Lime is known for its distinctive aroma, high juice content and longer shelf life.
- It represents the agricultural heritage of northern Karnataka.
- The GI status of Indi Lime has played a crucial role in positioning the fruit competitively in global markets.
- The export of GI-tagged Indi Lime to Oman gains significance under the India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) / Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which aims to strengthen economic ties and expand market access for Indian products.

#### 26. (d)

**In News:** India urgently needs a **National Insolvency Tribunal** to uphold the promise of swift and effective resolution under the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)**, as the current system is struggling to meet the **IBC's time-bound mandates**.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- Under the IBC, once insolvency proceedings are initiated, **control of the company shifts from the existing management (debtors) to an Insolvency Resolution Professional (IRP)**.
- It follows the '**creditor-in-control**' model, **not 'debtor-in-possession'**. The IRP manages the company until a resolution plan is approved.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- The IBC applies to **companies, Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs), partnerships, and individuals**.
- IBC covers **individuals and partnership firms** (though its implementation for individuals has been phased and limited so far), while the **Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP)** mainly covers companies and LLPs.

**Statement 3 is not correct**

- Both **financial creditors** (banks, lenders, etc.) and **operational creditors** (suppliers, service providers, employees, etc.) can initiate insolvency proceedings under **Section 7 and Section 9** of the IBC respectively.
- Even **the corporate debtor itself** can initiate proceedings under **Section 10**.

**27. (d)**

India has inked trade deals with Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Japan, Mauritius, the 10-nation bloc ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

- India has signed **six Free Trade Agreements** in the **last five years**, the latest being with **Oman**.
  - India -Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), 2025.
  - India -UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), 2025.
  - India-EFTA Trade & Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein, 2024.
  - India- United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), 2022.
  - India- Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), 2022.
  - India – Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership (CECPA), 2021.
- In addition, India is negotiating trade agreements with a number of its trading partners, including the US, New Zealand, the European Union (EU), Chile, Peru, and Israel.

**28. (a)****Context**

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has granted **No Objection Certificates (NOCs)** to **two** new airlines, **AI Hind Air and FlyExpress**, clearing the way for their launch next year.
  - In **2026**, apart from these two carriers, **Uttar Pradesh-based Shankh Air**, which already has a **No Objection Certificate (NOC)**, is likely to start operations.

**India's Aviation Industry Scenario**

- **India** has emerged as the **world's third-largest** domestic aviation market.
- India currently has **nine scheduled domestic airlines** in operation.
- **IndiGo and the Air India Group** (Air India and Air India Express) together account for over **90 per cent** of the domestic market.
- IndiGo alone holds more than **65 percent market share**, intensifying concerns over a de facto duopoly.
- **Other scheduled carriers** include Akasa Air, SpiceJet, Star Air, Fly91, and IndiaOne Air.
- **Systemic Concerns:** The dominance of IndiGo was highlighted when about **4,500** flights were cancelled recently.
  - It has intensified concerns over systemic risks and limited resilience arising from heavy dependence on a single carrier in India's domestic aviation market.



29. (b)

**In News:** The Quality Council of India(QCI) announced a set of next-generation quality reforms on the eve of Sushasan Divas 2025.

#### Quality Council of India (QCI)

- It was established as a National body for Accreditation on recommendations of the Expert Mission of the EU after consultations in the Inter-ministerial Task Force, Committee of Secretaries and Group of Ministers through a Cabinet decision in 1996.
- It is a non-profit organization registered under the **Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860**.
- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry was designated as the nodal point for all matters connected with quality and QCI to structure and help implement the Cabinet decision.

30. (b)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Narasapuram lace craft originated in the 19th century when Christian missionaries taught it to local women in West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Known as crochet lace craft, it uses fine cotton threads and crochet needles, not silk threads woven on handlooms.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The craft features intricate floral, geometric, and paisley patterns drawn from nature and traditional motifs.

**Statement 4 is correct:** It received the GI tag in November 2024 and the ODOP award in July 2025.

31. (c)

#### Context

- The Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution released **IS 19412:2025 – Incense Sticks (Agarbatti) — Specification**, developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), marking India's first national standard for agarbattis.

#### About the notified standards

- The standard classifies Agarbatti into **machine-made, hand-made, and traditional masala agarbattis**, and prescribes requirements for raw materials, burning quality, fragrance performance, and chemical parameters.
- **Prohibited Chemicals:** The standard specifies prohibited use of certain insecticidal such as **Alethrin, permethrin, cypermethrin, deltamethrin, and fipronil**, as well as synthetic fragrance intermediates like **benzyl cyanide, ethyl acrylate, and diphenylamine**.
- The standard has been developed by the **Fragrance and Flavour Sectional Committee (PCD 18) of BIS** through extensive stakeholder consultations.

- Products conforming to this standard will be eligible to carry the **BIS Standard Mark**, enabling consumers to make informed choices.

#### Incense Sticks Sector in India

- India is the **world's largest producer and exporter** of agarbattis, with the industry estimated at around **₹8,000 crore** annually and exports of about **₹1,200 crore** to more than **150 countries**.
- Supports a vast ecosystem of artisans, MSMEs, and micro-entrepreneurs.
- The sector supports a **large ecosystem of artisans, MSMEs and micro-entrepreneurs**, providing substantial employment, particularly for women in rural and semi-urban areas.

#### 32. (a)

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is published monthly by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) through its National Statistics Office, measuring short-term volume changes in industrial production across mining, manufacturing, and electricity. Manufacturing holds the highest weight at 77.6%, followed by Mining (14.4%) and Electricity (8%). However, the current IIP series uses 2011-12 as the base year (not 2015-16).

#### 33. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Conventional rice farming uses flooded fields to suppress weeds, but the resulting anaerobic soil promotes **methane-producing microbes**, emitting methane—a greenhouse gas 28 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>.

- **Under Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD)**, the paddy fields, instead of being constantly flooded, are **periodically dried out before re-flooding**. The idea is to disrupt the waterlogged anaerobic conditions conducive to methane-producing microbes.

**Statement 2 and 3 is correct:** Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) offers Indian rice farmers a simple way to save water, cut methane emissions, and earn carbon income without reducing yields.

- It supports India's NDC targets and climate-resilient agriculture agenda.

# INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI):
1. It was established on the recommendation of the Malimath Committee.
  2. The CBI is a statutory body created under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
2. Which of the following committees of the Constituent Assembly was chaired by Dr. Rajendra Prasad?
1. Committee on the Rules of Procedure
  2. Steering Committee
  3. Finance and Staff Committee
  4. Ad hoc Committee on the National Flag
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1, 2, 3 and 4 (b) 1, 2 and 4 only  
(c) 3, and 4 only (d) 1, 3 and 4 only
3. With reference to the Indian Information Service (IIS), consider the following statements:
1. The IIS is the central civil service under Group A and Group B of the Central Civil Services of the executive branch of the Government.
  2. Most IIS officers work in various media units which are under the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
  3. They act as a vital communication link between the Government and the people.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
4. With reference to the Private Member's Bill in the Indian Parliament, consider the following statements:
1. A Private Member's Bill is a proposal introduced by MPs who are not ministers.
  2. The purpose of a Private Member's Bill is to draw the government's attention to issues that require legislation.
  3. A Private Member's Bill can be introduced only with the prior approval of the President.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3



5. With reference to the 'Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)', consider the following statements:
1. It is a regulatory and statutory body under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India.
  2. Its headquarter is located in Bangalore, Karnataka.
  3. It introduced the Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) to address pilot fatigue and improve safety.

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   |

6. Consider the following statements regarding the 'whip' in the Indian parliamentary system:
1. A whip is an order issued by political parties directing their members in the House to follow a particular voting line.
  2. The concept of the whip is mentioned explicitly in the Constitution of India.
  3. MPs who defy a party whip may lose their seat in Parliament under the provisions of the anti-defection law.
  4. The practice of issuing whips originated from a British parliamentary tradition.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

7. With reference to the 'Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019', consider the following statements:
1. It applies to all illegal immigrants in India.
  2. It bars Muslims from applying for Indian citizenship through the existing legal process.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

8. With reference to the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, consider the following statements:
1. The Sixth Schedule was adopted under Article 244 and provides for creation of autonomous administrative divisions within Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.
  2. All Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) under the Sixth Schedule have a uniform composition of 30 members with a term of four years.
  3. 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.

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:
1. Article 21A of the Indian Constitution guarantees the Right to Free and Compulsory Education for all children aged 6 to 18 years.
  2. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to provide universal education for children aged 3 to 18 years by 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**10.** As per the POSH Act and recent Supreme Court interpretation (2025), Internal Complaints Committee jurisdiction can extend to:

1. The workplace of the complainant.
2. The workplace of the respondent.
3. Any place visited by the respondent in the course of employment.

Which of the above are 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 Census in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Census is conducted under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948.
2. The Census of India is carried out by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. Conducting the Census every ten years is a constitutional obligation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**12.** With reference to the issue of marital rape in India, consider the following statements:

1. Under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, non-consensual sexual acts within marriage are excluded from the definition of rape if the wife is above 16 years of age.
2. The Justice Verma Committee has recommended removing the marital rape exception.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**13.** Consider the following statements regarding Lok Adalats:

1. Awards passed by Lok Adalats are deemed to be decrees of a civil court.
2. No appeal lies against the award of a Lok Adalat.
3. Lok Adalats can adjudicate non-compoundable criminal offences.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**14.** With reference to the Central Information Commission (CIC), consider the following statements:

1. The Central Information Commission is a statutory body established under the Right to Information Act, 2005.
2. The Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners hold office for a term of six years from the date they enter office.

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.** Consider the following statements regarding the composition of the Competition Commission of India:
1. The Commission consists of a Chairperson and not less than two and not more than six other Members.
  2. All Members are appointed by the Central Government.
  3. The Chairperson must necessarily be a serving or former judge of the Supreme Court.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

- 16.** Which of the following is NOT an objective of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016?

- Revival of viable businesses
- Maximisation of value of debtor's assets
- Promotion of entrepreneurship and credit availability
- Guaranteed protection of existing management control

- 17.** Under the PESA Act, which of the following require mandatory consultation or consent of the Gram Sabha?

1. Land acquisition in Scheduled Areas
2. Development projects affecting tribal communities
3. Management of minor forest produce
4. Regulation of major minerals

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

- 18.** With reference to the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, consider the following statements:

1. Part XVII of the Constitution, dealing with official languages, comprises Articles 343 to 351.
2. Sindhi was added to the Eighth Schedule by a constitutional amendment in 1967.
3. English is included in the Eighth Schedule but is not one of the officially recognised languages of the Union.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

- 19.** With reference to the 'Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)', consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory authority established under an act of Parliament of India.
2. Aadhaar issued by UIDAI is a proof of identity, residence and citizenship.

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 the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), consider the following statements:
1. The Bureau of Indian Standards is the National Standards Body of India under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
  2. It was established by the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2006 and is headquartered in Mumbai.
- 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. (d)

**In News:** The Supreme Court directed the CBI to lead a pan-India probe into 'digital arrest' scams.

#### About the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- It is India's specialized investigative agency, responsible for tackling high-profile crimes, corruption, and national security matters.

#### Origins & Evolution

- The CBI traces its roots to the **Special Police Establishment (SPE), formed in 1941** to investigate corruption in wartime procurement.
- It was officially **established by an executive order** of the Government of India in **1963**, on the recommendation of **Santhanam Committee**.
  - It was **not created by an Act of Parliament**, thus **not a Statutory Body**.

2. (a)

#### Context

- The President of India, paid tributes to Dr Rajendra Prasad, the **first President of India**, on his birth anniversary.

#### Early Life and Education

- **Birth:** He was born in **1884** in the Siwan district of **Bihar**.
- **Education:** He joined Presidency College, Calcutta, where he pursued his undergraduate studies. In **1915**, he completed his **Master of Law (LLM)** with Honours.

#### Role in the Freedom Movement

- **Champaran Satyagraha (1917):** Gandhiji's call brought him to **Champaran**. This marked a turning point, inspiring him towards national service.
- **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–22):** Gave up his successful law practice and founded the **National College in Patna (1921)**.
  - Stood firmly with Gandhiji after the **Chauri Chaura** incident.
- **Salt Satyagraha (1930):** Led the Salt Satyagraha in Bihar at **Patna's Nakhas Ponds**, where volunteers made salt and courted arrest.
- **Congress President:** He presided over the Bombay session of the INC in **1934**. Following the resignation of Subhash Chandra Bose as the President of the Congress in **1939**, He was elected as President.
  - In July 1946, when the **Constituent Assembly** was established to frame the Constitution of India, he was elected its **President**.
- He was awarded the **Bharat Ratna in 1962** for his exemplary service.

**Committees of Constituent Assembly chaired by Rajendra Prasad**

- Committee on the Rules of Procedure
- Steering Committee
- Finance and Staff Committee
- Ad hoc Committee on the National Flag.

3. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The IIS is the **central civil service** under **Group A and Group B** of the Central Civil Services of the executive branch of the Government.

- **Indian Information Service officers** are the media managers of the Government.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Most IIS officers work in various media units which are under the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** such as DD News, All India Radio, Press Information Bureau, etc.

**Statement 3 is correct: Function:** They act as a **vital communication link between the Government and the people by way** of disseminating information and communicating various Government policies and schemes to the public.

- They also collect and provide valuable feedback to the Government for policy formulation.

4. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** A Private Member's Bill is a proposal introduced by **MPs who are not ministers**.

- The main purpose is to highlight issues requiring **parliamentary attention**. Very few such Bills get passed.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** A Private Member's Bill does not require prior approval of the President (unless it involves certain financial matters).

5. (c)

**In News:** The recent **operational meltdown at IndiGo** has exposed deep structural vulnerabilities in **India's civil aviation ecosystem**, calling for **compulsory resource mapping** and a **comprehensive overhaul of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)**.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** is India's **apex regulatory body for civil aviation**, operating under the **Ministry of Civil Aviation**.
- It was **created in 1927** and became a **statutory body in 2020** after amendments to the **Aircraft Act**.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- The DGCA is **headquartered in New Delhi**, not Bangalore.

**Statement 3 is correct**

- The DGCA introduced **Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL)** regulations to ensure pilots receive adequate rest and to enhance flight safety.

6. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** A **whip** refers to an order **to members of a party in the House** to abide by a certain direction of the party.

- Political parties issue whips to their MPs to either vote for or against the bill, depending on their party line.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** It is **not mentioned in the constitution** but is considered a parliamentary convention.

**Statement 3 and 4 are correct:** Once the whip is issued, the MPs from each party will **necessarily have to obey the whip** or else risk losing their seat in Parliament.

- The term is derived from the old **British practice of “whipping in”** lawmakers to follow the party line.

7. (d)

**In News:** Recently, the Supreme Court of India has clarified that citizenship under the **Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019** is **not an automatic entitlement**, and it requires applicants to **meet the conditions of naturalization** of each applicant's eligibility.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 applies **only to a specific group of illegal immigrants** like Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians from **Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh**, who entered India **on or before 31 December 2014**, due to religious persecution.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- The Act **does not bar Muslims from applying for Indian citizenship** under existing laws such as Citizenships by **naturalisation and registration**.
- It only provides a **fast-track route for certain non-Muslim communities**; it does **not cancel or block existing legal routes for Muslims**.

8. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** 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 ADCs, were granted certain **legislative, judicial and administrative autonomy** within the state.

**Statement 2 is not correct: 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**.

**Statement 3 is correct: 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**.

9. (b)

**In News:** India's education system is facing a deepening affordability crisis, with rising private school fees and widening disparities undermining the constitutional promise of equitable education.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- **Article 21A** of the Indian Constitution, introduced by the **86th Amendment (2002)**, guarantees the **Right to Free and Compulsory Education** for all children aged **6 to 14 years**.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** further expands this vision, aiming to provide **universal education for children aged 3 to 18 years** by 2030, spanning from pre-primary to higher secondary levels.
  - However, the **cost of schooling in India** continues to rise sharply.

## 10. (d)

The Supreme Court has expanded the jurisdiction of **Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs)** under the **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act)**,

- SC said that the complaints to be filed not just at the **accused's workplace but also at the complainant's workplace** or any employment-related site.

**About POSH**

- **Origin:** Enacted following the **Supreme Court's Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan judgment (1997)**, which laid down binding guidelines to fill the legislative vacuum on workplace sexual harassment.
- **Scope and Coverage:** The Act applies to all workplaces, including government offices, private sectors, NGOs, educational institutions, hospitals, sports bodies, and unorganized sectors, extending protection even to domestic workers in residences used for employment
- **Institutional Framework:** Every organization with 10 or more employees must constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), with the presiding officer and at least half the members being women, including an external NGO expert.
  - For workplaces with fewer than 10 employees, District Officers form Local Complaints Committees (LCCs) at the district level to ensure accessibility.
- **Complaint and Inquiry Process:** Complaints must be filed within 3 months of the incident (extendable by another 3 months for sufficient cause) to the ICC or LCC, which conducts a time-bound inquiry within 90 days, maintaining confidentiality and natural justice principles.

## 11. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Census in India is conducted under the Census Act, 1948, which lays down the legal provisions, powers, and procedures for conducting the Census. It provides statutory backing to the entire Census exercise.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The responsibility of conducting the Census rests with the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, who functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs. This office plans, organises, and implements the Census across the country.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The Constitution of India does not mandate that the Census must be conducted every ten years. The decennial Census is a convention and administrative practice, not a constitutional requirement.

## 12. (b)

**Context:** Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has introduced a **Private Member's Bill** seeking to criminalise **marital rape** in India.

**About**

- Under the **Section 63** of the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**, marital rape is still excluded as an offence. This means **non-consensual sex** within marriage is not treated as rape if the wife is above 18.
- The Bill argues this violates **Article 21**, the right to life, dignity, privacy and bodily autonomy.
- According to **National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5)**, 83% of sexual violence against women is committed by husbands, not strangers.
- The **Justice Verma Committee** has recommended removing the marital rape exception. International treaties like CEDAW, which India has signed, also call for recognising marital rape.
- However, past **Law Commission reports** have argued that criminalisation may not align with India's social realities.

## 13. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Under Section 21 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, every Lok Adalat award is deemed a decree of a civil court, executable as such and final/binding on parties.

**Statement 2 is correct:** No appeal lies against a Lok Adalat award before any court; statutory finality ensures quick resolution, though writ jurisdiction under Articles 226/227 may lie on limited grounds like fraud or lack of jurisdiction.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Lok Adalats handle only compoundable offences or civil/pre-litigation matters; non-compoundable criminal cases (e.g., murder, rape) require court referral under Section 89 CPC and cannot be settled via compromise leading to acquittal.

## 14. (a)

**Context:** The President of India administered the oath of office to Raj Kumar Goyal as the Chief Information Commissioner of the Central Information Commission.

**About Central Information Commission**

- The Central Information Commission (CIC) is a **statutory body** in India, established under the provisions of the **Right to Information Act (2005)**.
- The Central Information Commission consists of a **Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)** and **not more than ten Information Commissioners (IC)**.
- The members are **appointed by the President** on the recommendation of a Committee consisting of:
  - The Prime Minister as the Chairperson,
  - The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and
  - A Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.
- **Term of office:** The Chief Information Commissioner, or Information Commissioners, as the case may be, shall hold office for a period of **three years** from the date on which he enters upon his office.
- **Jurisdiction:** It extends over all Central Public Authorities.

## 15. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** The Competition Commission of India (CCI) consists of a Chairperson and not less than two and not more than six other Members, all appointed by the Central Government as per Section 8 of the Competition Act, 2002.

- Members are selected through a committee chaired by the Chief Justice of India or nominee, including Secretaries from Corporate Affairs and Law Ministries, plus two experts, ensuring qualified individuals with 15+ years in relevant fields like law, economics, or competition matters.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The Chairperson need not be a serving or former Supreme Court judge.

## 16. (d)

**Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016**

- **IBC was introduced in 2016** to address rising Non Performing Assets and ineffective debt recovery mechanisms in India.
- It aims to overhaul the **corporate distress resolution system**, replacing debtor-controlled regimes with **creditor-in-control mechanisms** for time-bound resolutions.
- Objectives of the IBC resolution are;
  - **Business Revival:** To save businesses through restructuring, changes in ownership, or mergers,



- **Maximization of Asset Value:** To preserve and maximize the value of the debtor's assets,
- **Promoting Entrepreneurship and Credit:** To encourage entrepreneurship, improve credit availability, and balance the interests of stakeholders, including creditors and debtors.
- Currently a maximum **330 days** is allowed to find a resolution for a company admitted into the insolvency resolution process.
  - Otherwise, the company goes into **liquidation**.

#### 17. (a)

The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 was enacted to empower Gram Sabhas in Scheduled Areas (under the Fifth Schedule) to have a decisive say in their own development and governance.

Under the provisions of the Act, the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level must be consulted or give consent for the following:

- **Land Acquisition:** Consultation with the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats is mandatory before making the acquisition of land in the Scheduled Areas for development projects and before resettling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects.
- **Development Projects:** They have the power to approve plans, programs, and projects for social and economic development before they are implemented at the village level.
- **Minor Forest Produce:** The Gram Sabha and the Panchayats have been endowed specifically with the ownership of minor forest produce.
- **Regulation of major minerals:** Remains with the State and Union governments, not the Gram Sabha.

#### 18. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India lists the **official languages of the Republic of India**.

- **Part XVII** of the Indian Constitution deals with the official languages in **Articles 343 to 351**.
- The Eighth Schedule includes the recognition of the following **22 languages**:
  - Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri.
  - **Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution.** Subsequently, Sindhi was added in 1967; Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added in 1992; and Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003.

**Statement 3 is not correct: English is absent** from the list of 22 in the Eighth Schedule. It is one of the 99 non-scheduled languages of India.

#### 19. (a)

**In News:** The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has announced a major expansion plan to increase the number of full-service Aadhaar centres across the country from the current 88 to 473 by September 2026.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- UIDAI is a statutory authority established by the Government of India under the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- Aadhaar is a proof of identity and residence, not of citizenship. It **does not confer any rights of citizenship**.

- UIDAI allows residents to update their Aadhaar details, including address, mobile number, and even biometric data, through online and offline processes.

## 20. (a)

### Context

- The Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, released **IS 19412:2025 – Incense Sticks (Agarbatti)** — Specification, an Indian Standard developed by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

### Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

- The Bureau of Indian Standards is the National Standards Body of India under the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution**, Government of India.
- It is established by the **Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016** which came into effect on **12 October 2017**.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Functions:**
  - **Formulation of Indian Standards (IS)** across many sectors.
  - **Product Certification Schemes**, both voluntary and compulsory.
  - **Release of Quality Control Orders (QCOs):** Making compliance with certain Indian Standards mandatory for some products.
- **The schemes operated by BIS are,** Product Certification (ISI mark), Management Systems Certification, Hall Marking of Gold and Silver Jewellery/Artefacts and Laboratory Services for the benefit of the industry and in turn aiming at consumer protection.

# GEOGRAPHY

1. With reference to River Kosi, consider the following statements:

1. It is formed by the confluence of the Sun Kosi, the Arun Kosi and Tamur Kosi.
2. It joins the Ganga river in Gorakhpur District of Uttar Pradesh.
3. It is called 'Sorrow of Bihar' due to frequent floods and shifting of courses.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

2. The recently inaugurated Shyok Tunnel is located in:

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| (a) Arunachal Pradesh | (b) Sikkim      |
| (c) Ladakh            | (d) Uttarakhand |

3. The Subansiri Lower Hydel Project, recently in news, is located at which of the following borders?

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (a) Sikkim – West Bengal border | (b) Arunachal Pradesh – Assam border |
| (c) Nagaland – Manipur border   | (d) Meghalaya – Assam border         |

4. It is a Landlocked country except for a short coastline at Aqaba (Red Sea) in West Asia Middle East, bordered by Israel & Palestine in the West.

Which among the following countries is described above?

- |             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| (a) Lebanon | (b) Jordan |
| (c) Qatar   | (d) Egypt  |

5. With reference to Ethiopia, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Ethiopia is a landlocked country located in the Horn of Africa.
2. The Blue Nile originates from Lake Tana in Ethiopia.

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 |

6. The Strait of Hormuz, frequently in the news, is strategically significant because it:

- (a) Separates Africa from Asia
- (b) Connects the Red Sea with the Arabian Sea
- (c) Links the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman
- (d) Connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Atlantic Ocean

7. The Pamir Mountains extend across which of the following countries?

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Tajikistan | 2. Afghanistan |
| 3. China      | 4. Kyrgyzstan  |

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

8. With reference to Aravalli Range, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The Aravalli Range passes through Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and ends in Delhi.
2. It is the oldest mountain range in India, acting as a natural barrier preventing the eastward expansion of the Thar Desert.

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 |

9. The Ratle Hydroelectric Project, recently in the news, is located on which of the following rivers?

- |            |            |
|------------|------------|
| (a) Jhelum | (b) Chenab |
| (c) Satluj | (d) Ravi   |

10. The Pamir Knot is best described as;

- (a) A junction where several major mountain ranges converge
- (b) A glacial depression within the Pamir Mountains
- (c) A fault zone separating India from Eurasia
- (d) A volcanic caldera formed during plate subduction

11. A country located in Northwestern Europe, bordering Germany and Belgium, and having a North Sea coastline is:

- |             |                 |
|-------------|-----------------|
| (a) Denmark | (b) Netherlands |
| (c) Sweden  | (d) Austria     |

12. The Drake Passage, often mentioned in the context of the formation of the youngest ocean basin, is associated with which of the following oceans?

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| (a) Arctic Ocean   | (b) Indian Ocean   |
| (c) Southern Ocean | (d) Atlantic Ocean |

13. Syria, a country in West Asia, shares its borders with which of the following countries?

- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Turkey  | 2. Iraq   |
| 3. Jordan  | 4. Israel |
| 5. Lebanon | 6. Egypt  |

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| (a) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 only | (b) 1, 2, 4 and 6 only |
| (c) 2, 3, 4 and 5 only    | (d) All of the above   |

14. The Dulhasti Stage-II hydropower project, recently approved by a panel under the Ministry of Environment, is located on which river?

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| (a) Ravi  | (b) Jhelum |
| (c) Indus | (d) Chenab |

## EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

**In News:** Repeated embankments on Kosi River have failed to prevent floods and often worsen them due to heavy siltation, shifting river courses, and fragile eastern Himalayan geology.

**Statements 1 and 3 are correct :** Kosi River is a trans-boundary river which flows through Bihar and Nepal.

- The river Kosi is formed by the confluence of three streams namely the Sun Kosi, the Arun Kosi and Tamur Kosi all taking their origin in the Himalayan region of Nepal and Tibet. The Kosi is well known for its tendency to change its course generally in westward direction. It is called '**Sorrow of Bihar**' because of frequent floods and shifting of river courses.

**Statement 2 is not correct :** River Kosi enters the Indian territory near Hanuman Nagar in Nepal. It joins the **Ganga river near Kursela in Katihar district of Bihar**.

2. (c)

**In News:** The Defence Minister inaugurated Shyok Tunnel in eastern Ladakh and 124 other strategic border infra projects.

#### Shyok Tunnel

- It is the **920-metre** cut-and-cover tunnel.
- It is of key strategic significance as it would provide all-weather connectivity to areas close to the LAC in eastern Ladakh, where India and China were locked in a military standoff between 2020-2024 before both sides decided to disengage from all friction points along the border.
- It will also likely reduce dependence on air maintenance and resolve logistical challenges in the difficult terrains.
- It is built in one of the world's toughest and most challenging terrain.

3. (b)

The Environment Ministry has turned down a NHPC proposal to use assets located on forest land as collateral to raise funds for the **Subansiri Lower hydel project**.

- **Location:**
  - On the **Subansiri River**, a tributary of the Brahmaputra.
  - Situated at Gerukamukh on the **Arunachal Pradesh–Assam border**.
- **Capacity & Type:** It has a total installed capacity: **2,000 MW (8 × 250 MW)**.
  - It is one of India's **largest hydroelectric projects**.
- **Strategic Importance:**
  - Enhances clean energy generation in the Northeast.
  - Strengthens grid stability and supports India's renewable energy goals.

4. (b)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded **his two-day visit to Jordan**.

- Jordan is a West Asian country in the **Middle East**.
- **Borders:** Israel & Palestine (West), Saudi Arabia (South & East), Iraq (East), Syria (North).
- **Landlocked** except for a short coastline at Aqaba (Red Sea).
- **Head of State:** King Abdullah II (since 1999).
- **Dead Sea**, landlocked salt lake between Israel and Jordan in southwestern Asia.
- **The main ethnic groups in Jordan** are Arabs, primarily Jordanians and Palestinians.

5. (c)

**Context**

- PM Modi was conferred with Ethiopia's highest award, '**The Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia**', by his Ethiopian counterpart Abiy Ahmed Ali.

**About Ethiopia**

- Location:** Ethiopia is a landlocked country located in the **Horn of Africa**.
  - It shares borders with **Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Sudan**.



- Geography:** The country has diverse topography, including the **Ethiopian Highlands**, the **Great Rift Valley**, and the **Danakil Depression** (one of the hottest places on Earth).
  - The Blue Nile** originates from **Lake Tana in Ethiopia**.
- Demography:** Ethiopia is the **second-most populous country** in Africa.
- Cultural Significance:** Ethiopia has its **own calendar**, which is seven years and around three months behind the Gregorian calendar.
  - Ethiopia is widely recognised as the **birthplace of coffee**.

6. (c)

**In News:** Iran seizes foreign oil tanker carrying 6 million litres of smuggled Diesel in the **Gulf of Oman**.

**About Gulf of Oman**

- The Gulf of Oman is the north-western arm of the Arabian Sea.
- It forms a vital maritime corridor connecting the Indian Ocean with the Persian Gulf through the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- Through the Strait of Hormuz, it provides access to the **Persian Gulf**, making it **vital for global oil and LNG trade**.

7. (a)

**Context**

- Ice cores from the Pamir Mountains are being studied to understand why its glaciers have resisted melting despite global warming.

**What is the Pamir–Karakoram Anomaly?**

- It refers to the **unusual behaviour of glaciers** in parts of the **Pamir and Karakoram ranges**.





- Unlike most glaciers worldwide, these glaciers have:
  - Shown resistance to melting, and
  - Experienced slight mass gain in recent decades.
- This makes the region scientifically significant for understanding glacier–climate interactions.

#### About Pamir Mountains

- **Geology:** Formed by the collision of the **Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates**, making it a seismically active zone.
- **Location:** Spans parts of Tajikistan, Afghanistan, China, and Kyrgyzstan.
  - The Pamir Mountains, also known as the “**Roof of the World**,” form a massive convergence zone (**Pamir Knot**) with the **Himalayas, Karakoram, Hindu Kush, Kunlun, and Tian Shan** ranges.
- **Ancient Routes:** Historically part of the Silk Road, with Marco Polo referencing the area.
- **Major Peaks & Features:** Ismoil Somoni Peak (Tajikistan), Kongur Tagh (China), Muztagh Ata (China) etc.
  - **Tajik National Park:** A large protected area encompassing much of the Pamirs, a **UNESCO** World Heritage site.

8. (c)

#### Context

- The Supreme Court, in a recent order, settled on a uniform definition of the Aravalli hills and ranges, and paused the grant of fresh mining leases across Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.

#### Significance of the Aravalli Range

- The Aravalli Range, stretching over approximately **692 kilometres (430 miles)** in a northeastern direction, traverses the Indian states of **Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Haryana** before culminating in **Delhi**, is the oldest mountain range in India.
  - **Rajasthan** accounts for nearly **two-thirds** of the mountain range.
- It acts as a **critical ecological barrier** preventing the eastward expansion of the **Thar Desert** into Haryana, Rajasthan, and western Uttar Pradesh.
- The Aravallis support water-recharge systems and are the source of rivers such as the **Sabarmati and Luni**.
- The region is **rich in minerals** including sandstone, limestone, marble, granite, lead, zinc, copper, gold, and tungsten.

## 9. (b)

**In News:** Recently, the Jammu and Kashmir Police informed Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Limited (MEIL) that 29 workers employed at the under-construction 850 MW **Ratle Hydro Electric Project in Kishtwar** had alleged militant links or criminal backgrounds.

**The Ratle Hydroelectric Project (850 MW)**

- **Location:** On the Chenab River near Drabshalla in Kishtwar district, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- **Type and capacity:** Run-of-the-river scheme with a total installed capacity of 850 MW and a 133 m high concrete gravity dam and associated underground power houses.
- **Ownership structure:** Implemented by Ratle Hydroelectric Power Corporation Ltd, a JV of NHPC (51% equity) and JKSPDC (49% equity).

## 10. (a)

**Context**

- Ice cores from the Pamir Mountains are being studied to understand why its glaciers have resisted melting despite global warming.

**About Pamir Mountains**

- **Geology:** Formed by the collision of the **Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates**, making it a seismically active zone.
- **Location:** Spans parts of Tajikistan, Afghanistan, China, and Kyrgyzstan.
  - The Pamir Mountains, also known as the **“Roof of the World,”** form a massive convergence zone (**Pamir Knot**) with the **Himalayas, Karakoram, Hindu Kush, Kunlun, and Tian Shan ranges**.

## 11. (b)

**Context:** The Defence Minister of India met the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands reaffirming the strong and steadily expanding defence partnership between the two nations.

**Netherlands**

- **Location:** Northwestern Europe, bordering Germany and Belgium; North Sea coast.



- The name Netherlands means **“low countries.”**
- **Political system:** Constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy.
- **Ports:** **Port of Rotterdam** located in the Netherlands is Europe’s largest port and a global trade gateway.

## 12. (c)

**Context**

- A recent study highlighted that the Southern Ocean is absorbing more carbon dioxide than climate models had predicted.

### About Southern Ocean

- The Southern Ocean is **one of the five major ocean basins of the Earth**. It surrounds the continent of Antarctica.
- It lies between **60° South latitude and the coast of Antarctica**.
- It was formed around 34 million years ago when Antarctica and South America drifted apart, creating the **Drake Passage**.
- Recognised formally as a distinct ocean by the **International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)**.
- It is central to international scientific research under **the Antarctic Treaty System**.



13. (a)

### Context

- Eight people were killed in an explosion at a mosque of the **Alawite minority sect in the Syrian city of Homs**.

### About Syria

- Syria is a **West Asian country** in the Levant region.
- **Bordering Countries:** Bordered by Turkey (north), Iraq (east), Jordan (south), Israel (south-west) and Lebanon (west).
- It has a **small Mediterranean coastline**.
- **Important river:** Euphrates (lifeline for agriculture).



14. (d)

**Context**

- A panel under the Ministry of Environment has approved the Dulhasti Stage-II hydropower project on the **Chenab river** in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district.

**About Dulhasti Stage-II Project**

- Dulhasti Stage-II is an extension of the existing **390 MW Dulhasti Stage-I project**, operational since 2007.
- The project will divert water from Stage-I through a **3,685-metre-long tunnel** with a diameter of **8.5 metres**.
- **Key infrastructure components include:**
  - A surge shaft and pressure shaft.
  - An underground powerhouse housing two units of **130 MW each**.
- **The total installed capacity** will be **260 MW**, contributing to additional annual energy generation.



# GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS), consider the following statements:
1. It is a Central Sector Scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).
  2. It focuses on socio-economic empowerment of minority communities including Buddhists and Christians.
  3. It promotes targeted skill training, formal education via open schooling, and improved livelihood opportunities

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

2. Sanchar Saathi app, recently in the news, is primarily related to:

- (a) Postal services and digital mail delivery  
(b) Mobile tracking and fraud reporting  
(c) Cybersecurity audits for government websites  
(d) Digital literacy for rural communities

3. With reference to the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), consider the following statements:

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme implemented directly by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
2. It aims to provide 55 litres per capita per day of potable drinking water to all rural households.
3. The National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) was subsumed under JJM.

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

4. With reference to Jiyo Parsi Scheme, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The scheme was launched to address the demographic challenge of an ageing and shrinking Parsi population.
2. It supports advanced reproductive technologies such as IVF and ICSI as part of its medical assistance.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

5. With reference to Samagra Shiksha scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is implemented as an integrated Centrally Sponsored Scheme for School education.
2. It treats school education holistically, without segmentation from pre-primary to class XII.
3. It is in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goal for Education (SDG-4).

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

6. With reference to the PM Internship Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It was announced in the Union Budget 2024–25 and aims to provide 12-month internships to one crore youth over five years.
2. The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
3. Only companies with high Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spending in the last three years are eligible to participate.

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 'Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana', consider the following statements:

1. It promotes first-generation biofuels derived from food crops.
2. It is implemented by the Union Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.
3. It provides subsidies for electric vehicles and solar energy projects.

How many of the above statement(s) is / are correct?

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

8. Which of the following best captures the strategic significance of Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address (DHRUVA)?

- (a) It enables monetisation of postal data assets for government revenue.
- (b) It primarily replaces GPS-based location systems with postal alternatives.
- (c) It enhances India's digital governance by creating a geospatially accurate addressing backbone for public and private services.
- (d) It reduces the need for digital identity systems in welfare schemes.

9. With reference to the Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme, consider the following statements:

1. The TDF scheme is implemented by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) under the Make in India initiative.
2. The scheme provides financial support to develop futuristic defence technologies as well as upgrade existing systems.
3. Only large defence PSUs are eligible to receive support under the TDF scheme.

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

10. With reference to the Export Promotion Mission (EPM), consider the following statements:

1. The EPM will be implemented over a period of six years, from FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31.
2. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) is the implementing agency for the Mission.
3. The Mission includes two integrated sub-schemes—Financial Support (Niryat Shakti) and Non-Financial Support (Niryat Disha).



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

11. The National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) functions as a real-time intelligence and data-access platform under which of the following?

- (a) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology  
(b) Ministry of Defence  
(c) Prime Minister's Office  
(d) Ministry of Home Affairs

12. The ASPIRE Scheme is primarily aimed at promoting:

- (a) Large-scale industrial clusters in urban areas  
(b) Innovation and entrepreneurship in rural and agro-based industries  
(c) Export-oriented manufacturing units  
(d) Start-ups in the IT and services sector

13. Which of the following best explains why Kessler Syndrome is difficult to reverse once initiated?

- (a) Space debris moves at extremely low velocities  
(b) Orbital debris cannot be tracked by ground-based systems  
(c) Each collision exponentially increases the number of debris fragments  
(d) International space law prohibits debris removal

14. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), consider the following statements:

1. PMKVY was launched in 2015 under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
2. PMKVY primarily targets providing skill training and certification to enhance youth employability.

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 Electoral Trust Scheme in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Electoral Trust Scheme was introduced by the Government of India in 2013 to facilitate transparent political funding.
2. Any company registered under the Companies Act can form an electoral trust.
3. Donations to such trusts can be made by Indian citizens and companies anonymously.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

16. With reference to the 'Comprehensive Internship Policy launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports', consider the following statements:

1. It focuses on sports governance, administration, sports science and allied domains.
2. It is designed primarily for Indian college and university students.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. With reference to the 'Prime Minister Internship Scheme (PMIS)', consider the following statements:

1. It was introduced under the Viksit Bharat initiative.
2. It guarantees a full-time government job to every intern upon completion.
3. Those undergoing any apprenticeship under Central Government schemes are not eligible for PMIS.

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

18. With reference to the Joint Initiative for Village Advancement (JIVA) programme, consider the following statements:

1. The JIVA programme was launched by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in 2022.
2. The programme aims to promote agroecological principles to nudge farming communities towards natural farming and long-term sustainability.

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 the 'National Frequency Allocation Plan 2025 (NFAP-2025)', consider the following statements:

1. It explicitly includes provisions for 5G Advanced, 6G readiness and Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X).
2. It aims to improve spectrum provisions for In-Flight and Maritime Connectivity (IFMC).

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

20. The JIVA Programme (Joint Initiative for Village Advancement) of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), recently seen in the context of Marathwada, is best described as:

- (a) An agroecology-based initiative promoting natural farming
- (b) A fertiliser subsidy reform programme
- (c) A market intervention scheme for price stabilisation
- (d) A credit-linked crop insurance scheme for small farmers

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

**In News :** PM VIKAS is uplifting minority communities through skill development and promoting entrepreneurship .

**Statement 1 is not correct :** The Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) is a Central Sector Scheme of the **Ministry of Minority Affairs** which converges five erstwhile schemes viz. 'Seekho Aur Kamao', 'Nai Manzil', 'Nai Roshni' and 'USTTAD' & 'Hamari Dharohar'.

**Statements 2 and 3 are correct :** PM VIKAS focuses on socio-economic empowerment of six notified minority communities (**Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and Parsis**) through the following Skilling and Training (Non-traditional and traditional), Women Leadership and Entrepreneurship, Education (through National Institute of Open Schooling) and Infrastructure Development (through Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram).

## 2. (b)

**Context:** Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed phone makers to pre-install the **Sanchar Saathi app** on devices sold from **March 2026 onwards**.

**What is Sanchar Saathi?**

- In 2025, the **Department of Telecommunications** launched the **Sanchar Saathi Mobile App** for both Android and iOS to help users report and protect against mobile related fraud and theft.
- **Key Features**
  - **Chakshu:** Users report suspected fraud via calls, SMS, or WhatsApp, targeting scams like fake KYC updates.
  - **IMEI Tracking and Blocking:** Tracks and blocks lost/stolen phones nationwide across all telecom networks.
  - **Verify Mobile Handset Genuineness:** Checks if a device is authentic using IMEI or barcode scan.
  - **Report Masked International Calls:** Flags calls from abroad disguised as local (+91 followed by 10 digits).
  - **Know Your Internet Service Provider:** Searches wireline ISPs by PIN code, address, or name.

## 3. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, involving cost-sharing with states (e.g., 50:50 for most states, 90:10 for hilly/North-Eastern states, 100% for UTs), rather than a Central Sector Scheme fully funded and implemented directly by the Centre.

**Statement 2 is correct:** JJM targets Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) delivering 55 litres per capita per day (lpcd) of safe, potable drinking water to every rural household under the "Har Ghar Jal" vision.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), a prior centrally sponsored scheme, was restructured and subsumed into JJM in 2019 to accelerate tap water provision to rural households.

## 4. (c)

**Context**

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA), organised a comprehensive Advocacy and Outreach Workshop in Mumbai to promote and **amplify the Jiyo Parsi Scheme**.

**About the scheme**

- The Jiyo Parsi scheme was launched in **2013-14** with the objective to **reverse the declining trend of Parsi population** by adopting a scientific protocol and structured interventions, stabilize their population and to increase the population of Parsis in India.

- **The scheme has three components:**

- **Medical Assistance:** Provides financial aid for infertility treatments such as IVF, ICSI, surrogacy, and post-conception care.
- **Advocacy:** Provides for counselling of couples with fertility issues and publicity including workshops; and
- **Health of the Community:** Offers monthly financial support to Parsi couples with children as well as to dependent elderly members.

## 5. (c)

**In News :** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan reiterated that States must meet the Samagra Shiksha scheme's conditions to receive Central funds.

**Statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct :** The Department of School Education and Literacy has implemented an Integrated **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** for School Education- Samagra Shiksha from 2018-19. The scheme **treats school education holistically, without segmentation from pre-primary to class XII** and is in accordance with the **Sustainable Development Goal for Education (SDG-4)**. The scheme provides support for the implementation of the RTE Act.

- It supports States and UTs through interventions such as composite school grants, libraries, sports, free uniforms and textbooks, ICT initiatives, remedial teaching, and leadership development.

## 6. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct: Announced in:** Union Budget 2024-25.

- **Aim:** To provide 12-month internships for one crore candidates in the age group of 21 to 24 years, for five years.
  - To provide real-life work experience to job seekers in top companies.

**Statement 2 is not correct: Implementing Agency:** Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

**Statement 3 is correct: The top companies** have been identified based on the average Corporate Social Responsibility expenditure of the last three years.

- Participation of the companies in the scheme is **voluntary**.

## 7. (d)

**In News:** Recently, the Union Government has **expanded the scope and timeline** of the Pradhan Mantri Jaiv Indhan–Vatavaran Anukool Fasal Awashesh Nivaran (**JI-VAN**) Yojana, reaffirming its commitment to **sustainable development and energy security**.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The scheme focuses on **second-generation (2G) and advanced biofuels**, which are produced from non-food biomass like agricultural residues, not food crops.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The scheme is implemented by the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoP&NG)**, with the **Centre for High Technology (CHT)** as the coordinating agency.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The scheme is exclusively focused on biofuel production, particularly ethanol from **lignocellulosic biomass** and other renewable feedstocks.

## 8. (c)

**Context**

- The Department of Posts (DoP) under the Ministry of Communications has proposed **Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address (DHRUVA)**, an interoperable, standardized and user-centric **Digital Address System for India**.

**What is DHRUVA?**

- A national framework to create virtual, **UPI-like address labels** such as “name@entity” that serve as proxies for physical locations.
- The system is built as a part of its **Digital Public Infrastructure** initiatives and will allow private firms to participate.
- At its core is the concept of **Address-as-a-Service (AaaS)** — the array of services associated with address data management to support secure, consent-driven sharing of location information.

9. (a)

**In News:** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has handed over **seven technologies** developed under the **Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme** to the three Services.

**The Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme**

- It is a **flagship programme of the Ministry of Defence** executed by DRDO under ‘**Make in India**’ initiative.
- It extends financial support and expertise to **upgrade existing products/ systems, processes** and its applications by reducing production costs, improving functionality and quality by promoting Make in India, and the development of futuristic technologies with defence applications.
- The Scheme encourages participation of public/private industries, especially MSMEs and startups.

10. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** In the **Union Budget for 2025-26**, the Finance Minister announced an Export Promotion Mission.

- It would facilitate easy access to export credit, cross-border factoring support, and support to MSMEs to tackle non-tariff measures in overseas markets.
- **Time Span:** EPM will span **six years** covering FY 2025-26 to FY 2030-31.
- **Implementing Agency:** The **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)**, it will be managed through a dedicated digital platform integrated with existing trade systems.

**Statement 3 is not correct: Two Integrated Sub-Schemes: Financial Support (Niryat Protsahan) & Non-Financial Support (Niryat Disha).**

- **Under EPM, priority support** will be extended to sectors impacted by recent global tariff escalations, such as textiles, leather, gems & jewellery, engineering goods, and marine products.

11. (d)

**Context**

- The National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) has begun receiving nearly 45,000 requests per month, reflecting a significant rise in its use by central and state security agencies.

**What is the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)?**

- NATGRID is a **real-time intelligence and data-access platform** developed after the **26/11 Mumbai attacks (2008)** to enable seamless information-sharing across agencies.
- It functions under the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** and consolidates over **20 categories** of civil and commercial data, such as bank transactions, telecom usage, passport/immigration records, tax IDs, police FIRs (CCTNS), and other e-governance sources.
- **Data accessibility:** Initially restricted to Intelligence Bureau (IB), the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the

Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) etc.

- Access to NATGRID is now available to **Superintendent of Police (SP)** rank officers.

## 12. (b)

**In News:** The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is implementing the **ASPIRE scheme** to promote entrepreneurship and livelihood opportunities in rural areas.

### About the Scheme

- **Launch:** In 2015 by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
- **Aim:** To create an enabling ecosystem for job creation through skill development, incubation and support to micro-enterprises.
  - As of now, 109 Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs) have been approved across the country.
- **Key Components:**
  - **Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs):** Support agro-based ventures with grants up to ₹75 lakh (private) or ₹1 crore (government institutions) for training in food processing, handicrafts, and rural trades.
  - **Technology Business Incubators (TBIs):** Focus on tech-driven rural innovation with similar funding.
  - **Fund of Funds:** Managed by SIDBI with ₹200 crore corpus to back startups in agro-rural sectors.

## 13. (c)

Kessler Syndrome describes a cascading chain reaction in low Earth orbit where collisions between objects generate more debris fragments than atmospheric drag can remove. This exponential growth creates a self-sustaining process, making reversal difficult as new fragments continuously collide with intact objects, satellites, or other debris.

## 14. (b)

**Context:** The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in its report on the government's flagship skill development program, **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY)** has underscored some glaring loopholes in the data management of assessors and trainees, including their bank account details.

### About PMKVY

- **Launched:** 2015 under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).
- **Implementing Agency:** National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
- **Objective:** To provide skill training and certification to youth to enhance employability.
- **Beneficiaries (till June 2025):** Over 1.64 crore youth trained.
- **Budget (FY 2024–25):** ₹1,538 crore.
- **Latest Phase:** PMKVY 4.0 (2022–2026) – focuses on industry-linked courses, digital monitoring, and local-level skill hubs.

## 15. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** The electoral trust scheme was introduced by the **government in 2013**.

- Electoral trusts are one of the **funding channels for political parties**.
  - They became a **preferred source of political donation** for companies in **2024-25 after the SC scrapped the electoral bonds** scheme in 2024.



- **Both schemes** are meant to facilitate donations to political parties by corporations and individuals.
- Any company registered under the Companies Act can form an electoral trust.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Any citizen of India, a company registered in India, or a firm or Hindu Undivided Family or association of persons living in India, can donate to an electoral trust.

- While the **electoral bonds scheme** sought to ensure donor anonymity, **electoral trusts are required to report to the Election Commission contributions** from individuals and companies, and their donations to parties every year.
- **Transparency:** The electoral trust route is fully transparent, with disclosure of both contributors and beneficiaries, unlike electoral bonds.

16. (c)

**In News:** Recently, the **Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS)** has launched a **Comprehensive Internship Policy** designed to provide structured, hands-on experience to aspiring sports professionals, aligning with the broader goals of the **National Sports Policy** and the **Khelo Bharat Niti 2025**.

**Statement 1 is correct:** The actual policy focuses on sports governance, administration, sports science and allied domains within the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS) and its autonomous bodies.

- It provides 452 internships annually specifically within MYAS and its institutions like SAI, NADA and NDTL.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The internship shall be open to **Indian Nationals only**, and is designed **primarily for Indian college and university students**, giving them **hands-on experience** within the MYAS and its autonomous bodies.

17. (b)

**In News:**

**Statement 1 is correct**

- The **Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS)** is part of the **Viksit Bharat initiative (Viksit Bharat@2047)**.
- It aims to engage **young graduates and final-year students** in government projects and policy research to contribute toward India's development vision.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- The PMIS is designed to enhance employability through skill development and industry exposure, **not to ensure job placement**.
- It primarily focuses on providing internship opportunities within India, across government departments and private sector organizations.

**Statement 3 is correct**

- The eligibility conditions explicitly mention that **students already engaged in any apprenticeship or internship under other Central Government schemes** are **not eligible** to apply for PMIS simultaneously.

18. (c)

**Both the statements are correct:** The Joint Initiative for Village Advancement (JIVA) programme was launched by NABARD on February 9, 2022, as an agroecology-based initiative integrated into its existing watershed and wadi programmes across 11 states covering ecologically fragile, rain-fed areas in five agroecological zones. It explicitly promotes agroecological principles such as crop-

livestock-tree integration, natural pest/nutrient management, and soil moisture conservation to foster long-term sustainability, transform social/natural capital, and transition farming communities toward natural farming, where commercial chemical-intensive models are unsuitable.

19. (d)

**In News:** Recently, the **National Frequency Allocation Plan 2025 (NFAP-2025)** was released by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications.

**Statement 1 is correct:**

- **5G and 5G Advanced:** New bands, including 6425–7125 MHz, have been identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), enabling faster and more reliable 5G services.
- **6G Readiness:** Provisions have been made to accommodate future 6G deployments.
- **Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X):** Spectrum has been allocated to support intelligent transport systems and connected vehicles.
- **Satellite Broadband:** The Ka, Q, and V bands have been earmarked for next-generation satellite communication services.

**Statement 2 is correct:**

- **Enhanced Connectivity Services:** Improved spectrum provisions for **In-Flight and Maritime Connectivity (IFMC)** to ensure seamless communication in air and sea travel.

20. (a)

**Context**

- The **JIVA programme** in drought-prone Nanded district of Marathwada has been beneficial for small and marginal farms.

**Components of JIVA Programme**

- The JIVA programme (Joint Initiative for Village Advancement), launched in 2022 by the **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**, is an **agroecology-based initiative** to promote natural farming in India.
- **Objectives of the Programme:**
  - Promote long-term sustainability of farming systems using **natural and low-cost inputs**.
  - **Strengthen resilience** against climate variability and drought through ecological methods.
  - **Enhance soil health**, biodiversity, and food security in rural landscapes.
  - Facilitate a **shift from input-intensive to ecosystem-based agriculture** for small and marginal farmers.



# DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. With reference to the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), consider the following statements:
1. It is a paramilitary force established in 1969, under the Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968.
  2. The CISF functions under the Ministry of Defence and the force is headed by a Director General (DG).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. With reference to the BrahMos missile, consider the following statements:
1. It is a two-stage missile that uses a solid propellant booster in the first stage and a liquid-fuelled ramjet in the second stage.
  2. It can perform both land-attack and anti-ship roles.
  3. It has a terminal flight altitude as low as 5 metres.

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

3. Which of the following best describes the nature of Exercise Ekuverin?
- (a) Annual trilateral naval exercise with India, Maldives and Sri Lanka  
(b) Bilateral army exercise between India and Maldives  
(c) Annual air combat exercise between India and Egypt  
(d) Special Forces maritime exercise focused on anti-piracy
4. India has initiated the procurement of Heron MK-II drones. These drones are developed by which organisation?
- (a) Rafael Advanced Defense Systems (b) Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)  
(c) Elbit Systems (d) Boeing
5. Indian Navy Day is celebrated on 4th December every year in India to commemorate which of the following operations?
- (a) Operation Vijay (b) Operation Pawan  
(c) Operation Cactus (d) Operation Trident
6. Exercise Harimau Shakti, recently in the news, is a bilateral military exercise between which two countries?
- (a) India and Indonesia (b) India and Singapore  
(c) India and Thailand (d) India and Malaysia

7. Consider the following statements about the Border Roads Organisation (BRO):
1. It was established in 1960 under the Ministry of Defence.
  2. It is responsible for construction and maintenance of roads only in India and has no role in projects abroad.
  3. The Director General of BRO is always a civilian officer appointed by the Central Government.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only  
(c) 1 and 2 only (d) 1 and 3 only
8. With reference to the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, consider the following statements:
1. The Sixth Schedule was adopted under Article 244 and provides for creation of autonomous administrative divisions within Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.
  2. All Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) under the Sixth Schedule have a uniform composition of 30 members with a term of four years.
  3. 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.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
9. With reference to India's defence cooperation, the bilateral exercises Al Najah, Eastern Bridge, and Naseem Al Bahr are conducted between India and which of the following countries?
- (a) United Arab Emirates (b) Saudi Arabia  
(c) Oman (d) Qatar
10. Exercise Desert Cyclone, recently seen in the news, is a joint military exercise between India and which of the following countries?
- (a) Saudi Arabia (b) United Arab Emirates  
(c) Oman (d) Qatar
11. With reference to the Param Vir Chakra (PVC), consider the following statements:
1. It was instituted on 26 January 1950 with retrospective effect from 15 August 1947.
  2. It is India's highest military decoration for acts of valour during war.
  3. It was instituted by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
12. 'Sampriti' is a joint military exercise conducted between India and which of the following countries?
- (a) Nepal (b) Bangladesh  
(c) Myanmar (d) Sri Lanka
13. The Indian Navy's Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts (ASW SWC) 'Anjadip' is named after Anjadip Island, located off the coast of which of the following places?
- (a) Karwar, Karnataka (b) Kochi, Kerala  
(c) Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (d) Porbandar, Gujarat

14. Mitra Shakti, often seen in the news, is a joint military exercise between:
- (a) India and Nepal (b) India and Bangladesh  
(c) India and Maldives (d) India and Sri Lanka
15. With reference to the K-4 missile, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:
1. K-4 is a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) developed by DRDO with a strike range of about 3,500 km.
  2. The 'K' in the K-series of missiles is a tribute to APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
16. With reference to INS Vaghsheer, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:
1. INS Vaghsheer is the sixth and final submarine of the Indian Navy's Kalvari-class under Project 75.
  2. INS Vaghsheer is named after a species of sandfish.
- 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)

**Statement 1 is correct:** It is a paramilitary force established in 1969, under the **Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968**.

- Every year, **CISF Raising Day is observed on March 10**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The force is led by a **Director General (DG)** and operates under the **Ministry of Home Affairs of India**.

2. (d)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The BrahMos missile uses a two-stage propulsion system—a solid-propellant booster in the first stage to bring it to supersonic speeds, which then separates, followed by a liquid-fuelled ramjet engine in the second stage that sustains the supersonic cruise velocity near Mach 3. This liquid ramjet is an air-breathing engine using liquid fuel, providing efficient high-speed propulsion.

**Statement 2 is correct:** BrahMos is capable of performing both land-attack and anti-ship missions, with various launch platforms including land, sea, and air. It is highly versatile and can accurately target both types of targets with high speed and precision.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The missile's terminal flight altitude can be as low as 5 meters (sea-skimming), which helps it evade radar and defense systems. This low altitude during the terminal phase enhances its survivability against interception.

3. (b)

**Option b is correct:** Exercise Ekuverin is an annual bilateral military exercise between the Indian Army and Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF), meaning "Friends" in Dhivehi, started in 2009 and held alternately in India and Maldives to enhance interoperability in counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, and humanitarian assistance operations.

## 4. (b)

**Context**

- India has initiated the procurement of **Heron MK-II drones** from Israel under emergency provisions invoked after Operation Sindoor.

**About**

- Developer:** Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)
- Capability:** The Heron Mk II is a medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE) UAV. It can carry **close to 500 kg** of payload and sustain more than 24 hours of continuous flight.
- Sensors and Systems:** Equipped with Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), electro-optical systems, and SIGINT sensors, the platform provides comprehensive ISR capabilities even in challenging weather conditions.
- Operational Flexibility:** Its fully automated take-off and landing systems, coupled with encrypted satellite communication, enable remote operations, flexible mission planning and deployment across varied theatres without ground-based line-of-sight control.
- Significance:** Heron drones are primarily deployed for **long-range surveillance** on both the Chinese and Pakistani frontiers and have proven highly effective.



## 5. (d)

**Context:** Navy Day is celebrated on the 4th of December every year to recognise the achievements and role of the Indian Navy.

**About**

- It was on this day in 1971, during **Operation Trident**, that the Indian Navy sank four Pakistani vessels, including PNS Khaibar.
- This year, the Navy Day is being celebrated with a spectacular Operational Demonstration at **Shangumugham beach** in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

**Do you know?**

- The Indian Navy operates as a modern blue-water force with over **67,000 personnel** and about **150 ships and submarines**.
- Before **1972**, Navy Day shifted **multiple times**, first observed on the Royal Navy's Trafalgar Day (October 21), then on 1 December, and later on 15 December.

## 6. (d)

**In News:** India and Malaysia have commenced the **5th edition of Exercise Harimau Shakti 2025** at the **Mahajan Field Firing Range, Rajasthan**.



**About**

- It is a bilateral military exercise between the **Indian Army and the Malaysian Army**.
- The exercise aimed at training both forces in jungle warfare, counter-insurgency operations, semi-urban combat & enabling smoother cooperation in future missions.
- The exercise began in 2012 and is conducted regularly, strengthening defence ties.

**7. (a)**

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Border Roads Organisation was established in 1960 and functions under the Ministry of Defence, with its parent body being the Border Roads Development Board.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** BRO constructs and maintains roads and related infrastructure not only in India's border areas but also in friendly foreign countries such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The head of BRO is the Director General Border Roads (DGBR), who is a Lieutenant General—rank officer of the Indian Army, not a civilian post.

**8. (c)**

**Statement 1 is correct: 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 ADCs, were granted certain **legislative, judicial and administrative autonomy** within the state.

**Statement 2 is not correct: 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**.

**Statement 3 is correct: 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**.

**9. (c)**

**Context:** The Union Cabinet has approved the proposed **Free Trade Agreement between India and Oman**.

**India-Oman Ties**

- Diplomatic relations were **formalised in 1955** and elevated to a **Strategic Partnership in 2008**.
- **Defence Cooperation:** India and Oman conduct regular bilateral exercises between all three services.
  - Army exercise: Al Najah
  - Air Force exercise: Eastern Bridge
  - Naval Exercise: Naseem Al Bahr

**10. (b)**

**Context:** India-UAE Joint Military Exercise Desert Cyclone is going to begin in UAE.

**About the exercise**

- The **first edition** of Exercise Desert Cyclone was held in **2024** in Rajasthan, India.
- The aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability and foster defence cooperation between the Indian Army and the UAE Land Forces through joint training in an **urban environment**, with a focus on sub-conventional operations under a **United Nations mandate**.

**11. (a)**

**Context:** Portraits of all 21 Param Vir Chakra (PVC) awardees have been installed at Rashtrapati Bhavan, replacing the portraits of 96 British Aide-de-Camps (ADCs).

**About the Param Vir Chakra**

- It was instituted on **26 January 1950 (Republic Day)** by **Dr. Rajendra Prasad**, the first President of India, with retrospective effect from 15 August 1947.
- The name *Param Vir Chakra* translates to **“Wheel of the Ultimate Brave.”**
- The medal was designed by **Savitri Khanolkar**, who drew inspiration from **Sage Dadhichi**, the Vedic rishi who sacrificed his body so that the gods could forge the **Vajra (thunderbolt)** from his spine.
- The medal is cast in bronze. In the centre, on a raised circle, is the **state emblem**, surrounded by **four replicas of Indra’s Vajra**, flanked by the sword of **Shivaji**. It is suspended from a swivelling bar and worn with a **32 mm purple ribbon**.

**12. (b)**

**Context:** According to a recent report by the **Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs**, India is facing its **most formidable strategic challenge** in Bangladesh since the **1971 Liberation War**.

**India–Bangladesh Relationship: An Overview**

- **Historical Context:** India was the first country to recognize Bangladesh after its independence in 1971.
  - The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Peace (1972) and further evolution into a comprehensive partnership encompassing political, security, economic, and cultural dimensions.
- **Defence & Security Cooperation:** Robust military exchanges between armed forces of both nations, like **Sampriti & Bongo Sagar joint exercises**.

**13. (a)**

**Context:** The Indian Navy received **Anjadip**, the third of eight **Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts (ASW SWC)**.

**About**

- The ship is named after **Anjadip Island**, located **off the coast of Karwar in Karnataka**, and carries forward the **legacy of the erstwhile INS Anjadip**, a Petya-class corvette that was **decommissioned in 2003**.
- It is **indigenously designed** and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.
  - The project has been executed under a **public-private partnership**.
- The ASW SWC is the **largest Indian naval warship** to be propelled by waterjets.
  - The craft is equipped with advanced lightweight torpedoes, indigenously developed anti-submarine rockets and shallow water sonar systems, enabling effective detection and engagement of underwater threats.

- The platform is expected to significantly enhance the **Navy's anti-submarine warfare, coastal surveillance and mine-laying capabilities.**

14. (d)

#### Context

- India has pledged a **reconstruction package of \$450 million** as part of India's First Responder activity under **Operation Sagar Bandhu to Sri Lanka.**

#### India and Sri Lanka Relations

- **Diplomatic Ties:** Diplomatic relations established in **1948** after Sri Lanka's independence.
- **Maritime Security and Defence Cooperation:** In 2011, a decision was taken to establish the **Colombo Security Conclave which aims to further promote maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.**
  - India and Sri Lanka conduct a joint Military exercise named '**Mitra Shakti**', Trilateral Maritime Exercise "**Dosti**", and a Naval exercise named **SLINEX.**

15. (c)

#### Context

- India recently tested the K-4 submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) from the nuclear-powered submarine INS Arighaat in the Bay of Bengal.
  - INS Arighaat, the country's second nuclear-powered submarine with nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles (called SSBN in naval parlance), was commissioned in 2024.

#### About the K-4 Missile

- With a strike range of around **3,500 km**, the **DRDO-developed K-4 missile** substantially enhances India's **sea-based nuclear deterrence.**
  - Earlier, the first nuclear-powered submarine, **INS Arihant**, commissioned in 2016, was equipped with K-15 missiles limited to a 750-km range.
- Derived from the **Agni-III** missile, the K-4 is India's longest-range sea-launched strategic weapon and can carry a **2.5-ton nuclear warhead.**
- The K-4 programme, along with future K-5 and K-6 missiles in the 5,000–6,000 km range class, is critical for narrowing India's strategic gap with major nuclear powers, as the US, Russia, and China already deploy SLBMs with ranges exceeding 5,000 km.

#### Do you know?

- The 'K' in the K-series of missiles is a tribute to APJ Abdul Kalam (Scientist and former President of India), who played a key role in India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).

16. (c)

**In News:** President Droupadi Murmu created history by undertaking a dive and operational sortie aboard the indigenous Kalvari-class submarine INS Vaghsheer.

#### About INS Vaghsheer

- It is the sixth and final submarine of the Indian Navy's Kalvari-class (Scorpène-class) under Project 75, built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited with French technology transfer.
- Other submarines of this class are Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj, Vagir and Vela.
- It is named after the sandfish, it enhances India's underwater combat capabilities with advanced stealth features.



# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. The Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA) recently seen in the news, is primarily associated with which among the following international frameworks?
  - (a) International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
  - (b) United Nations Framework for Climate-Resilient Agriculture
  - (c) Global Seed Vault Framework
  - (d) Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
2. Which of the following countries is not a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)?
  - (a) Saudi Arabia
  - (b) Oman
  - (c) Iraq
  - (d) Qatar
3. With reference to the '*Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)*', consider the following statements:
  1. It prohibits the development, production, and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons.
  2. It has a formal verification regime and enforcement mechanism.Which of the statements given above is/are *not* correct?
  - (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. 'RELOS Agreement' recently seen in the news, is a
  - (a) Defence technology transfer agreement
  - (b) Military logistics support pact
  - (c) Free trade agreement
  - (d) Trilateral naval cooperation framework
5. With reference to the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), consider the following statements:
  1. It was launched by India in 2023 for conservation of seven major big cat species.
  2. Only big cat range countries are eligible to become members of the Alliance.
  3. The Secretariat of IBCA is located in New Delhi.How many of the statements given above are correct?
  - (a) Only one
  - (b) Only two
  - (c) All three
  - (d) None
6. The Preah Vihear Temple, often seen in news due to border clashes, is disputed between two countries?
  - (a) Thailand and Cambodia
  - (b) Laos and Cambodia
  - (c) Thailand and Vietnam
  - (d) Myanmar and Thailand

7. With reference to the Quad grouping, consider the following statements:
1. The idea of the Quad first emerged during the joint humanitarian response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.
  2. Japan formally proposed the idea of the Quad in 2007 through its then Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

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. Consider the following pairs:

<i>INTERPOL Notices</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
1. Red Notice	Wanted Persons
2. Blue Notice	Unidentified bodies
3. Yellow Notice	Mission persons

How many of the pairs are correctly matched?

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

9. The “Yellow Line” recently seen in news is being described as:
- (a) A permanent international border between Israel and Gaza
  - (b) A temporary military demarcation line inside the Gaza Strip
  - (c) A ceasefire line between Israel and Egypt
  - (d) An international border between Israel and the West Bank recognized by the United Nations
10. With reference to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consider the following statements:
1. ADB was established in 1966 and is headquartered in Manila, Philippines.
  2. India is not a founding member of ADB.
  3. Japan and the United States are the largest shareholders in ADB.

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   |

11. With reference to Pax Silica, consider the following statements:

1. Pax Silica is a United States–led strategic initiative aimed at building a secure and resilient silicon supply chain starting from critical minerals.
2. It includes participation from countries such as Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Israel, and Australia.
3. Pax Silica is limited exclusively to semiconductor manufacturing and does not include cooperation in software platforms or applications.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

12. Satellite spectrum is globally coordinated and managed by;

- (a) International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- (b) World Trade Organization (WTO)

- (c) International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- (d) United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)

**13.** With reference to the Asian Development Bank, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. ADB is a regional development bank established in 1966 for Social and Economic Development.
2. It has more than 100 members including India as a founding member.

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

**14.** With reference to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), consider the following statements:

1. It was launched in 2005 as a joint initiative of Türkiye and Spain under the United Nations.
2. Its Secretariat is located in Geneva.
3. It primarily works to promote intercultural dialogue and reduce polarisation and conflict.
4. It has a legally binding mandate to resolve inter-state disputes.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**15.** With reference to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), consider the following statements:

1. SAARC was established with the signing of its Charter in Dhaka in 1985.
2. At present, SAARC has eight member countries.
3. China is a full member of SAARC.

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

**16.** With reference to the Tianjin Declaration, consider the following statements:

1. The Tianjin Declaration was adopted at the BRICS Summit to strengthen cooperation in climate change mitigation and green finance.
2. It reaffirmed the commitment of participating countries to the principles of multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations in global governance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**17.** With reference to the '*India-Bangladesh relations*', consider the following statements:

1. India shares the longest land boundary with Bangladesh.
2. Both countries engage through the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) to manage transboundary rivers.

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.** With reference to the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), consider the following statements:
1. It is a World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) agreement that sets minimum global standards for the protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).
  2. It came into force in 1995 and is binding on all member states.
- 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 United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, consider the following statements:
1. UN Peacekeeping missions are composed of multinational military, police, and civilian personnel contributed by member states.
  2. The principle of impartiality requires peacekeepers to remain neutral and not favor any party to the conflict.
  3. Use of force by UN Peacekeepers is permitted only in self-defence or for the protection of the mandate, such as protection of civilians.
- 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
- 20.** With reference to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and OPEC+, consider the following statements:
1. OPEC was established in 1960 at the Baghdad Conference by five founding members including Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.
  2. Austria is a member of OPEC since the organisation is headquartered in Vienna.
  3. OPEC+ was formed in 2016 following the Algiers Accord and the Vienna Agreement, partly in response to falling oil prices due to rising U.S. shale oil production.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 21.** Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port is associated with which of the following initiatives?
- (a) International North–South Transport Corridor  
(b) Belt and Road Initiative  
(c) Asia–Africa Growth Corridor  
(d) Indo-Pacific Economic Framework
- 22.** With reference to Kimberley Process (KP), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is a legally binding international treaty under the United Nations.
  2. The Kimberley Process Secretariat is headquartered in Gaborone, Botswana.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

23. Consider the following countries:

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Myanmar  | 2. Cambodia    |
| 3. Thailand | 4. Vietnam     |
| 5. Japan    | 6. New Zealand |

How many of the above countries are part of the *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)*?

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| (a) Only three | (b) Only four |
| (c) Only five  | (d) All six   |

24. With reference to the World Trade Organization (WTO), consider the following statements:

1. The WTO was established as a result of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.
2. The Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body of the WTO.
3. Accession to the WTO requires a country to align its trade and economic policies with WTO rules and negotiate terms with existing members.

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   |

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

#### Context

- The 11th Governing Body Meeting of the **International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)** concluded in Lima, Peru without consensus on expanding the list of crops covered under the **Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA)**.

#### About

- India and several other countries opposed the proposal to extend the **Multilateral System (MLS)** to all crops and revise benefit-sharing rules, arguing it could dilute national sovereignty over seed diversity.
- Under the SMTA, genetic material of **64 crops is accessible only to treaty members** and exclusively for research, breeding and training.
- Recipients cannot claim IPR over the material in its received form and must share benefits through the treaty's four benefit-sharing mechanisms.

#### What is ITPGRFA?

- The ITPGRFA is a legally binding **FAO treaty, adopted in 2001** and enforced since 2004, aimed at conservation, sustainable use and fair benefit-sharing of **Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA)**.
- It complements the **CBD and Nagoya Protocol**.

2. (c)

#### About GCC

- It is a **political and economic alliance of six Middle Eastern countries**—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman.
- It was established in **1981**.

- It aims to achieve unity among its members based on their common objectives and their similar political and cultural identities, which are rooted in Arab and Islamic cultures.
- The presidency of the council rotates **annually**.

### 3. (b)

**In News:** Recently, India's External Affairs Minister, at a conference marking **50 Years of Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)**, has cautioned that the world remains '**not yet adequately prepared**' to tackle the threat of '**Bioterrorism**', highlighting serious institutional and structural gaps.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- **The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)** was established and entered into force on **March 26, 1975**, becoming the **first multilateral disarmament treaty** to ban an **entire category of weapons of mass destruction**.
- It prohibits the **development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling**, and use of biological and toxin weapons.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- The BWC **lacks a formal verification regime**, making enforcement and compliance monitoring challenging, **unlike the Chemical Weapons Convention**.
- India highlighted that '*Bioterrorism is a serious concern that the international community has to be adequately prepared for*', noting that despite its importance, the **BWC still lacks basic institutional structures**, like:
  - No compliance system;
  - No permanent technical body;
  - No mechanism to track scientific developments.

### 4. (b)

**In News:** Russia's lower house of parliament has ratified the **Reciprocal Exchange of Logistic Support (Relos) Agreement** with India.

- Relos is similar to logistics agreements India has signed with countries like the US, UK, Japan, Australia, France, Singapore, South Korea, and Vietnam.

**India–Russia Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Support (Relos) Agreement**

- It is a **bilateral military logistics pact** that enables both countries' military aircraft, ships, and personnel to use each other's bases for refueling, maintenance, spare parts, training, joint exercises, humanitarian missions, and disaster relief.
- It streamlines logistics by reducing paperwork, ensuring quicker support, and allowing rolling settlement of costs.
- It also grants mutual access to each other's airspace and ports, which will provide **India with strategic entry to the Arctic region** along the Northern Sea Route, where Russia has an extensive military presence.
- **For Russia**, Relos offers access to Indian Ocean facilities, helping it maintain global reach despite Western sanctions and allowing power projection in Asia without costly overseas bases.

### 5. (b)

**Statement 1 is Correct:** The alliance was launched by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, on April 9, 2023, in Mysuru, Karnataka, during the commemoration of 50 years of Project Tiger. Its primary aim is the conservation of the seven major big cats: Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma.

**Statement 2 is Incorrect:** Membership is not limited to a range of countries. The alliance is open to 97 range countries as well as non-range countries interested in big cat conservation, along with conservation partners and scientific organizations.

**Statement 3 is Correct:** The headquarters and Secretariat of the IBCA are located in New Delhi, India.

6. (a)

**In News:** Recently, Thailand launched airstrikes on Cambodian military targets.

#### Background

- The conflict centers on a long-standing territorial dispute dating back to colonial-era border demarcations made by France in 1907.



- At the heart of the dispute is the Preah Vihear temple, a culturally significant 11th–12th century Khmer shrine claimed by both countries.
- Though the International Court of Justice affirmed Cambodian sovereignty in 1962 and again in 2013, Thailand has rejected the rulings, and the area remains heavily militarized.

7. (c)

**Context:** The **Quad grouping** has urged all UN member states to cooperate in bringing to justice the perpetrators, organisers and financiers of the recent Red Fort terror incident.

#### About the Quad

- It is an informal strategic forum comprising **four nations**, namely -- United States of America (USA), India, Australia and Japan.
- One of the **primary objectives** of the Quad is to work for a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
- Origins**
  - The idea first emerged during the **2004 Indian Ocean tsunami**, when the four countries coordinated massive humanitarian assistance.
  - Later, in **2007**, Japan's then Prime Minister **Shinzo Abe** pushed to formalise this cooperation — giving shape to what we now call the Quad.
- Dormancy & Revival**
  - Australia** pulled out of the Quad in **2008**, and the grouping went dormant for nearly a decade — largely due to Canberra's concern that the forum might provoke China.
  - But by **2017**, shifting geopolitical realities and growing worries over China's influence brought all four countries back together, reviving the Quad.

8. (b)

**In News :** Interpol has issued a Blue Corner Notice to track owners of nightclubs in Goa, after a fire at the club killed 25 people.

- The Goa Police had requested the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to seek the notice from Interpol.

**INTERPOL Notices** are international alerts used by police in member countries to share critical crime-related information.

- They are Issued by INTERPOL's General Secretariat at the request of a member country, international tribunals, the International Criminal Court, or the UN.



9. (b)

#### Context

- The Israeli military has described the “Yellow Line”, a temporary withdrawal line agreed during Phase-1 of the 2025 U.S.-brokered ceasefire, as a “**new border**”.

#### About Yellow Line

- The Yellow Line is a **temporary military demarcation** line inside the Gaza Strip.
- Territory east of the line remains under direct **Israeli operational control**.
- **Territory Controlled by Israel:** More than half of Gaza (53–58%) remains under Israeli control. It includes most agricultural land and Rafah border crossing with Egypt.

10. (c)

**In News:** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has raised India's growth forecast for **FY26 to 7.2%, from 6.5%.**

#### About ADB

- ADB was **established in 1966** as a regional development bank to promote social and economic development in Asia and the Pacific.
- Its **headquarters is in Mandaluyong, Manila, Philippines.**
- Its membership includes both **regional (Asia-Pacific) and non-regional countries**, with around **two-thirds of UNESCAP members** plus developed donor countries participating.
  - India joined **ADB in 1966 as a founding member.**
- **Major shareholders** include Japan and the United States (15.6% each), followed by China (6.4%), India (6.3%) and Australia (5.8%), reflecting both regional and non-regional stake.



## 11. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** Pax Silica is a US-led strategic initiative to build a secure, prosperous, and innovation-driven silicon supply chain from critical minerals.

- **The inaugural Pax Silica Summit convenes counterparts from:** Japan, Republic of Korea, Singapore, the Netherlands, The United Kingdom, Israel, United Arab Emirates, and Australia.
  - Together, these countries are home to the most important companies and investors powering the global AI supply chain.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Its objective is to reduce coercive dependencies, protect the materials and capabilities foundational to artificial intelligence, and ensure aligned nations can develop and deploy transformative technologies at scale.

- **Countries will partner** on securing strategic stacks of the global technology supply chain, including, but not limited to, software applications and platforms.

## 12. (a)

## Context

- The rapid expansion of satellite megaconstellations, driven by soaring demand for high-speed connectivity, has intensified the global race for limited spectrum and orbital slots.

## What is Satellite Spectrum?



- Satellite spectrum refers to the **radio frequencies** used for satellite communications.
  - These frequencies enable satellite-based systems to **transmit data and signals between satellites** in orbit and ground stations.
- Unlike terrestrial spectrum, satellite spectrum operates without national territorial limits and is managed globally by the **International Telecommunications Union (ITU)**.
- Satellite spectrum is divided into different frequency bands, each suited for specific types of communication.

## International Telecommunications Union (ITU)

- The ITU is a specialised agency of the **United Nations with 194** member states.
- **Founded in 1865** to facilitate international connectivity in communications networks, it serves as the **sole global coordinator for satellite spectrum and orbital slots**.
  - **India** has been a member of ITU since 1869.



- **Functions:** It allocates global radio spectrum and satellite orbits.
  - It develops the **technical standards** that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strive to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.

## 13. (a)

**Context**

- The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank signed agreements for five loans totaling over \$2.2 billion to support various development projects.

**About Asian Development Bank**

- ADB is a regional development bank established in **1966** for Social and Economic Development.
- **Members:** It has **69 members including** India as a **founding member**.
- It is a **multilateral development bank**, which seeks to help its developing member countries to reduce poverty and improve their people's quality of life through inclusive economic growth, environmentally sustainable growth and regional integration.
- ADB uses a **weighted voting system** based on members' capital subscriptions. The current top five shareholders and their approximate share percentages are;
  - Japan (15.6%), United States (15.6%), People's Republic of China (6.4%), India (6.3%) and Australia (5.8%).
- **Headquarters:** Manila, Philippines.

## 14. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** UNAOC was launched in 2005 by Türkiye and Spain, under the auspices of the United Nations.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The Secretariat is located in New York, not Geneva.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Its core objective is to improve cross-cultural relations and reduce polarisation.

**Statement 4 is not correct:** UNAOC has no legally binding or dispute-resolution mandate; it is a dialogue and partnership-based initiative.

## 15. (a)

**Context:** Pakistan and China are working to create a new regional bloc to replace SAARC, in which India was a prominent member.

**About SAARC**

- The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on December 8, 1985.
- At present, SAARC comprises eight Member states: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

## 16. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The Tianjin Declaration is a recent political declaration adopted by the Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) at the 2025 Tianjin SCO Summit, setting out their shared vision on security, development and global governance.

**Statement 2 is correct:** It reaffirms adherence to the UN Charter and the SCO Charter, and to the "Shanghai Spirit" of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations, and common development. The declaration is part of a broader push by SCO members to advocate a more multipolar world order and a greater role for the Global South in shaping international norms.

17. (c)

**In News:** According to a recent report by the **Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs**, India is facing its **most formidable strategic challenge** in Bangladesh since the **1971 Liberation War**.

**Statement 1 is correct:** India and Bangladesh share a land boundary of about **4,096 km**, which is **India's longest international border** with any country.

- The boundary touches **five Indian states** as West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The **Joint Rivers Commission (JRC)** between India and Bangladesh was established in **1972**.

- Its objective is to maintain liaison for the **common interests and sharing of the waters** of 54 transboundary rivers, **including the Ganga, Teesta, and Brahmaputra**.

18. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** TRIPS is a **binding** WTO agreement that sets **minimum global standards** for the protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).

**Statement 2 is correct:** It has been in force since **1995**.

- It is binding on all WTO members, including India.

18. (d)

**All three statements are correct:** UN Peacekeeping is a key mechanism used by the United Nations to maintain **global peace and security**.

- It operates alongside other UN efforts, including **conflict prevention, peacemaking, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding**.
- The UN Peacekeepers, known as **Blue Helmets**, get their name from the light blue of the United Nations flag.

#### Key Features

- **Multinational Forces:** Troops and police are contributed by UN member states.
- **Impartiality:** Peacekeepers remain neutral and do not take sides in a conflict.
- **Consent-Based:** Missions operate with the consent of the host country (though this can be complex in practice).
- **Use of Force:** Only allowed in self-defense or defense of the mandate (e.g., to protect civilians).

20. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** is an intergovernmental organisation established in **1960** at the **Baghdad Conference** by **Saudi Arabia, Iran, Venezuela, Kuwait and Iraq**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** It is **headquartered** in Vienna, Austria, although **Austria is not an OPEC member state**.

**Statement 3 is correct:** **OPEC+ has 22 members**, made up of **10 major oil producing countries** (Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Brunei, Bahrain, Mexico, Oman, South Sudan, Sudan and Malaysia), **along with the 12 OPEC members**.

- The **OPEC+ was formed in 2016** after the adoption of the '**Algiers Accord**' by OPEC countries in 2016 and signing of the '**Vienna Agreement**' in 2016 between OPEC and other major oil exporting countries.
- The move was largely a response to sharply falling oil prices caused by a surge in U.S. shale oil production.

## 21. (b)

The **Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port** is a major deep-water port currently under construction on Boubyan Island, Kuwait. In December 2025, Kuwait signed a massive \$4.1 billion contract with China to complete the construction of the port. During the signing, Chinese officials explicitly stated that the project constitutes participation in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

- The port is a cornerstone of “**Kuwait Vision 2035**” (**New Kuwait**), aiming to transform Kuwait into a major regional financial and trade hub. The port is strategically located very close to Iraq’s Al Faw Grand Port, which has led to diplomatic tensions between Kuwait and Iraq over maritime access and economic competition in the Northern Gulf.

## 22. (b)

**Context**

- The Kimberley Process (KP) Plenary has selected India to assume the chairmanship of the Kimberley Process from **1 January 2026**.

**About**

- The Kimberley Process is a **tripartite initiative** involving governments, the international diamond industry and civil society to prevent the trade in **conflict diamonds**.
  - **Conflict diamonds are rough diamonds** used by rebel groups or their allies to finance conflicts that undermine legitimate governments, as defined in United Nations Security Council resolutions.
- **History:** The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), established pursuant to a UN resolution, came into effect on **1 January 2003**.
- **Members:** The Kimberley Process (KP) is **open to any country that can meet its standards**.
  - Currently, it comprises **60 participants** representing 86 countries, with the EU and its **27 Member States** counted as one participant under the European Commission.
  - **India** is a founding member of the KP.
  - The members account for over **99 percent** of the global rough diamond trade.
- **The chair oversees** the implementation of the **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)** and operations of the working groups, committees and administration that activate the KP.
- **Secretariat:** The Kimberley Process Secretariat is headquartered in **Gaborone, Botswana**.

## 23. (d)

**In News:** India has since managed to strategically position itself to reap many of the benefits of **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** without formally joining the bloc or compromising its economic sovereignty or exposing itself to the vulnerabilities associated with Chinese market dominance.

- The **RCEP** includes the **10 ASEAN nations** (*Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam*) plus **Australia, China, Japan, South Korea, and New Zealand**.

## 24. (d)

**All three statements are correct: WTO was established** on 1 January 1995.

- **Created by:** Uruguay Round negotiations (1986-94).
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Membership:** 166 members representing 98 per cent of world trade.
- **Functions:**
  - Administering WTO trade agreements.

- Forum for trade negotiations.
- Handling trade disputes.
- Monitoring national trade policies.
- Technical assistance and training for developing countries.
- Cooperation with other international organizations.
- The WTO's top decision-making body is the **Ministerial Conference**.
  - Below this is the General Council and various other councils and committees.
- To join the WTO, a government has to bring its economic and trade policies in line with WTO rules and negotiate its terms of entry with the WTO membership.

■ ■ ■ ■



# SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1. Which of the following best describes Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)?
  - (a) AI that surpasses human intelligence across all domains
  - (b) AI that can perform specialized tasks like image recognition
  - (c) AI capable of understanding, learning, and performing any intellectual task that humans can
  - (d) AI used exclusively for military applications
2. Liraglutide, Semaglutide and Tirzepatide are sometimes seen in the news. They are related to:
  - (a) New-generation antiviral therapies used in pandemic preparedness
  - (b) Drugs used for the treatment of obesity and type 2 diabetes
  - (c) Novel antibiotics developed to counter drug-resistant bacteria
  - (d) Hormonal contraceptives developed for reproductive health
3. With reference to the Leprosy, consider the following statements:
  1. The National Strategic Plan (NSP) and Roadmap for Leprosy launched in 2023 aims to achieve zero transmission of leprosy in India by 2030.
  2. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.3 targets ending leprosy by 2030.
  3. Jordan became the first country in the world to eliminate leprosy, as declared by WHO in 2024.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

4. With reference to Leprosy, consider the following statements:
  1. It is caused by Mycobacterium leprae, which primarily affects the peripheral nerves.
  2. The disease can spread through droplets from the nose and mouth.
  3. Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) is an effective cure for leprosy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Which among the following techniques are used in food irradiation for preservation?
  1. Gamma rays
  2. X-rays
  3. Electron beams (e-beam)

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  |

6. With reference to cosmic filaments, consider the following statements:
1. Cosmic filaments are among the largest structures in the Universe, stretching across hundreds of millions of lightyears.
  2. They form at the intersection of large sheets of matter that collapse under gravity.
  3. Observational mapping of filaments is possible only through gravitational wave measurements.

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 organ donation in India, consider the following statements:

1. A single donor can save up to eight lives by donating vital organs.
2. Both living and deceased individuals can donate organs.
3. India ranks third globally in organ transplantation.

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. Which of the following best describes Biostimulants?

- (a) Substances that kill pests or inhibit their growth in crops.
- (b) Substances that act as primary nutrients for plants.
- (c) Materials that enhance nutrient efficiency, stress tolerance, and plant metabolism.
- (d) Microorganisms genetically modified to increase crop yield.

9. With reference to Willow processor, consider the following statements:

1. Willow is a superconducting quantum designed by Microsoft processor that uses qubits instead of classical bits.
2. It has been used in experiments such as the Quantum Echoes algorithm to study quantum chaos.

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 Aditya-L1, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is India's first dedicated space-based mission to study the Sun.
2. It was launched by the PSLV-C57, and was placed at Lagrangian point L1 for Observing the chromospheric and coronal dynamics of the Sun.

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

11. Mephedrone, recently seen in the news, is best described as:

- (a) A naturally occurring opioid derived from the poppy plant
- (b) A synthetic stimulant classified as a New Psychoactive Substance
- (c) A pharmaceutical sedative used for anaesthesia
- (d) A hallucinogenic compound extracted from cacti



**12.** GlowCas9, recently developed by Indian scientists, is significant because:

- (a) It completely eliminates off-target gene editing errors.
- (b) It allows gene editing without the need for guide RNA.
- (c) It emits bioluminescent signals that help track Cas9 activity in real time.
- (d) It replaces the Cas9 enzyme with a synthetic RNA polymerase.

**13.** Consider the following pairs:

<i>Launch vehicles</i>	<i>Related Countries</i>
1. Soyuz-2	Russia
2. Long March 2F	China
3. Atlas V	U.S

How many of the pairs are correctly matched?

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

**14.** Which of the following substances is commonly administered during a narco test to reduce inhibitions and reasoning ability?

- (a) Ketamine
- (b) Sodium Pentothal
- (c) Halothane
- (d) Propofol

**15.** A supernova is best described as;

- (a) The gradual cooling of a star after hydrogen exhaustion
- (b) A luminous stellar explosion occurring at the end of a star's life
- (c) The formation of a neutron star during star birth
- (d) The collapse of interstellar gas clouds

**16.** With reference to Snakebite Envenoming, consider the following statements:

- 1. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified snakebite envenoming as a high-priority neglected tropical disease.
- 2. In India, nearly 90% of snake bites are attributed to the 'Big Four' species—Indian cobra, common krait, Russell's viper and saw-scaled viper.
- 3. Almost half of snakebite-related deaths in India occur during the southwest monsoon season.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**17.** With reference to Lunarcrete, consider the following statements:

- 1. Lunarcrete refers to a construction material proposed to be manufactured on the Moon using lunar regolith as the primary aggregate.
- 2. Lunarcrete is primarily intended to replace metallic structures for spacecraft launched from Earth.
- 3. It can provide radiation shielding and protection against micrometeorites for long-duration human presence on the Moon.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

- 18.** With reference to Gonorrhea, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is a sexually transmitted infection caused by the virus *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.
  2. Gonorrhoea can be passed from a pregnant mother to her baby.
- 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.** Which of the following statements best describes Nitrofurans, sometimes seen in the news?
- (a) Steroid substance used in poultry and aquaculture to improve growth
  - (b) Synthetic antimicrobial compounds banned in food-producing animals due to health risks
  - (c) Plant-based preservatives approved by FSSAI for extending shelf life of meat products
  - (d) Vaccines used to prevent bacterial infections in livestock
- 20.** Jumping genes are scientifically referred to as:
- (a) Plasmids (b) Transposable elements  
(c) Operons (d) Introns
- 21.** With reference to the composition of the Universe and the properties of dark matter and dark energy, consider the following statements:
1. The Universe is believed to be composed of normal matter, dark matter and dark energy.
  2. Dark energy acts as a repulsive force responsible for the accelerated expansion of the Universe.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 22.** Which of the following best explains why Kessler Syndrome is difficult to reverse once initiated?
- (a) Space debris moves at extremely low velocities
  - (b) Orbital debris cannot be tracked by ground-based systems
  - (c) Each collision exponentially increases the number of debris fragments
  - (d) International space law prohibits debris removal
- 23.** With reference to Diabetes, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. In Type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin and affected individuals require regular insulin to survive.
  2. Type 2 diabetes is characterised by improper use of insulin by the body.
- 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.** Autophagy is often described as “self-eating” because;
- (a) Cells digest neighbouring cells
  - (b) Cells consume extracellular nutrients only
  - (c) Cells recycle their own damaged organelles and proteins
  - (d) Cells undergo apoptosis i.e. a programmed cell death

- 25.** The Doppler effect, used in weather radars, is based on changes in:
- Amplitude of reflected radio waves only
  - Phase and frequency of reflected radio waves due to relative motion
  - Temperature of atmospheric particles
  - Direction of satellite orbits
- 26.** Which of the following features distinguishes the BlueBird Block-2 satellite from conventional communication satellites?
- It operates in geostationary orbit
  - It requires special antennas on user devices
  - It connects directly to standard smartphones without additional hardware
  - It is exclusively meant for military communications
- 27.** With reference to NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), which of the following statements is/are correct?
- It is the commercial arm of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), incorporated in 2019.
  - It is a wholly owned Government of India company, under the administrative control of the Department of Space (DOS).
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
- 28.** Ghost Pairing, recently seen in news, is best described as:
- A malware that spreads through Bluetooth-based file sharing
  - A cyber scam that exploits SIM cloning to hijack messaging apps
  - A technique to take over a messaging account by abusing device-linking features
  - A ransomware attack targeting cloud-based communication platforms
- 29.** With reference to Neoblasts, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- Neoblasts are pluripotent stem cells found in planarian flatworms.
  - Neoblasts can differentiate into nerve, muscle, gut and epidermal cells.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
- 30.** With reference to BlueBird Block-2 satellite, Consider the following statements:
- It is the largest commercial communications satellite to be deployed in Low Earth Orbit.
  - It is the heaviest payload launched by Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3) from Indian soil.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
- 31.** With reference to Kashiwazaki–Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- It is situated in Niigata Prefecture on Japan's Honshu island.
  - It is the world's largest nuclear power plant in terms of installed capacity.

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.** With reference to Rabies, consider the following statements:

1. Rabies is a viral, zoonotic disease affecting the central nervous system and is classified as a neglected tropical disease.
2. The rabies virus belongs to the genus *Lyssavirus* and the family *Rhabdoviridae*.
3. In most human rabies cases worldwide, wildlife animals such as bats and foxes are the primary source of transmission.

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

**33.** With reference to chromatin, consider the following statements:

1. Chromatin is a complex of DNA and proteins found in the nucleus of eukaryotic cells.
2. DNA wraps around histone proteins to form structures known as nucleosomes.
3. Tightly packed chromatin facilitates active gene transcription.

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

**34.** Which of the following is a direct advantage of eliminating wheel–rail contact in Maglev systems?

- (a) Increased fuel consumption  
(b) Higher noise due to air turbulence  
(c) Reduced friction and mechanical wear  
(d) Reduced need for power supply

**35.** With reference to the composition of the Universe, consider the following statements:

1. Dark energy acts as a repulsive force and is responsible for the accelerated expansion of the Universe.
2. Dark matter constitutes a larger share of the Universe than dark 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

**36.** With reference to Rabies in India, consider the following statements:

1. Rabies is a viral zoonotic disease transmitted mainly through the saliva of infected animals.
2. Once clinical symptoms of rabies appear, the disease is almost always fatal.
3. India accounts for more than two-third of global rabies deaths, according to WHO estimates.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 37.** With reference to Ulcerative Colitis (UC), consider the following statements:
1. It is a chronic inflammatory bowel disease affecting the inner lining of the colon and rectum.
  2. It is caused exclusively by bacterial infection of the large intestine.
- 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
- 38.** Quantum mechanics primarily explains the behaviour of matter and energy at:
- (a) Astronomical scales (b) Geological time scales  
(c) Macroscopic scales (d) Atomic and subatomic scales
- 39.** With reference to Copper (Cu), consider the following statements:
1. Copper is a ductile and malleable metal with excellent electrical conductivity and is second only to silver in this respect.
  2. Brass and bronze are important alloys of copper, formed by combining copper with zinc and tin respectively.
- 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
- 40.** With reference to Candida auris, consider the following statements:
1. It is a fungal pathogen that primarily affects hospitalised and immunocompromised patients.
  2. It is known for resistance to multiple classes of antifungal drugs.
  3. It was first identified in the early 1980s during HIV/AIDS outbreaks.
- 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

### EXPLANATIONS

- 1. (c)**  
AGI refers to AI systems that possess the general cognitive abilities of humans—including learning, reasoning, understanding, and the adaptability to solve new and unfamiliar problems across any domain, not just specialized tasks. Unlike narrow AI, AGI can transfer knowledge across domains and approach tasks with true general intelligence, just like a human being.
- 2. (b)**  
Liraglutide, semaglutide, and tirzepatide are GLP-1 receptor agonists (with tirzepatide also acting as a GIP agonist) that mimic the hormone GLP-1 to regulate blood glucose, slow gastric emptying, reduce appetite, and promote weight loss, making them effective for managing type 2 diabetes and chronic obesity in adults.
- 3. (b)**  
**Statement 1 is not correct:** The Union Health Ministry launched the **National Strategic Plan (NSP) and Roadmap for Leprosy (2023-27) in 2023**, to achieve zero transmission of leprosy by **2027**.  
**Statement 2 and 3 is correct:** The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.3 aims to end leprosy by **2030**.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) declared **Jordan** as the first country in the world to eliminate leprosy in 2024.
- **Leprosy:** Leprosy is also known as **Hansen's disease**, it is a chronic infectious disease caused by a type of **bacteria, Mycobacterium leprae**.
  - It is known to occur at **all ages** ranging from early childhood to old age.

#### 4. (d)

##### Leprosy

- Leprosy is also known as **Hansen's disease**, it is a chronic infectious disease caused by a type of **bacteria, Mycobacterium leprae**.
- It is known to occur at **all ages** ranging from early childhood to old age.
- **Symptoms:** The disease predominantly affects the skin and peripheral nerves.
  - Loss of sensation in affected areas.
  - Left untreated, the disease may cause **progressive and permanent disabilities**.
- **Transmission:** Through droplets from the nose and mouth.
  - The disease is **not spread through casual contact** with an infected person.
- **Treatment:** Leprosy is a **curable** disease through the multi-drug therapy (MDT).

#### 5. (d)

##### Context

- The Government of India has invited proposals for setting up 100 NABL-accredited food testing laboratories and 50 multi-product **food irradiation units** across the country.

##### Food Processing and Irradiation

- **Processed Foods:** Processed foods are those that have been altered from their natural state before consumption through methods such as heating, pasteurization, canning, drying, freezing, or refrigeration.
- **Food Irradiation:** Exposing food to a controlled dose of ionising radiation that kills bacteria, mould, and insects, and extends shelf life without making the food **'radioactive'** or unsafe.
  - This technique offers several benefits, including:
    - Preventing sprouting in potatoes, onions, and other tubers
    - Increasing the shelf life of fruits and vegetables
    - Eliminating insect infestations
    - Reducing microbial contamination
    - Fulfilling quarantine and export requirements.

##### Types of radiation used in food preservation

- **Gamma rays:** Generated from radioactive forms of **Cobalt-60**. In India, the Board of Radiation and Isotope Technology (BRIT) under the Department of Atomic Energy supplies Cobalt-60 for food irradiation.
  - An MoU or agreement with BRIT is a prerequisite for obtaining this source.
- **X-rays:** Produced by reflecting a high-energy stream of electrons off a target substance (usually one of the heavy metals) into food, are also commonly used in medicine and industry.
- **Electron beams (e-beam):** A stream of high-energy electrons from an accelerator directed onto food, provides rapid processing.



6. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 is correct:** Cosmic filaments are **long, thin, thread-like structures** of the **cosmic web**, spanning hundreds of millions of lightyears.

- They form when **gravity pulls gas, dark matter, and galaxies** into elongated strands **linking massive galaxy clusters**.
  - They arise where **sheets of matter intersect and collapse, forming dense strands**.
  - Filaments act as **highways for gas and small galaxies**, which flow toward **large gravitational hubs like clusters**.
- **Statement 3 is not correct:** Astronomers map them by **measuring galaxy positions and distances, then tracing the patterns not by** gravitational wave measurements.
  - Computer simulations show similar filamentary networks, confirming they arise from initial ripples in the early universe that evolved under gravity.

7. (d)

**Context:** India's performance in deceased organ donation remains extremely low (0.77 per million in 2023, compared to 49.38 in Spain). Nearly 5 lakh Indians die annually waiting for transplants.

#### Organ Transplant and Donation

- **Organ Transplantation/Donation** is a **surgical procedure** in which an organ, tissue or a group of cells are removed from one person and surgically transplanted into another person.
  - **One person can save up to 8 lives** by donating heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, pancreas and intestines.
- In India, the organ transplantation is **one of the lowest** in comparison with the western nations.
  - India's organ donation rate remains **under 1%** relative to the population.
  - India **ranks third globally** in organ transplantation.
- **In 2023**, more than three lakh citizens pledged to donate organs through the **National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO)**.
- **Eligibility for Organ Donation:** **Both living and deceased individuals** can donate organs. Living donors must meet specific medical and legal criteria to ensure donor safety and ethical practices.

8. (c)

**Option c is correct:** Biostimulants are substances or microorganisms applied to plants or soils to stimulate natural processes. Their primary function is to enhance nutrient uptake, nutrient use efficiency, tolerance to abiotic stress (like drought or heat), and crop quality.

9. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Willow is a superconducting quantum processor **designed by Google**, it uses quantum bits (qubits) instead of classical bits to perform computations.

**Statement 2 is correct: Key Features:**

- Can create entanglement and quantum interference between qubits.
- Designed to handle complex quantum calculations that classical computers struggle with.
- Used in experiments like the Quantum Echoes algorithm to study quantum chaos.

10. (c)

#### Context

- **India's solar observatory Aditya-L1** along with six U.S. satellites, has revealed unusual behaviour of the May 2024 solar storm called **"Gannon's storm"** triggered by a series of giant explosions on the **Sun known as Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)**.

**About Aditya-L1**

- **Aditya-L1** is the first space-based Indian observatory to study the Sun.
- It was launched on September 2, 2023 by the **PSLV-C57**, and was inserted in its **targeted halo orbit, Lagrangian point L1, on January 6, 2024.**
- **It is equipped with seven payloads** (instruments) on board with four of them carrying out remote sensing of the Sun and three of them carrying in-situ observation.

**11. (b)**

**In News:** The **Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI)** successfully dismantled a **clandestine Mephedrone** manufacturing facility in Wardha, Maharashtra, during a strategic operation codenamed **“Operation Hinterland Brew.”**

**What is Mephedrone?**

- Mephedrone, also known as **4-methylmethcathinone (4-MMC) or 4-methylephedrone**, is a synthetic stimulant drug belonging to the **amphetamine and cathinone family**.
- It is classified as a **New Psychoactive Substance (NPS)** and is colloquially known as “meow meow,” “bath salts,” or “research chemicals” in illicit drug markets.
- Mephedrone is prohibited under the **NDPS Act, 1985.**

**12. (c)**

**GlowCas9** is a newly engineered variant of the **CRISPR Cas9 enzyme** that emits light while **editing DNA.**

**About**

- **GlowCas9 is a bioluminescent Cas9** created at the Bose Institute, Kolkata, by fusing Cas9 with a split **nano-luciferase enzyme** derived from deep-sea shrimp proteins.
- CRISPR uses a guide RNA to direct the Cas9 enzyme to a specific DNA sequence.
  - Cas9 makes a precise cut, enabling gene correction.
- **Bioluminescent Cas9** opens a new direction for “theratracking” – simultaneously performing therapy and tracking it at the molecular level.

**13. (c)**

**In News:** As India nears its Gaganyaan mission, human-rating has become crucial.

**About**

- Human-rating is the rigorous engineering and certification process ensuring a space system, like a launch vehicle or a crew module, can safely carry humans.
- Human-rated systems have an acceptable level of risk and according to NASA standards, this is a 0.2% chance for a catastrophic event causing loss of crew during the ascent and descent phases of flight.
- The fully operational human-rated launch vehicles carrying crew to orbit are **Russia’s Soyuz-2, China’s Long March 2F, and SpaceX’s Falcon 9.**
- In the **U.S.**, **Atlas V** has completed a crewed test flight with Boeing’s Starliner but awaits certification for regular missions, while NASA’s Space Launch System is human-rated but has only flown uncrewed so far.

**14. (b)**

**In News:** The Supreme Court ruled that forced or involuntary narco tests are unconstitutional and invalid.

**About Narco Test**

- It is a process of investigation during which it is expected that the accused, undergoing such a test, would express the concealed facts.
- In this test the accused is sedated by administering a certain class of substances, such as **barbiturates**, for instance, **Sodium Pentothal**, to reduce a subject's inhibitions and reasoning ability.
- It is a non-violent method similar to those called **polygraphs or brain mapping**.

**15. (b)**

**Context:** Astronomers using the **James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)** have identified a rare supernova linked to a long gamma-ray burst, dating to about **730 million years** after the Big Bang.

**What is Supernova?**

- **Hydrostatic Equilibrium in a Star:** A star survives because of a balance between;
  - **Gravity** which is pulling matter inward and
  - **Nuclear Fusion**, releasing energy outward by fusing hydrogen into helium, and later heavier elements.
- **A supernova** is a powerful and luminous stellar explosion, occurring when a star reaches the end of its life. This happens when a massive **star's core collapses under gravity after it runs out of nuclear fuel**.
  - This **collapse triggers a shockwave** that blasts the star's outer layers into space, creating a supernova.

**16. (d)**

**All three statements are correct:** The snakebite envenoming (poisoning from snake bites) was classified by the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** as a high-priority neglected tropical disease.

- An estimated **1.8 – 2.7 million** people worldwide are envenomed annually.
- **Snake Bites in India:** In India, around **90% of snake bites** are caused by the '**big four**' among the crawlers - **common krait, Indian cobra, Russell's viper and saw scaled viper**.
  - In India, around **58,000 deaths** occur of an estimated 3-4 million snake bites annually.
  - Snakebite deaths are more common (**48%**) during the **southwest monsoon (June-September)**.
  - **Close to 70% of snakebite deaths occur in nine states**, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

**17. (c)**

**Statement 1 is correct:** **Lunarcrete** is an **umbrella** term for '**concrete made on the moon**'.

- It is a proposed construction material made using **lunar regolith (Moon soil)** as the primary aggregate instead of Earth-based sand and gravel.

**Statement 2 is not correct: Purpose:** It supports in-situ resource utilisation (ISRU) by enabling construction of habitats, landing pads, and roads on the Moon without transporting materials from Earth.

- It is not related to the spacecraft structures launched from Earth.

**Statement 3 is correct:** It can provide radiation shielding, protection from micrometeorites, and thermal insulation for long-duration human presence.

- It is seen to be crucial for future lunar missions and permanent bases under programmes like Artemis and aligns with emerging space infrastructure technologies.

18. (b)

**Context**

- The U.S. The Food and Drug Administration recently approved two new oral medicines to **treat gonorrhea**.

**About**

- Gonorrhoea is a **preventable and curable sexually transmitted infection** caused by the bacterium **Neisseria gonorrhoeae**.
- In **2020** there were an estimated **82.4 million** new infections among adults globally.
- **Antimicrobial resistance** to gonorrhoea is a **serious and growing problem**, rendering many classes of antibiotics as ineffective with the risk of becoming untreatable.
- Gonorrhoea can be passed from a **pregnant mother to her baby**.
- **Diagnosis:** Molecular tests, Gram stain microscopy.

19. (b)

Nitrofurans are synthetic antimicrobial compounds that were earlier used in veterinary medicine. They are banned in food-producing animals in India and many other countries because their metabolites are genotoxic and potentially carcinogenic, posing serious food safety risks.

20. (b)

**In News:** Polar bears in Southern Greenland show rapid genetic changes linked to jumping genes that may help them survive warming Arctic conditions.

**About Jumping Genes**

- Jumping genes, scientifically called Transposable Elements (TEs), are DNA sequences that can move (transpose) from one location to another within the genome.
- They were discovered by **Barbara McClintock in maize (corn)**, for which she received the Nobel Prize (1983).
- In humans, they constitute 45% of the genome.
- Once considered “junk DNA,” now known to have regulatory and evolutionary roles.

21. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The content of the Universe is widely thought to consist of **three types of substance: normal matter, dark matter and dark energy**.

**Statement 2 is correct: Dark Energy:** Dark energy is a **repulsive force** — a sort of anti-gravity — that **drives the universe’s ever-accelerating expansion**.

- Dark energy is the far more dominant force than Dark matter.

22. (c)

Kessler Syndrome describes a cascading chain reaction in low Earth orbit where collisions between objects generate more debris fragments than atmospheric drag can remove. This exponential growth creates a self-sustaining process, making reversal difficult as new fragments continuously collide with intact objects, satellites, or other debris.

23. (c)

**Context**

- The 11th edition of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Diabetes Atlas, projects a sharp global rise in diabetes prevalence by 2050.

**What is Diabetes?**

- Diabetes is a **chronic medical condition** where the body has trouble regulating **blood sugar (glucose) levels**.
- It occurs when the body either **doesn't produce enough insulin** (a hormone that helps regulate blood sugar) or doesn't effectively use the insulin it produces.

**Types of diabetes**

- **Type 1 Diabetes:** The body doesn't produce insulin at all, and it typically develops in childhood or adolescence.
  - Type 1 diabetes is usually **diagnosed in children and young adults**, although it can appear at any age.
  - People with **type 1 diabetes** need to **take insulin every day** to stay alive.
- **Type 2 Diabetes:** The body doesn't use insulin properly (insulin resistance), often due to lifestyle factors, and usually develops in adults.
  - One can develop type 2 diabetes at any age, even during childhood. However, this type of diabetes occurs most often in middle-aged and older people.
  - Type 2 is the **most common** type of diabetes.

24. (c)

**Context**

- Researchers from the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), discovered a critical protein complex (exocyst complex) involved in the early stages of autophagy.

**What is Autophagy?**

- Autophagy is a fundamental cellular process through which **cells degrade and recycle damaged organelles, misfolded proteins, and pathogens**.
- Often described as "**self-eating**," it helps maintain cellular homeostasis, especially in long-lived cells such as neurons.
- The process involves the formation of **double-membraned vesicles** called **autophagosomes**, which **engulf cellular waste** and **deliver it to lysosomes** for degradation.

25. (b)

The Doppler effect in weather radars relies on detecting changes in the frequency (or phase) of radio waves reflected from moving precipitation particles, such as raindrops. When particles move toward the radar, the returned wave's frequency increases (positive shift); when moving away, it decreases (negative shift), enabling velocity measurements.

26. (c)

**Context**

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to launch the BlueBird Block 2 satellite from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, as part of the Launch Vehicle Mark-III M6 (LVM3-M6) mission.

**BlueBird Block-2 satellite**

- **BlueBird Block-2 satellite**, also known as **BlueBird-6**, is a **low-Earth orbit communications satellite**.
- It **aims** to provide **direct cellular broadband** to ordinary smartphones worldwide.
  - Connectivity will be available directly on standard smartphones, without requiring any special antennas or hardware.

- **Developed by:** AST SpaceMobile (AST & Science, LLC), a US-based satellite communications company.
- **Antenna System:** Equipped with a 223-square-metre phased-array antenna, the largest commercial communications antenna deployed in LEO to date.
- The satellite, weighing nearly **6.5 tonnes (6,500 kilograms)**, is configured to provide up to **ten times** the bandwidth of the prior **five BlueBird models**.
  - AST SpaceMobile has already launched five satellites — **BlueBird 1 to 5** — in 2024.

27. (c)

#### NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)

- NSIL is the **commercial arm** of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), incorporated in **2019** under the Companies Act, 2013.
- It is a **wholly owned Government of India company**, under the administrative control of the Department of Space (DOS).
- **The major business areas of NSIL include;**
  - Production of **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)** and **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)** through industry;
  - **Production and marketing** of space-based services,
  - **Building of Satellites** (both Communication and Earth Observation) as per user requirements.
  - **Transfer of technology** developed by ISRO centres/ units and constituent institutions of Dept. of Space.

28. (c)

Ghost Pairing is a sophisticated social engineering attack targeting WhatsApp, where attackers trick victims into linking their browser as an invisible “ghost” device to the victim’s account using legitimate pairing codes. Victims receive lures like “Hey, I found your photo!” from trusted contacts, leading to fake pages that relay phone numbers to WhatsApp’s device-linking endpoint, prompting the user to enter a code that grants attackers full access to chats, media, and contacts without passwords or SIM swaps.

29. (c)

#### Context

- Recent studies published in Cell and Cell Reports reveal that regeneration in **axolotls and planarian flatworms** is not confined to the injury site; the entire body actively participates in the healing and regrowth process.
  - In planarians, this finding is closely linked to neoblasts, the special stem cells that drive regeneration.

#### What are Neoblasts?

- Neoblasts are **pluripotent stem cells** found in planarian flatworms.
- They are the **only dividing cells** in adult planarians and are responsible for their extraordinary regenerative ability.
- Can differentiate into all cell types of the planarian body, including nerve, muscle, gut and epidermal cells.

#### What is a Blastema?

- A blastema is a mass of **undifferentiated, proliferating cells** that forms at the site of injury during regeneration.
- It is commonly observed in **regenerative vertebrates**, such as axolotls and salamanders.



30. (c)

**In News :** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the LVM-3 rocket carrying the BlueBird Block-2 satellite.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** The BlueBird Block-2 satellite will be the largest-ever commercial communications satellite to be deployed in low Earth orbit (LEO).

- As the name suggests, LEO is an orbit that is relatively close to Earth's surface. It is normally at an altitude of less than 1,000 km.
- It, designed by the US company AST SpaceMobile and will be part of an LEO constellation.
- It marked the launch of the heaviest satellite ever from Indian soil, weighing about 6.5 tonnes, making it one of the heaviest commercial satellites.
- It will provide direct-to-mobile connectivity, allowing satellites to communicate directly with smartphones without ground stations.
- It will enable 4G and 5G calls, messages, streaming, and data services anytime and anywhere.

31. (c)

**Context**

- Japan is set to resume operations at the world's largest **nuclear plant (Kashiwazaki-Kariwa)** for the first time since the **2011 Fukushima disaster**.

**About**

- **Location:** It spans the towns of Kashiwazaki and Kariwa in **Niigata Prefecture**, (Island of **Honshu**) Japan, on the coast of the **Sea of Japan**.
- **Capacity:** Approximately **8,200 MW**, making it the largest nuclear power plant globally.
- **Operator:** Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO).

**Japan's Focus on Nuclear Energy**

- **Japan is the world's fifth-largest single-country emitter of carbon dioxide**, after China, the United States, India and Russia, and is heavily dependent on imported fossil fuels.
  - **Nearly 70% of Japan's power needs in 2023** were met by power plants burning coal, gas and oil.
- Before the 2011 quake and tsunami, nuclear power generated **about a third of Japan's electricity**.
  - Fourteen reactors, mostly in western and southern regions, have resumed operation since the post-Fukushima shutdown after strict safety standards were imposed.
- Japan aims to make renewables its top power source by **2040**.
  - Under the plan, nuclear power will account for around 20% of Japan's energy supply by 2040 – up from 5.6% in 2022.

32. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** Rabies is a serious public health problem in **over 150 countries and territories, mainly in Asia and Africa**.

- It is a **viral, zoonotic, neglected tropical disease** affecting the central nervous system.
- **Caused by the Rabies virus** (genus *Lyssavirus*, family *Rhabdoviridae*).
  - Children between the age of 5 and 14 years are frequent victims.

**Statement 3 is not correct: Transmission:** In up to 99% of the human rabies cases, **dogs are responsible for virus transmission**.

- Rabies spreads to people and animals via saliva, usually through bites, scratches, or direct contact with mucosa (e.g. eyes, mouth, or open wounds).

33. (a)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** **Chromatin** is a **complex of DNA** and proteins that forms chromosomes within the nucleus of eukaryotic cells.

- **DNA molecules** first wrap around the **histone proteins** forming beads on string structure called **nucleosomes**.
- **Nucleosomes** further coil and condense/gather to form fibrous material which is called **chromatin**.
- Chromatin fibers can unwind for DNA replication and transcription.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Loose chromatin allows genes to be read and used by the cell.

- **Tightly packed chromatin blocks access to genes and keeps them switched off.**

34. (c)

Eliminating wheel-rail contact in maglev systems directly removes rolling resistance and physical abrasion, leading to lower friction and significantly reduced wear on both the vehicle and track.

**Option (a) is not correct**, as maglev systems improve energy efficiency by minimizing mechanical losses.

**Option (b) is not correct** as maglev trains produce less noise overall due to no wheel-rail interaction, though high speeds create aerodynamic noise.

**Option (d) is not correct** as maglev requires substantial electrical power for levitation, propulsion, and control systems.

35. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The content of the Universe is widely thought to consist of **three types of substance: normal matter, dark matter and dark energy**.

- **Dark Energy:** Dark energy is a **repulsive force** — a sort of anti-gravity — that **drives the universe's ever-accelerating expansion**.
- Dark energy is the far more dominant force than Dark matter.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Roughly **68% of the universe is dark energy**, **dark matter** makes up about **27%** and the rest everything observed adds up to **less than 5% of the universe**. Dark energy (~68%) is more dominant than dark matter (~27%).

36. (b)

**Context:** Recently countries like the UK, US, and Australia have issued an advisory about the counterfeit batch of Abhayrab, a rabies vaccine manufactured by government-owned Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL).

#### Understanding Rabies and Its Risks

- Rabies is a **viral infection** transmitted through the **saliva of infected animals** such as **dogs, cats, bats, and monkeys**.
- It typically spreads through **bites, scratches, or saliva entering open wounds**.
- Symptoms may include Fever, headache, and nausea; hallucinations and fear of water (hydrophobia);
- **Post-exposure vaccination**, given promptly after a potential exposure, is the **most reliable way** to prevent infection.
- According to **India's National Rabies Control Program**, 6,644 suspected human rabies cases and deaths were reported between 2012 and 2022.
  - However, the **WHO** estimates a far higher toll, at around **18,000–20,000 deaths annually**, with up to **two-thirds of victims under age 15**.
    - India alone accounts for **36% of global rabies deaths**.
- The issue of rabies is particularly serious because **it is almost 100% fatal once symptoms appear**.

37. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Ulcerative colitis (UC) is a **chronic inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)** that causes long-lasting inflammation and ulcers in the **inner lining of the large intestine (colon) and rectum**.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** It is an **auto-inflammatory/immune-mediated condition** with periods of flare-ups and remission.

- It is immune-mediated, not caused exclusively by infection.

38. (d)

#### Context

- **2025** has been declared the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology by UNESCO, marking 100 years since the formal development of quantum mechanics in 1925.
- The milestone commemorates the **Helgoland breakthrough** by **Werner Heisenberg**, which laid the foundations of modern quantum theory.

#### What is Quantum Mechanics?

- Quantum mechanics is the branch of physics that explains the **behaviour of matter and energy at atomic and subatomic scales**.
- It departs from classical Newtonian physics and is based on principles such as **quantisation of energy, wave-particle duality, uncertainty, and superposition**.
  - It explains how extremely small objects simultaneously have the **characteristics of both particles** (tiny pieces of matter) and **waves** (a disturbance or variation that transfers energy).
- **Domains of quantum technologies:**
  - **Quantum communication:** It applies the properties of quantum physics to provide better security and improved long-distance communications.
  - **Quantum simulation:** It refers to the use of a quantum system to simulate the behavior of another quantum system.
  - **Quantum computation:** It is a field of computing that utilizes the principles of quantum mechanics to perform certain types of calculations more efficiently than classical computers.
  - **Quantum sensing and metrology:** It leverages the principles of quantum mechanics to achieve highly precise measurements.

39. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Copper (Cu) is indeed a ductile and malleable metal renowned for its excellent electrical conductivity, ranking second only to silver among pure metals (silver at ~106% IACS, copper at ~100-101% IACS for annealed commercial purity). **Statement 2 correctly** identifies the primary alloys: bronze (copper + tin) and brass (copper + zinc), though exact compositions vary (e.g., bronze typically 88% Cu + 12% Sn; brass ~70% Cu + 30% Zn).

40. (a)

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct, but statement 3 is not correct:** Candida auris is a multidrug-resistant fungal pathogen that primarily causes invasive infections in hospitalized, immunocompromised patients, particularly those with central lines or ventilators. It exhibits resistance to multiple antifungal classes (azoles, amphotericin B, echinocandins), making treatment challenging. However, it was first identified in 2009 in Japan (ear infection), not the 1980s during HIV/AIDS outbreaks.



# ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. With reference to the '*bioremediation technique*', consider the following statements:

1. It is effective against lead, mercury, and radioactive materials.
2. It is useful for emergency cleanups of highly toxic sites.

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 with reference to Ozone Hole:

1. It is a seasonal thinning of the stratospheric ozone layer particularly in the southern polar region.
2. It was first discovered in 1985 and is caused primarily by human-induced emission of chemicals like chlorofluorocarbons.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

3. Consider the following statements regarding Kuno National Park:

1. Kuno National Park derives its name from a tributary of the Chambal River that flows through it.
2. The park is characterised by Northern Tropical Dry Deciduous forests dominated by species like Kardhai, Khair, and Salai.

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. The major factor responsible for the drastic decline of vulture populations in India is;

- (a) Habitat loss due to deforestation
- (b) Use of the anti-inflammatory drugs like Diclofenac in veterinary treatment
- (c) Poaching for traditional medicine
- (d) Competition with feral dogs

5. Which among the following vulture species are found in India?

- |                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Red-headed vulture     | 2. Egyptian vulture |
| 3. Slender-billed vulture | 4. Bearded vulture  |

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

6. With reference to African penguins, consider the following statements:
1. They are among the smallest penguin species and are native to the coasts of South Africa and Namibia.
  2. They live primarily on sea ice and snow-covered habitats similar to Antarctic penguins.
  3. The African penguin was uplisted to Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List in 2024.

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   |

7. Which of the following statements about CITES are correct?
1. It is an international agreement aimed at ensuring that global trade in wildlife does not threaten the survival of species.
  2. CITES is legally binding and replaces national laws related to wildlife protection.

Select the correct answer:

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

8. Consider the following statements with reference to Western tragopan (*Tragopan melanocephalus*):
1. It is one of India's rarest pheasants and the state bird of Kerala.
  2. The IUCN Red list of Threatened species classifies it as Least Concern.

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 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. CITES is legally binding on the Parties, however it does not take the place of national laws.
  2. The CITES Secretariat is administered by the United Nations Environment Programme and is located at Geneva, Switzerland.

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. With reference to Red-Shanked Douc (*Pygathrix nemaeus*), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. It is an Old World monkey species native to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.
  2. It is primarily nocturnal and inhabits the forest floor of tropical rainforests.

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 |

11. With reference to methane, consider the following statements:
1. Methane has a global warming potential significantly higher than carbon dioxide over a 20-year time horizon.

2. Methane is the second largest contributor to anthropogenic warming after carbon dioxide.
3. Methane has an atmospheric lifetime of several decades, similar to carbon dioxide.

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   |

12. Kopra Jalashay, recently designated as a Ramsar site, is located in which of the following states?

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| (a) Odisha       | (b) Madhya Pradesh |
| (c) Chhattisgarh | (d) Jharkhand      |

13. With reference to Ramsar Convention, which of the following statements is/are not correct?

1. The convention protects only the natural wetland through national, and international cooperation.
2. India is a founding member of the Ramsar Convention.

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 |

14. With reference to mangrove forests in India, consider the following statements:

1. The Sundarbans in West Bengal are the largest mangrove region in the world.
2. Bhitarkanika mangroves are located in Andhra Pradesh.

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 Great Smog of London, consider the following statements:

1. It was primarily caused by vehicular emissions and photochemical reactions under strong sunlight.
2. High concentrations of smoke (soot) and sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), forming dense smog, were the main 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 |

16. With reference to biomass-based power capacity, consider the following statements:

1. Biomass power plants generate electricity using agricultural residues, wood chips, and bagasse as fuel.
2. Biogas consists of methane, carbon dioxide, and traces of other gases such as hydrogen, carbon monoxide, nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen sulphide.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

17. With reference to the Tundra biome, consider the following statements:

1. Arctic tundra is mainly found between 60° and 70° North latitude.
2. Alpine tundra occurs only in polar regions.
3. Tundra regions receive very low precipitation, often less than 25 cm annually.



Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**18.** With reference to the Great Indian Bustard (GIB), consider the following statements:

1. It is one of the heaviest flying birds and is endemic to the Indian subcontinent.
2. It is listed as Endangered under 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 |

**19.** With reference to BlueBird Block-2 satellite, Consider the following statements:

1. It is the largest commercial communications satellite to be deployed in Low Earth Orbit.
2. It is the heaviest payload launched by Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3) from Indian soil.

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 the 'Aravalli Range in India', consider the following statements:

1. It is a type of fold mountain that was formed during the Precambrian Era.
2. It divides the drainage between the west-flowing rivers and east-flowing rivers.
3. Guru Shikhar peak in Gujarat is the highest peak of Aravalli.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**21.** With reference to the recent news about Gujarat regaining its status as a 'Tiger State', consider the following statements:

1. Gujarat has become the only Indian state to host lion, tiger, and leopard simultaneously.
2. The tiger has been recorded in Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary located along the Gujarat-Rajasthan border.
3. Gujarat lost its 'Tiger State' status more than three decades ago.

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   |

**22.** With reference to India's climate change commitments, consider the following statements:

1. India aims to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2070.
2. India has committed to increasing its non-fossil fuel electricity capacity to 500 GW by 2030.
3. India has achieved its COP26 Panchamrit target of 50% non-fossil fuel power capacity five years ahead of the 2030 deadline.

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   |

23. The formation of “dead zones” in aquatic ecosystems due to nitrate pollution is mainly caused by;
- Reduced sunlight penetration
  - Increased turbidity blocking photosynthesis
  - Excessive oxygen consumption during decomposition of algae
  - Heavy metal accumulation
24. With reference to secondary pollutants, consider the following statements:
- Secondary pollutants are directly emitted from identifiable sources such as vehicles and industries.
  - Tropospheric ozone and peroxyacetyl nitrates (PANs) are important components of photochemical smog.
  - Sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides are the main constituents of secondary particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 and 2 only
  - 2 only
  - 1 and 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3

### EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

**In News:** As over 16 crore tonnes of legacy waste in India, it urgently needs bioremediation to restore polluted ecosystems, and ensure sustainable urban development.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Bioremediation is most effective for organic contaminants like petroleum hydrocarbons and some pesticides.

- It is ineffective against certain inorganic contaminants like lead, mercury, and radioactive materials.
  - Heavy metals, radioactive materials, and certain synthetic chemicals resist microbial breakdown.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Bioremediation often takes weeks to years to show significant results. It may not be suitable for emergency cleanups or highly toxic sites requiring immediate action.

2. (c)

**In News :** The Antarctic ozone hole that formed in August 2025 closed earlier than usual, offering hope for recovery amid record global warming.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** the Ozone Hole is a seasonal thinning of the stratospheric ozone layer particularly in the southern polar region — was first discovered in 1985.

- The ozone hole is not technically a “hole” where no ozone is present, but is actually a region of exceptionally depleted ozone in the stratosphere over the Antarctic .
- It happens at the beginning of the Southern Hemisphere spring (August–October).
- It is caused primarily by human-induced emission of chemicals like chlorofluorocarbons that destroy ozone molecules and allow more harmful ultraviolet radiation to reach the Earth’s surface.

3. (c)

**Context:** On International Cheetah Day (December 4), the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister released three cheetahs into the wild at Kuno National Park.

### About Kuno

- Located in **Sheopur district, Madhya Pradesh**, in central India.
- Named after the **Kuno River**, a perennial tributary of the **Chambal** that flows through the park.
- Notified as **Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary in 1981**; also known as *Kuno Palpur* due to the 7th-century Palpur fort of the Scindia rulers. In **2018**, it was given the status of a national park.
- **Forest type:** Northern Tropical Dry Deciduous, with Kardhai, Khair, Dhawa, Salai and savannah woodland.

### 4. (b)

#### Context

- The **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**, is set to reintroduce two critically endangered vulture species, Slender-billed Vultures (*Gyps tenuirostris*) and White-rumped Vultures (*Gyps bengalensis*), in Assam.

#### Importance of Vultures

- They serve as **nature's clean-up crew** by feeding on the infected carcass which kills the Pathogens and breaks the chain of infections.
- Vultures are critically important to the **Parsi community** as it leaves its dead bodies atop the **Towers of Silence** to be consumed by vultures.

#### Major Threats

- Use of toxic non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like **Diclofenac**, Lack of Nesting Trees, Electrocution by power lines, Food Dearth and Contaminated Food, Pesticide poisoning etc. threaten vultures across the country.
  - BNHS has been **encouraging veterinarians** to use vulture-safe alternatives like **Meloxicam and Tolfenamic acid**.
- India has **lost 99 percent** of the population of the three species, Oriental White-Backed Vulture, Long-billed Vulture and Slender-billed Vulture.

#### Conservation Status

- **Schedule-1 of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972:** Bearded, Long-billed, Slender-billed, Oriental white-backed.
  - Rest are protected under '**Schedule IV**'.
- **IUCN Red List;**
  - **Critically Endangered:** Oriental White-backed Vulture, Long-billed Vulture, Slender-billed Vulture and Red-headed Vulture.
  - **Endangered:** Egyptian Vulture.
  - **Least Concerned:** Eurasian Griffon.
  - **Near Threatened:** Himalayan, Bearded and Cinereous.

### 5. (a)

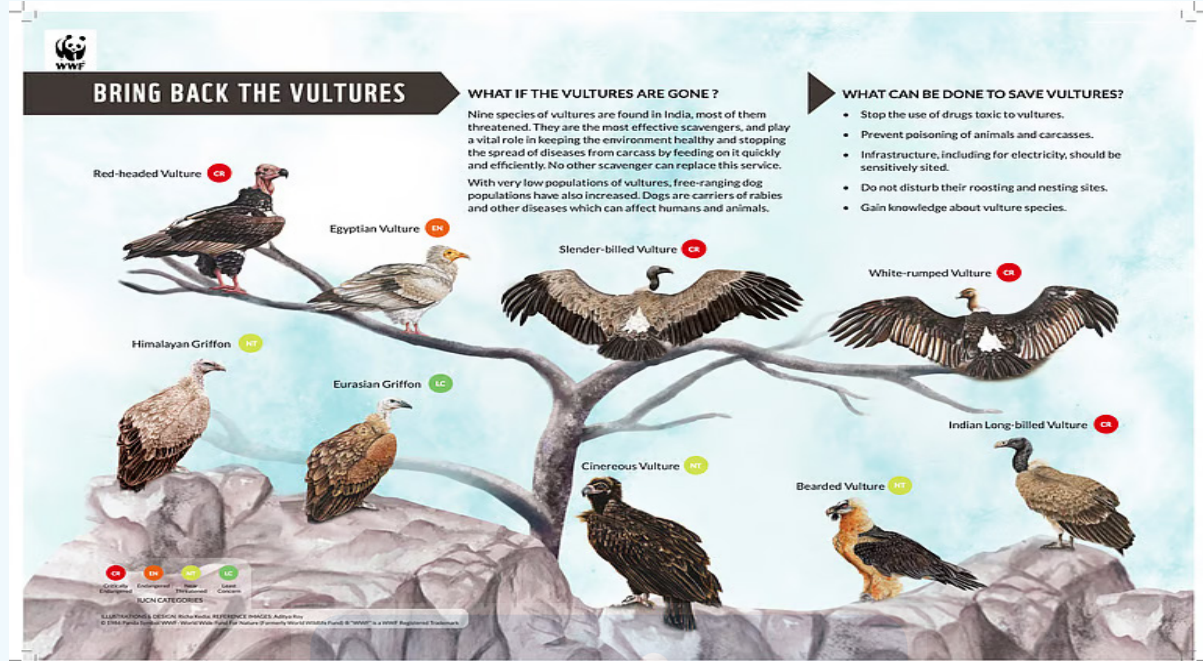
#### Context

- The **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**, is set to reintroduce two critically endangered vulture species, Slender-billed Vultures (*Gyps tenuirostris*) and White-rumped Vultures (*Gyps bengalensis*), in Assam.

#### Vulture

- Vultures are one of the 22 species of large **carrion-eating birds** that live mostly in the tropics and subtropics.

- India is home to nine species of Vulture namely the Oriental white-backed, Long-billed, Slender-billed, Himalayan, Red-headed, Egyptian, Bearded, Cinereous and the Eurasian Griffon.



### Importance of Vultures

- They serve as **nature's clean-up crew** by feeding on the infected carcass which kills the Pathogens and breaks the chain of infections.
- Vultures are critically important to the **Parsi community** as it leaves its dead bodies atop the **Towers of Silence** to be consumed by vultures.

6. (c)

**Context:** A new study finds that excessive sardine fishing off southern Africa led to the deaths of over **60,000 African penguins** between 2004 and 2011, especially around **Dassen and Robben Islands**.

### About African Penguins

- Scientific name:** *Spheniscus demersus*
- Among the **smallest penguin species**, fast swimmers, living along the coasts of **South Africa and Namibia**.
- Unlike Antarctic penguins, they live on **sandy beaches and rocky shores**, not ice.
- Have a **bare pink patch above the eyes** to regulate body temperature.
- Each penguin has a **unique chest-spot pattern**, like human fingerprints.
- Reclassified from "Endangered" to "**Critically Endangered**" (IUCN, 2024).

7. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is defined as an international agreement that "regulates and moderates international trade in plants and animals to ensure that such trade does not threaten their survival."

**Statement 2 is not correct:** While CITES is legally binding on States that are party to it, it does NOT replace national laws related to wildlife protection. CITES is "generally not self-executing," meaning it cannot be fully implemented until specific domestic measures have been adopted. States Parties are required to adopt domestic laws to ensure CITES compliance at the national level. Each Party must adopt "CITES implementing legislation—national laws that allow the Party to implement and enforce the treaty."

8. (d)

**In News :** Recent Studies show that suitable habitats of western tragopan exist in Jammu & Kashmir but human disturbance and fragmentation still threaten the bird's survival.

**Statements 1 and 2 are not correct :** Western tragopan is one of India's rarest pheasants and Himachal Pradesh's state bird.

- It now survives only in small fragmented pockets across the western Himalayas.
- The IUCN estimates only 3,000–9,500 mature individuals remain, all in a single subpopulation, with about a quarter found in the western Himalayas and northern Pakistan.
- The IUCN Red List of Threatened species classified it as **Vulnerable**.

9. (c)

**Context**

- The 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP20) to the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)** has concluded in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, marking the **50th anniversary of the Convention**.

**About CITES**

- **Overview:** CITES (**the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora**) is an international agreement between governments.
- **Aim:** To ensure that **international trade** in specimens of wild animals and plants **does not threaten the survival of the species**.
- **History:** CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted in 1963 at a meeting of members of IUCN (The World Conservation Union).
  - The text of the Convention was agreed in 1973, and came into force in **1975**.
- **CITES lists species in three appendices based on the level of protection required:**
  - **Appendix I:** Species threatened with extinction and Commercial trade is strictly prohibited.
  - **Appendix II:** Species are not necessarily threatened with extinction but may become so if trade is not regulated. Trade is allowed but controlled through permits.
  - **Appendix III:** Species protected in at least one country which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling trade.
- CITES is **legally binding** on the Parties – in other words members have to implement the convention, however it does not take the place of national laws.
- **The CITES Secretariat** is administered by the **United Nations Environment Programme** and is located at **Geneva, Switzerland**.

10. (a)

**Context**

- A passenger at the Kempegowda International Airport has been arrested for allegedly smuggling **two Red-Shanked Doucs Monkeys**.

**About**

- **The red-shanked douc (Pygathrix nemaeus)** is a highly colorful Old World monkey species, often called the "**Queen of Primates**".
- **Scientific Name:** Pygathrix nemaeus
- **Distribution:** It is an arboreal, diurnal primate native to the forests of **Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia**.
  - They live in the forest canopy in **evergreen and semi-evergreen forests up to 2,000 meters (6,600 feet)** in elevation.



- **Appearance:** They are known for their distinctive appearance including a gray body, maroon-red lower legs, white forearms and tail, and an orange-yellow face with light blue eyelids.
  - Males are distinguished by **white spots** on their rump.
- **IUCN Status: Critically Endangered.**



11. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Methane's global warming potential (GWP) is ~84x that of CO<sub>2</sub> over 20 years (GWP-20), far higher than over 100 years (~28x), due to its intense short-term heat-trapping before atmospheric breakdown.

**Statement 2 is correct:** After CO<sub>2</sub> (~66-75% of anthropogenic warming), methane is the second largest contributor (~16-20%), from sources like agriculture, fossil fuels, and waste.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Methane's atmospheric lifetime is 9-12 years (oxidizing to CO<sub>2</sub> and water), much shorter than CO<sub>2</sub>'s centuries-long persistence.

12. (c)

Kopra Jalashay is a man-made reservoir (jalashay) near Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh, constructed originally for irrigation and now recognized as Chhattisgarh's first Ramsar site (added December 2025, bringing India's total to 96).

13. (c)

#### Context

- India designated Siliserh Lake and Kopra Jalashay as its 95th and 96th Ramsar Sites, increasing the country's total to 96, up from 26 in 2014.

#### What are the Wetlands?

- **The Ramsar Convention's definition for wetlands includes:**
  - "areas of marsh, fen, peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tide does not exceed six metres".
- The Ramsar Convention protects all wetlands defined broadly to include both natural and human-made areas like rice paddies, reservoirs, fish ponds, salt pans, and dams, not "only natural wetlands". Its three pillars emphasize wise use of all wetlands, not just natural ones.

#### What is the Ramsar Convention?

- The Ramsar Convention is one of the oldest **inter-governmental accords** signed by member countries to preserve the ecological character of their wetlands of international importance.
- It was signed on **February 2, 1971** in **Ramsar, Iran** and came into force in 1975.
  - India became a signatory to the **Ramsar Convention in 1982**.



14. (a)

**Context:** A new study published in **Current Biology** explains the cellular adaptations that enable mangrove species to tolerate extreme salt stress, offering insights for developing salt-tolerant crops in the future.

#### Mangroves

- A mangrove is a **small tree or shrub** that grows along coastlines, taking root in salty sediments, often underwater.
- Mangroves are flowering trees, belonging to the families **Rhizophoraceae, Acanthaceae, Lythraceae, Combretaceae, and Arecaceae**.
- The **Sundarbans in West Bengal** are the largest mangrove region in the world and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.
- The second largest mangrove forest in India is **Bhitarkanika (Ramsar site)** in Odisha created by the two river deltas of **Rivers Brahmani and Baitarani**.

15. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The **1952 Great Smog of London** lasted barely **five days**, yet it shocked policymakers into action. At least 4,000 lives were lost.

- **Primary Causes:** Extensive **coal burning** (domestic heating and power plants), industrial emissions, and stagnant weather conditions.

**Statement 2 is correct: Pollutants:** High concentrations of **smoke (soot)** and **sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)**, forming dense smog.

- It forced Parliament to pass the **Clean Air Acts**, changing how cities were heated by restricting coal-burning and switching to natural gas, electricity, and smokeless fuel.

16. (c)

**Statement 1 is correct:** India has added **2,361 MW of biomass-based power capacity**, 228 MW of waste-to-energy capacity and installed about 2.88 lakh biogas plants across the country **over the last ten years**.

- Biomass-based power capacity refers to the installed electricity generation capacity that uses **biomass as fuel instead of fossil fuels**.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Biogas is a clean fuel produced through anaerobic digestion of a variety of organic wastes: animal, agricultural, domestic, and industrial.

- Biogas consists of **methane, carbon dioxide**, and traces of other gases such as **hydrogen, carbon monoxide, nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen sulphide**.
- The methane content of biogas is appreciably high, at 60%.

17. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** Arctic tundra primarily spans latitudes between approximately 60° and 70° North, along Arctic coastal regions of North America, Eurasia, and Greenland.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Alpine tundra forms above the treeline on mountains worldwide (e.g., Rockies, Himalayas, Alps), not limited to polar regions, and lacks continuous permafrost unlike Arctic tundra.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Tundra precipitation typically falls below 25 cm (10 inches) annually, mostly as snow, resembling a polar desert due to low moisture and cold air capacity.

18. (a)

**In News:** The Supreme Court of India has tightened safeguards for the protection of the **Great Indian Bustard (GIB)** by revising and rationalising conservation areas in relation to **Green Energy Corridor (GEC)** transmission projects in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

**About Great Indian Bustard (GIB)**

- **About:**
  - **One of the heaviest flying birds endemic to the** Indian subcontinent mainly Rajasthan and Gujarat. It is also a State Bird of Rajasthan.
  - It is an omnivorous bird.
- **Habitat:**
  - Untamed, Arid grasslands.
  - A maximum number of GIBs were found in Jaisalmer and the Indian Army-controlled field firing range near Pokhran, Rajasthan.
  - **Other areas:** Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Protection Status:**
  - **IUCN Status:** Critically Endangered.
  - Listed in **Wildlife Protection Act's Schedule 1**.
- **Threats to the Bird:**
  - Hunting, Intensification of agriculture, Power lines.

19. (c)

**In News :** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the LVM-3 rocket carrying the BlueBird Block-2 satellite.

**Statements 1 and 2 are correct :** The BlueBird Block-2 satellite will be the largest-ever commercial communications satellite to be deployed in low Earth orbit (LEO).

- As the name suggests, LEO is an orbit that is relatively close to Earth's surface. It is normally at an altitude of less than 1,000 km.
- It, designed by the US company AST SpaceMobile and will be part of an LEO constellation.
- It marked the launch of the heaviest satellite ever from Indian soil, weighing about 6.5 tonnes, making it one of the heaviest commercial satellites.
- It will provide direct-to-mobile connectivity, allowing satellites to communicate directly with smartphones without ground stations.
- It will enable 4G and 5G calls, messages, streaming, and data services anytime and anywhere.

20. (a)

**In News:** The **recent judgment of the Supreme Court of India**, which **redefined the Aravalli Hills** by adopting an **arbitrary '100-metre local relief' criterion**, prioritizes administrative convenience over ecological and scientific coherence, marking a decisive **rupture in India's environmental jurisprudence**.

**Statement 1 is correct**

- The **Aravalli Range** is one of the **oldest Fold Mountain systems in the world**, formed during the **Precambrian Era**, estimated at **2.5 – 3.2 billion years old**.
- It is made up of **Archean Gneiss, Schist, and Quartzite**, and shows evidence of **folding and faulting** due to ancient tectonic activities.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- The Aravalli Range **acts as a watershed** between the **west-flowing rivers** (like the **Luni**) that drain into the Arabian Sea, and the **east-flowing rivers** (like the **Banas** and **Chambal**) that drain into the Bay of Bengal.

**Statement 3 is not correct**

- **Guru Shikhar (1,722 m)** is the **highest peak of the Aravalli Range** which is located in **Mount Abu, Rajasthan, not in Gujarat.**

**21. (b)**

**Statement 1 is correct:** Gujarat has become the only state in India where all three major big cats—lion (Gir), tiger (recent sighting), and leopard—are found together. This makes Gujarat unique in terms of big cat diversity.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The tiger was recorded in Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary, which is located in Dahod district of central Gujarat along the Gujarat–Madhya Pradesh border, not the Gujarat–Rajasthan border.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Gujarat had lost its ‘Tiger State’ status around 33 years ago, and the recent sighting marks its return after more than three decades.

**22. (d)**

**All three statements are correct:** India has a vision to achieve **Net Zero Emissions by 2070**, in addition to attaining the short-term targets which include:

- Increasing renewables capacity to **500 GW by 2030**,
- Meeting **50% of energy requirements** from renewables,
- Reducing cumulative emissions by **one billion tonnes by 2030**, and
- Reducing emissions intensity of India’s gross domestic product (GDP) by **45% by 2030 from 2005 levels.**
- **India** has already achieved one of its major COP26 Panchamrit goals i.e. to have **50% of installed electric power capacity** from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030, five years early.

**23. (c)**

**Context**

- According to data submitted by the Central Groundwater Board (CGWB) to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), over **20%** of groundwater samples in Delhi exceed the permissible nitrate limit of **45 mg/l.**

**About**

- **Causes of Nitrate Contamination:**
  - Excessive use of **nitrogen-based fertilizers** in agriculture.
  - **Animal waste and agricultural runoff** entering aquifers.
  - **Leaching from poorly managed septic tanks** and sewage systems, especially in urban and peri-urban areas.
- **Environmental Impacts:** Excess nitrates cause **explosive growth of algae in lakes and ponds**, leading to oxygen depletion (dead zones) that kill aquatic life.
- **Public Health Concerns:** High nitrate levels can cause **methemoglobinemia (blue baby syndrome)** in infants. Long-term exposure is linked to;
  - Increased risk of certain cancers.
  - Thyroid dysfunction.
  - Reduced oxygen-carrying capacity of blood in adults.

## 24. (b)

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Secondary pollutants are not directly emitted from sources like vehicles or industries; those are primary pollutants. Secondary pollutants form in the atmosphere by chemical reactions involving primary pollutants (e.g. NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, VOCs) and sunlight/water.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Tropospheric (ground-level) ozone and peroxyacetyl nitrates (PANs) are classic secondary pollutants and key components of photochemical smog formed from NO<sub>x</sub> and hydrocarbons/VOCs under sunlight.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) themselves are primary gaseous pollutants; secondary PM<sub>2.5</sub> typically consists of sulfates, nitrates, secondary organic aerosols formed from atmospheric oxidation of SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub> and VOCs, not SO<sub>2</sub>/NO<sub>x</sub> directly.

■■■■



# MISCELLANEOUS

1. With reference to the World AIDS Day, consider the following statements:
1. It was first observed in 1988 by the World Health Organization (WHO).
  2. The theme for World AIDS Day 2025 is Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response.
  3. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) primarily attacks red blood cells, weakening the body's immune system.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only  
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
2. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the Baikonur cosmodrome?
- (a) It is a spaceport in Kazakhstan that Russia leases and operates for space launches.
  - (b) It is the primary launch center of American spaceflight, research, and technology.
  - (c) It is Iran's only operating nuclear power plant which stores enriched uranium.
  - (d) It is an Egyptian resort town on the southeastern coast of the Sinai Peninsula.
3. The Hansa-3 aircraft, recently in news, is primarily used for:
- (a) Aerial surveillance (b) Drone-based mapping
  - (c) Transport operations (d) Basic flight training
4. With reference to Dr Tessy Thomas, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. Dr. Tessy Thomas is popularly known as the Missile Woman of India.
  2. She played a pivotal role as the Project Director for the Agni-IV and Agni-V long-range ballistic missile systems, under 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
5. The term "rage bait," recently chosen as the Oxford Word of the Year 2025, refers to which of the following?
- (a) Online content that causes mental exhaustion due to excessive screen time
  - (b) Advertisements tailored to individual consumer preferences using AI
  - (c) Humorous posts created to encourage positive user interaction
  - (d) Online content designed to provoke anger or outrage to boost engagement
6. With reference to Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG) Framework, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. GIRG is an inter-ministerial mechanism for monitoring progress across 26 global indices published by 16 international agencies.

2. These Indices span four broad themes such as economy, development, governance, and industry.

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. Consider the following statements regarding the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD):

1. The theme for IDPD 2025 is "Empowering persons with disabilities through digital accessibility."
2. IDPD was first celebrated in 1992, following its proclamation through United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/3.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

8. The establishment of the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory was influenced by which historical event?

- (a) The Great Drought of 1875–1877 (b) The Indian Famine of 1896–97  
(c) The Dust Bowl drought of 1930s (d) The Bengal Famine of 1943

9. With reference to the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), consider the following statements:

1. The Indian Statistical Institute was founded by P.C. Mahalanobis in 1931 and later declared an Institution of National Importance in 1959.
2. The highest decision-making body of ISI is the 33-member Council, which includes representatives from the Central Government, UGC, and ex-officio 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

10. Terms like ASR-SHRUTI, PANINI, SUPACE and SUVAS, sometimes appeared in the news, are in the context of:

- (a) Space exploration and satellite launch programs  
(b) Tools to enhance judicial efficiency and accessibility  
(c) National sports talent identification initiatives  
(d) Wildlife conservation and forest management projects

11. Consider the following statements with reference to Indian Statistical Institute (ISI):

1. It was founded in December 1945 by C.R. Rao in Kolkata.
2. It only offers postgraduate degrees in Statistics, Mathematics and Economics.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

12. With reference to the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2026, consider the following statements:

1. CCPI is jointly published by Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute and Climate Action Network.



2. India's rank dropped 13 places to 23rd which is attributed to the absence of a national coal exit deadline and ongoing coal auctions.
3. Denmark, the UK and Morocco are among the top-ranked countries in the latest edition.

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   |

- 13.** Which of the following countries currently have operational or planned Unified Payments Interface (UPI) interoperability?

- |              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Nepal     | 2. United Arab Emirates |
| 3. Indonesia | 4. France               |
| 5. Sri Lanka |                         |

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

- 14.** With reference to Human Rights Day, consider the following statements:

1. It marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the UN General Assembly in 1948.
2. The theme for Human Rights Day 2025 is "Dignity, Freedom and Justice for All."

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 15.** With reference to the World Inequality Report (2026), consider the following statements:

1. It is published annually by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN).
2. It highlights that India remains one of the most unequal countries 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 |

- 16.** The Global Environment Outlook (GEO), recently in the news, is published by which of the following organisations?

- (a) World Bank
- (b) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- (c) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- (d) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

- 17.** Supriya Sahu, recently in the news, was honoured with the 2025 Champions of the Earth Award by which organisation?

- (a) World Bank
- (b) UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
- (c) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- (d) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

18. DSC A20, recently in news, is:
- (a) India's first autonomous underwater vehicle
  - (b) The lead vessel of an indigenously designed Diving Support Craft series
  - (c) A newly commissioned offshore patrol vessel of the Coast Guard
  - (d) A deep-sea research submersible developed by NIOT
19. Project Suncatcher, recently seen in the news, was announced by which of the following?
- (a) NASA
  - (b) European Space Agency
  - (c) Google
  - (d) SpaceX
20. Ponduru Khadi, recently awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, originates from which of the following regions?
- (a) Andhra Pradesh
  - (b) Tamil Nadu
  - (c) Telangana
  - (d) Odisha
21. Bridge Summit 2025, recently seen in the news, is best described as:
- (a) A multilateral summit on global trade hosted by the World Trade Organization.
  - (b) A defence and security exhibition focused on emerging warfare technologies.
  - (c) A global conference-cum-exhibition bringing together stakeholders from media, entertainment, and creative industries.
  - (d) A multilateral platform aimed at coordinating global climate finance and adaptation strategies.
22. DHRUV64, recently in the news, is related to which of the following?
- (a) Satellite launch vehicle
  - (b) General-purpose microprocessor
  - (c) Indigenous attack helicopter
  - (d) Unmanned aerial vehicle
23. Consider the following statements regarding the National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA):
1. The National Energy Conservation Awards are instituted by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency under the Ministry of Power.
  2. The awards are conferred under the provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003.
- 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. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics for deciding the base year of GDP data?
- (a) Raghuram Rajan
  - (b) Pronab Sen
  - (c) Biswanath Goldar
  - (d) Arvind Subramanian
25. With reference to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), consider the following statements:
1. WADA was established in 1999 following the Lausanne Declaration.
  2. WADA is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
  3. It is an independent international agency that coordinates and monitors the global fight against doping in sports.
- 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

26. RESPOND Basket 2025, recently seen in the news, is primarily related to:
- Disaster management research and mitigation strategies
  - Defence doctrine formulation and military preparedness
  - Environmental conservation and climate change studies
  - Space research proposals supporting ISRO's upcoming missions
27. The WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC) is located at which among the following places?
- Jamnagar, Gujarat
  - Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
  - New Delhi
  - Jaipur, Rajasthan
28. The WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine primarily reflects which of the following broader objectives?
- Replacement of modern medicine with traditional systems
  - Evidence-based integration of traditional medicine into health systems
  - Commercialisation of indigenous knowledge
  - Privatisation of healthcare delivery
29. Operation Hawkeye Strike, recently seen in the news, is related to:
- A US-led military operation against ISIS in Syria
  - A NATO naval exercise in the Mediterranean Sea
  - A counter-piracy mission in the Red Sea
  - A joint US–India border security operation
30. The Accra Convention, 2025 primarily seeks to:
- Regulate maritime boundaries and port State control
  - Establish a uniform legal framework for Negotiable Cargo Documents (NCDs) across transport modes
  - Replace the Hague-Visby Rules
  - Govern air cargo liability standards
31. Kessler Syndrome is related to which of the following?
- Accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere
  - Chain reaction of space debris collisions in Earth's orbit
  - Psychological or stress-related effects
  - Rapid spread of infectious diseases
32. With reference to the Jnanpith Award, consider the following statements:
- It is the highest literary honour of India, instituted in 1951 by the Ministry of Culture.
  - It honours an author's overall literary contribution across Indian languages, including English.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
  - 2 only
  - Both 1 and 2
  - Neither 1 nor 2
33. Which of the following statements is correct regarding the "Samudra Pratap, recently in news?
- It is India's first indigenously built nuclear-powered submarine.
  - It is the first indigenously built Pollution Control Vessel of the Indian Coast Guard.

- (c) It is India's first indigenously built aircraft carrier, designed by the Indian Navy.
- (d) It is India's first manned submersible vehicle under Samudrayaan Project

**34.** Consider the following statements regarding the Kimberley Process:

1. It is a multilateral initiative aimed at preventing the trade in conflict diamonds.
2. Only sovereign states can be participants in the Kimberley Process.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**35.** Dutch Disease, recently seen in the news, is related to:

- (a) Decline in agricultural productivity due to climate change
- (b) Banking sector stress caused by non-performing assets
- (c) Excessive dependence on foreign aid leading to fiscal stress
- (d) Over-expansion of a booming sector that harms other tradable sectors

**36.** Which among the following are included under the 10 sectors of the Good Governance Index (GGI)?

1. Agriculture and Allied Sectors
2. Defence Preparedness
3. Public Health
4. Human Resource Development

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**37.** 'Camellia sinensis', recently seen in the news, is associated with:

- (a) A newly discovered disease
- (b) The tea plant
- (c) A newly identified frog species
- (d) Fruit ripening agent

**38.** INSV Kaundinya, recently seen in the news, is best described as:

- (a) A nuclear-powered submarine of the Indian Navy
- (b) A coastal patrol vessel developed under Make in India
- (c) A modern frigate built under Project 17A
- (d) A traditional stitched sail ship inspired by ancient Indian vessels

**39.** With reference to National Test House (NTH), consider the following statements:

1. It is India's largest multi-location multidisciplinary industrial central government testing laboratory which deals with almost all sorts of testing.
2. It was established in 1995 under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

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)

**Statement 1 and 2 are correct:** It is observed **every year** to **raise awareness** about the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

- It was first marked in **1988** by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Theme 2025:** Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response.
  - This theme highlights the urgency of addressing disruptions caused by pandemics, conflicts, and inequalities that limit access to care.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** **Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)** is a virus that attacks the body's immune system.

- **HIV targets** the body's **white blood cells**, weakening the immune system. This makes it **easier to get sick** with diseases like tuberculosis, infections and some cancers.
- **Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS)** occurs at the most advanced stage of infection.

2. (a)

**In News :** a Soyuz-2.1a rocket damaged Baikonur's Site 31/6 by collapsing a service platform into the flame trench, leading to the suspension of crewed launches during the Soyuz MS-28 mission.

**Baikonur cosmodrome** is a spaceport in **Kazakhstan** that Russia leases and operates as the site of its space launches.

- It was built in the **1950s** first as a missile test range before becoming the centre of the Soviet space programme.
- It contains launch complexes, assembly buildings, tracking stations, and housing.
- Its facilities can accommodate the Proton and Soyuz rockets and cargo ships intended for the International Space Station.

3. (d)

**Context:** The CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), Bengaluru, launched a "production version" of the indigenous Hansa-3(NG) trainer aircraft.

#### About Hansa-3

- Hansa-3 is India's **indigenous two-seat trainer** aircraft developed by CSIR-NAL.
- Designed for basic flight training, it featured analogue instruments, mechanically operated flaps, and a standard cockpit, catering mainly to flying clubs and pilot training schools.
  - Being entirely constructed from **fiberglass and carbon composite materials**, it offers inherent advantages in **corrosion resistance, damage tolerance, and ease of repair**.
- **Hansa-3 NG (New Generation)** is an enhanced version of Hansa-3 with following key features;
  - **Digital Glass Cockpit:** Replaces analogue instruments for better situational awareness.
  - **Increased Fuel Capacity:** Enables longer training sorties and higher endurance.
  - **Stable Flight Handling:** Low stall speed and predictable behaviour make it ideal for ab-initio training.

4. (c)

#### Context

- Dr. Tessy Thomas, known as the "Missile Woman of India," has been honored with the eighth Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Award 2025 for her significant contributions to science and women's empowerment.

**About Dr. Tessy Thomas**

- **Pioneering Scientist:** Dr. Thomas is a renowned scientist at the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** and the **first woman** in India to lead a missile project.
- **Key Contributions:** She played a pivotal role as the Project Director for the **Agni-IV and Agni-V long-range ballistic missile systems**.
  - Her work earned her the nickname **"Agni Putri"** (one born of fire).

5. (d)

**In News:** The Oxford Dictionary has chosen **"rage bait"** as its **Word of the Year 2025**, reflecting the growing influence of digital culture.

**"Rage bait"**

- It is defined as online content deliberately designed to **provoke anger or outrage to boost traffic and engagement**
- It differs from **"brain rot" (2024's word)** by being intentional and targeted.
- It resembles clickbait but relies on negative provocations, often amplified by social media algorithms that **reward provocative posts, leading to practices like "rage farming."**
- It now spans fabricated stories, polarising political posts, and conspiracy theories, feeding an engagement-driven ecosystem that is hard for users—especially younger generations—to resist.

6. (c)

**Context**

- The Government of India has undertaken the Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG) initiative to benchmark national performance against international indices and guide evidence-based policy reforms.

**About**

- **The Global Indices for Reforms and Growth (GIRG)** is an inter-ministerial mechanism for monitoring progress across **26 global indices** published by **16 international agencies**.
  - These Indices are spanning **four broad themes:** economy, development, governance, and industry.
- **Each index** has been assigned to a **specific nodal ministry**, responsible for reviewing methodologies, engaging with publishing organisations and ensuring that India's latest official data is used in the computations.
- **The Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) at NITI Aayog** will serve as the central coordinating body for this exercise.

7. (b)

**Context:** The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is observed annually on December 3 to promote the rights and well-being of people with disabilities.

**About**

- **History:** IDPD was first celebrated in **1992**, following its proclamation through United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/3.
- **In 2006, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)** was adopted to ensure equality of opportunity for PwDs and to support the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Theme 2025:** "Fostering disability-inclusive societies for advancing social progress."



8. (a)

**Context:** Astronomers have uncovered new insights into how the Sun's magnetic activity varies with latitude, using data from the **Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KSO)**.

**About Kodaikanal Solar Observatory**

- It was established in 1899 by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics and is located at the southern tip of the Palani Hills in Tamil Nadu.
- It was set up to study the Sun and its influence on Earth's climate, especially the Indian monsoons.
- The observatory was established in response to the devastating **Great Drought of 1875–1877**, which, along with a global famine, killed nearly 50 million people.
- The Famine Commission of the time recommended setting up a solar observatory to understand the potential link between solar activity and rainfall patterns.

9. (c)

**Both the statements are correct:** The **Indian Statistical Institute** was founded by **Professor P.C. Mahalanobis** in **Kolkata** on **17th December, 1931**.

- The institute gained the **status of an Institution of National Importance** by an act of the Indian Parliament in 1959.
- **Its highest decision-making body is the 33-member council** — including an elected chairman, six representatives of the Centre, scientists not employed at the institute, a representative of the University Grants Commission, and ex-officio members including the director and heads of academic divisions and centres.

10. (b)

**In News:** Recently, the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)** observed that the judges are '**over-conscious**' of the risks in using **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, while hearing a PIL seeking guidelines to check the misuse of AI in Courts.

- **Supreme Court Portal for Assistance in Court Efficiency (SUPACE):** It processes facts and manages large volumes of case data to 'assist' judges, acting as a force multiplier without taking decisions.
- **Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software (SUVAS):** It translates judicial documents from **English to vernacular languages (and vice-versa)** to improve access to justice for non-English speakers.
- **Legal Research Analysis Assistant (LegRAA):** A new tool in the pilot phase designed to aid judges specifically in **legal research** and document analysis
- **Digital Courts 2.1: Unified Judicial Platform** is a single-window platform for judges that integrates:
  - **ASR-SHRUTI:** AI voice-to-text for dictating orders.
  - **PANINI:** Translation functionality to assist in drafting orders.

11. (d)

**In News :** the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the draft Indian Statistical Institute Bill, 2025. The Bill has been met with strong protests by academicians as well as students of the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) who claim that the move is aimed to strip the institute of its academic autonomy by converting it from a "registered society to a statutory body corporate"

**Statements 1 and 2 are NOT correct :** The ISI was founded in December 1931 by P.C. Mahalanobis in Kolkata and has since grown into one of India's most prestigious academic and research institutions.

- The institute was originally registered in April 1932, under the Societies Registration Act of 1860, and later re-registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act of 1961.
- With about 1,200 students and six centres across India, ISI offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Statistics, Mathematics, Quantitative Economics, Computer Science, Library and Information Science, Cryptology and Security, Quality Management Science and Operations Research.

## 12. (d)

**All three statements are correct: India dropped 13 places to 23rd**, the drop is attributed to the **absence of a national coal exit** deadline and ongoing coal auctions, raising concerns about India's climate commitments.

- India also scored medium in GHG emissions, climate policy, and energy use, and low in renewable energy.
- It also labelled India among the **biggest producers of oil, gas and coal worldwide**.
- **About Index:** CCPI is jointly published and released by **Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute and Climate Action Network**.
  - It is an **annual** independent monitoring tool for **climate mitigation performance** of 63 countries and the European Union.
- **Top Performing Countries:** 4 Denmark, 5 United Kingdom, 6 Morocco, **7 Chile**.
- **Worst Performing Countries:** 67 Saudi Arabia, 66 Islamic Republic of Iran, **65 United States**, 64 Russian Federation.

## 13. (b)

**In News:** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on 'Growing Retail Digital Payments (The Value of Interoperability)' dated June 2025 had recognized Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as the **world's largest retail fast-payment system (FPS) by transaction volume**.

### Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

- It is a system that empowers users to add multiple bank and other allowed accounts (of any participating bank) into a UPI App, merging several banking features, seamless fund routing & merchant payments under one hood.
- The pilot launch on UPI was done on 11th April 2016 by Dr. Raghuram G Rajan, Governor, RBI at Mumbai.

### Progress and Steps

- UPI accounts for about 49% of global real-time payment transactions, far surpassing other international platforms.
- Digital transactions through RuPay and UPI are being expanded nationwide across multiple sectors, including public services, transportation, and e-commerce.
  - Countries with operational or planned interoperability include: Singapore (PayNow), **UAE, France, Nepal**, Bhutan, Mauritius, **Sri Lanka, Indonesia**, and others.

## 14. (a)

**Context:** Human Rights Day is observed annually around the world on **10th December**.

### About Human Rights Day

- The day marks the adoption of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** by the United Nations General Assembly in **1948**.
  - Human Rights Day has been observed every year since **1950**.
- **Theme for 2025:** “Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials”.

15. (b)

**In News:** Recently, the *World Inequality Report 2026* reveals that **India remains one of the most unequal countries in the world**.

**Statement 1 is not correct**

- The **World Inequality Report** is published by the **World Inequality Lab**, based at the **Paris School of Economics**, not by the **United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UNSDSN)**.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- According to the **World Inequality Report (2026)**, India is reported as one of the most unequal countries globally.
- The **top 10%** of earners in India hold a **disproportionate share** of national income and wealth, while the **bottom 50%** control a very small share.
- The report explicitly highlights rising inequality across income, wealth, and carbon emissions within India.

16. (d)

**Context**

- The **Global Environment Outlook, Seventh Edition: A Future We Choose (GEO-7)**, was released during the **seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in Nairobi**.

**About**

- GEO-7 is UNEP’s **flagship assessment** published for the first time in **1997**.
- It is a **major scientific report** that reviews the planet’s environmental health, policy effectiveness, and future trends, providing crucial, participatory, science-based data to guide global environmental action and policy.

17. (b)

**Context:** Supriya Sahu, a Tamil Nadu IAS officer honoured with the UN Environment Programme’s 2025 Champions of the Earth Award.

**About the award**

- Launched in **2005**, Champions of the Earth is the **UN’s highest environmental honor**. It recognizes outstanding figures from the public and private sectors as well as civil society, whose actions have brought about a positive impact and a transformation on the environment.
- It is awarded across **five categories**: Policy Leadership, Entrepreneurial Vision, Science and Innovation, Lifetime Achievement, and **Inspiration and Action** (Supriya Sahu has been honored in this category).
- **Past Indian recipients include:** Madhav Gadgil (2024), Narendra Modi (2018), Cochin International Airport (2018) and Afroz Shah (2016).

18. (b)

**Context**

- The Indian Navy is going to commission DSC A20, the first vessel of the indigenously designed and constructed Diving Support Craft (DSC), at **Kochi** under the aegis of **Southern Naval Command**.

**About**

- **DSC A20 is the lead ship** in a series of **five** Diving Support Craft being built by **M/s Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL), Kolkata**.
- **Featuring a catamaran hull form**, the ship offers superior stability, **enhanced deck area**, and **improved seakeeping characteristics**, and has a displacement of approximately **390 tons**.
- With its induction, the Indian Navy's capability in **diving support, underwater inspection, salvage assistance, and coastal operational deployment** will be substantially strengthened.

19. (c)

**Context:** Google CEO Sundar Pichai has announced **Project Suncatcher**, a long-term research initiative to deploy **solar-powered data centres in space by 2027**.

**About**

- Under this project, Google is exploring constellations of satellites hosting high-performance AI hardware, similar to Starlink's satellite network but focused on space-based computing, not internet delivery.
- These satellites would run on **solar energy**, using **free-space optical links** to connect nodes and transfer data at **terabit speeds**. In space, solar panels can generate **up to 8 times more energy than on Earth** and almost continuously.

20. (a)

**In News:** Ponduru Khadi from Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh has received Geographical Indication (GI) tag recognition.

**About**

- Ponduru Khadi is a traditional handwoven fabric made using locally grown short-staple, hill-variety, pest-resistant cotton.
- The unique cotton variety allows chemical-free cultivation, supporting sustainable agriculture and eco-friendly production practices intrinsic to the region.

21. (c)

**Context:** **Bridge Summit 2025**, the world's largest debut media event, concluded at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre after a three-day programme.

**About**

- BRIDGE Summit is a first-of-its-kind event that acts as both a conference and exhibition for the entire scope of media and entertainment related industries.
- It gathers **1000s of creators, communicators, brands, leaders, and decision-makers** in one space to collectively align towards a more valuable, connected, and prosperous future.
- **BRIDGE Alliance** is a global organization that unites leaders across media, technology, politics, finance and the creative industries to build a more connected, resilient, and forward-looking framework for the world's media, entertainment and content ecosystem.

22. (b)

**In News:** India has launched the DHRUV64 microprocessor.

**About**

- **Type:** General-purpose microprocessor
- **Developed By:** Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) under the Microprocessor Development Programme (MDP) of the Government of India.
- **Architecture:** 64-bit, dual-core

- **Clock Speed:** 1.0 GHz
- **Status:** Fully indigenous (design and development in India)
- **Function:** Acts as the “brain” of electronic devices such as computers, mobiles, embedded systems and control units.

23. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The National Energy Conservation Awards were launched in 1991 as a scheme of the Ministry of Power and are presently implemented by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), which is a statutory body under the Ministry of Power.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The awards are not conferred “under the provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003”. They flow from policy initiatives and the Energy Conservation framework (Energy Conservation Act, 2001) rather than any specific section of the Electricity Act, 2003.

24. (c)

**Context:** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has released a discussion paper outlining major methodological changes in India’s GDP estimation.

**About**

- In 2024, MoSPI has set up a 26-member Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics to decide the base year for GDP data.
  - **Biswanath Goldar** has been appointed as its chairman.
- For GDP, the new series is scheduled to be released on February 27, 2026 with financial year 2022-23 as base year.

25. (b)

**About the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)**

- The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) coordinates the **global fight against doping in sports** through unified rules and oversight.
- **Founded in 1999** as a Swiss private law foundation following the **Lausanne Declaration**, it is headquartered in Montreal, Canada, with regional offices in Lausanne (Europe), Cape Town (Africa), and Montevideo (Latin America).
- The agency publishes the **World Anti-Doping Code** and the annual prohibited list.

26. (d)

**In News:** Recently, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the RESPOND Basket 2025.

**RESPOND Basket 2025**

- It invites submission of research proposals from various premier universities, and other recognised academic and R&D institutions in areas relevant to ISRO’s upcoming missions and national priorities.
- It supports ISRO’s upcoming projects, including Bharatiya Antariksh Station, Chandrayaan-4, Gaganyaan missions, Venus orbiter, and a human Moon landing.

27. (a)

**Context**

- India hosted the **2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine** in New Delhi.
  - The theme of the summit is “**Restoring Balance for People and Planet: The Science and Practice of Well-Being.**”



**Key Outcomes of the summit**

- **Initiatives Launched:**
  - **My Ayush Integrated Services Portal (MAISP):** A master digital portal for services, research and governance in the Ayush sector.
  - **Ayush Mark:** Envisioned as a global quality benchmark for Ayush products and services.
  - **Traditional Medicine Global Library (TMGL),** the world's largest digital repository on traditional, complementary and integrative medicine. The initiative is grounded in the **Gujarat Declaration (2023)** and aligned with **WHO's Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034.**
- Announcement of international collaborations, including a **Centre of Excellence for BIMSTEC countries** and an **India–Japan partnership in traditional medicine.**
- The summit stressed the use of **digital health tools and AI for research**, data generation and wider access to traditional medicine.

**About Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC)**

- **Establishment:** The foundation stone was laid in 2022.
- **Purpose:** It serves as a strategic “knowledge hub” to harness the potential of traditional medicine from across the world using modern science and technology.
- The WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC) is located in **Jamnagar, Gujarat.**

28. (b)

**Context**

- India hosted the **2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine** in New Delhi.
  - The theme of the summit is **“Restoring Balance for People and Planet: The Science and Practice of Well-Being.”**

**About**

- The WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine reflects the objective of **evidence-based integration of traditional medicine into health systems.**
- The summit focuses on scientifically validating traditional medicine practices, promoting global knowledge-sharing, ensuring quality and safety standards, and integrating traditional, complementary, and integrative medicine alongside modern healthcare systems.

**Key Outcomes of the summit**

- **Initiatives Launched:**
  - **My Ayush Integrated Services Portal (MAISP):** A master digital portal for services, research and governance in the Ayush sector.
  - **Ayush Mark:** Envisioned as a global quality benchmark for Ayush products and services.
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- Announcement of international collaborations, including a **Centre of Excellence for BIMSTEC countries** and an **India–Japan partnership in traditional medicine.**
- The summit stressed the use of **digital health tools and AI for research**, data generation and wider access to traditional medicine.



29. (a)

**Context**

- The US forces commenced '**Operation Hawkeye Strike**' in Syria to eliminate **Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)** fighters, infrastructure, and weapons sites.

**About**

- The operation comes days after a suspected Islamic State attacker struck a convoy of US and Syrian forces in the central Syrian town of Palmyra.
- The US personnel who were targeted were supporting Operation Inherent Resolve, the international effort to combat IS, which seized swaths of Syrian and Iraqi territory in 2014.



30. (b)

The Accra Convention, 2025 (United Nations Convention on Negotiable Cargo Documents) primarily aims to create a unified legal regime for electronic and paper negotiable documents like bills of lading, extending their benefits—such as transferability and financing security—beyond maritime transport to multimodal, road, rail, and air cargo operations.

31. (b)

**Context:** The rapid expansion of satellite launches and commercial space activity has intensified the threat posed by Micrometeoroids and Orbital Debris (MMOD), raising serious concerns for astronaut safety and long-term sustainability of Earth's orbits.

**What is Micrometeoroids and Orbital Debris (MMOD)?**

- MMOD** refers to the natural and human-made particles moving at very high speeds in Earth's orbital environment that pose a collision risk to spacecraft and astronauts.
  - Micrometeoroids:** Naturally occurring, extremely small particles originating mainly from asteroid belt collisions and comets, travelling at velocities of 11–72 km/s.
  - Orbital Debris:** Human-made objects such as defunct satellites, rocket fragments and collision remnants, typically moving at around 10 km/s.

**Dangers of space debris**

- According to NASA, debris can travel at speeds of up to **18,000 mph**, which is 10 times faster than the speed of a bullet.
- The International Space Station has experienced damage** from a two-inch piece of space junk striking one of its components in **2021**.
- Kessler Syndrome:** It is a theoretical scenario in which a cascade of collisions between artificial objects in low Earth orbit leads to a rapidly increasing amount of space debris, making the use of near-Earth space impossible for an extended period of time.

32. (b)

**In News:** Eminent Hindi litterateur and Jnanpith Award winner Vinod Kumar Shukla passed away.

**Jnanpith Award**

- It is the **highest literary honour of India** given to writers who have excelled in literature in different Indian languages.

- It was instituted in 1961 by the **Bharatiya Jnanpith Trust** to recognise outstanding contributions to Indian literature.
- Initially awarded for the best literary work, it later shifted to honouring an author's entire literary contribution across Indian languages, including English.
- The selection process involves Language Advisory Committees and an independent Selection Board, ensuring objectivity and national representation.

### 33. (b)

**In News :** The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) inducted the first in-built Pollution Control Vessel (PCV), SAMUDRA PRATAP (Yard 1267) under the 02 PCV project of Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).

'Samudra Pratap' is the first indigenously designed and built Pollution Control Vessel of the Indian Coast Guard.

- It is the largest ship in the ICG fleet, significantly enhancing the Coast Guard's operational reach and capability.
- With over 60% indigenous content, the induction of this ship reinforces the vision of Government's Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives.

### 34. (a)

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Kimberley Process is an international, multi-stakeholder initiative whose primary objective is to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the global diamond trade.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The Kimberley Process "participants" include entities like the European Union, which participates as a single entity representing multiple member States, so it is not limited only to sovereign states.

### 35. (d)

#### Context

- India's manufacturing sector has long underperformed relative to its potential, constrained by structural inefficiencies, policy missteps, and a premature leap into services despite several policy pushes.

#### Does India Resemble Dutch Disease?

- **Dutch Disease** describes how the boom of one sector (often resource-based) crowds out others, particularly **tradable sectors** like manufacturing, through two main channels:
  - **Wage Effect:** Labour is pulled towards the booming sector, raising overall wages.
  - **Exchange Rate Effect:** Increased exports appreciate the real exchange rate, making other exports less competitive.
- In India, **high government salaries** in the public sector **acted as the 'booming sector'**, drawing **labour away from manufacturing** and driving up wages across the economy. It had three major consequences:
  - **Manufacturing lost competitiveness** because firms couldn't match government pay scales.
  - **Domestic prices rose**, making imports cheaper and domestic goods relatively expensive.
  - **Real exchange rate appreciation** occurred, even without a change in nominal currency value, further hurting exports.
- In essence, India experienced a **policy-induced Dutch disease**, where the expansion of a high-wage public sector distorted incentives against industrial growth.

36. (d)

**Context**

- Good Governance Day is observed on **25th December** every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

**About Good Governance Day**

- **According to the United Nations**, Good governance is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law.
- **In 2014**, the government announced that December 25 would be celebrated as Good Governance Day.

**Good Governance Index**

- The Good Governance Index (GGI) is a **diagnostic tool** introduced by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)**, on **December 25, 2019** to evaluate governance performance across states and union territories and encourage improvements.
- The Index identifies **10 key sectors** and assesses governance performance through **58 citizen-centric indicators**.



37. (b)

**Context:** The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) issued a clarification to address misleading labelling of beverages marketed as tea.

**Regulatory Framework**

- As per **Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011**, tea must originate from **Camellia sinensis**.
- **Labelling and Display Regulations, 2020** require the food name to reflect its true nature.
- Use of the word 'tea' for other products amounts to misbranding under the **FSS Act, 2006**.

**What Is Tea as per FSSAI?**

- Tea is defined as a product exclusively derived from the plant **Camellia sinensis**.
- This includes traditional variants such as, **Black tea, Green tea, Kangra tea and Instant tea (in solid form)**.

- Tea is traditionally prepared from two leaves and a bud plucked from *Camellia sinensis*.

38. (d)

#### Context

- Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Kaundinya, sailed on her maiden overseas voyage from **Gujarat to Oman**.

#### About

- INSV Kaundinya is a stitched sail ship, based on a **5th century CE ship depicted in the paintings of Ajanta Caves**.
  - It is named after **Kaundinya**, the Indian mariner who sailed across the Indian Ocean to Southeast Asia.
  - It has been constructed using **traditional stitched shipbuilding techniques**, employing natural materials and methods that date back centuries.
- The project was undertaken through a **tripartite agreement between** the Ministry of Culture, the Indian Navy and Hodi Innovations as part of India's efforts to rediscover and **revive indigenous knowledge systems**.



- The voyage **retraces ancient maritime routes** that once connected the western coast of India with Oman.
- **Significance:** The expedition is expected to significantly enhance bilateral relations between India and Oman by reinforcing shared maritime heritage and strengthening cultural and people-to-people ties.

39. (a)

**In News:** The National Test House (NTH) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to strengthen quality control and third-party testing in national highway and infrastructure projects.

**Statement 1 is correct: National Test House (NTH)** is India's largest multi-location multidisciplinary industrial central government's testing laboratory dealing with almost all sorts of testing, calibration and quality evaluation related to industry, commerce, trade etc. as per international and national standards.

**Statement 2 is not correct: National Test House (NTH) was established in 1912** under the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.

