

DAILY MCQs COMPILATION *with* **EXPLANATIONS**

MAY 2025

NEXT IAS

Table of Contents

• HISTORY, ART & CULTURE.....	1
• ECONOMY.....	18
• INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION	34
• GEOGRAPHY	47
• GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/INITIATIVES.....	66
• DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY	76
• INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	87
• SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	96
• ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY.....	106
• MISCELLANEOUS	125

HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

1. With reference to the Basaveshwara, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. He was a 12th-century philosopher and a minister under King Bijjala II of the Kalachuri dynasty.
 2. He played a pivotal role in shaping the Lingayat religious tradition.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. He was a brilliant philosopher, visionary, and spiritual teacher. He composed Balabodha Sangraha and Kanakadhara Stotra. He established four mathas (monastic centers) across India and mentored four key disciples—Padmapada, Sureshvara, Totaka, and Hastamalaka. Which of the following personalities described above?
 - (a) Adi Shankaracharya
 - (b) Madhvacharya
 - (c) Ramakrishna Paramahansa
 - (d) Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
3. With reference to the ancient site of Lakkundi in Karnataka, consider the following statements:
 1. It was an important religious center under the rule of the Kalyana Chalukyas.
 2. Lakkundi is known for a high concentration of Jain temples.
 3. The site is located on the banks of the River Tungabhadra.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
4. With reference to the Thrissur Pooram, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. It is an annual Hindu temple festival held in Kerala, which includes the participation of 10 different temples.
 2. It was started by Shakthan Thampuran, Maharaja of Kochi.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. Vivekachudamani, Bhaja Govindam, and Soundaryalahari are works related to:
- Swami Vivekananda
 - Adi Shankaracharya
 - Ramanuja
 - Guru Nanak Dev
6. The recently discovered Gundaram Inscriptions belong to which of the following ancient Indian dynasties?
- Satavahanas Dynasty
 - Haryanka Dynasty
 - Nanda Dynasty
 - Shishunaga Dynasty
7. With reference to the Satavahana dynasty, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- The dynasty was founded by Gautamiputra Satakarni.
 - They ruled primarily over the northwestern frontier regions of India.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
8. Santhara, recently seen in the news, is a religious ritual associated with which of the following religions?
- Buddhism
 - Jainism
 - Hinduism
 - Sikhism
9. With reference to the Piprahwa Relics, consider the following statements:
- The Piprahwa Stupa is believed to mark the site where Buddha delivered his first sermon.
 - An inscribed casket found at Piprahwa refers to the Sakya clan and is believed to contain the relics of the Buddha.
 - The relics discovered at Piprahwa have been shared with countries like Sri Lanka and Thailand as a gesture of cultural diplomacy.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All three
 - None
10. Mangar Bani, a Paleolithic archaeological site and a sacred grove hill forest, is located in which of the following regions?
- Aravalli Range
 - Vindhya Range
 - Satpura Range
 - Zaskar Range

11. Consider the following statements regarding Ahilyabai Holkar:

1. She was known as the 'Philosopher Queen' and was the Holkar Queen of the Malwa kingdom.
2. Her most notable contribution was the renovation of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in 1780.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

12. Consider the following statements:

1. The Charter Act of 1813 abolished the patronage system and introduced open competitive examinations.
2. Article 309 empowers Parliament and State Legislatures to regulate recruitment and conditions of service.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

13. UN Vesak Day is related to which of the following?

- (a) Birth of Mahavira
- (b) Teachings of Confucius
- (c) Life events of Gautama Buddha
- (d) Coronation of Ashoka the Great

14. Rabindranath Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 for which of the following works?

- (a) Gora
- (b) Ghare-Baire
- (c) Gitanjali
- (d) Chokher Bali

15. He was born on May 9th 1540 in Kumbhalgarh, Rajasthan. He was the 54th ruler of Mewar in present-day Rajasthan in the line of the Sisodiya Rajputs.

Which among the following rulers have been described above?

- (a) Rana Sanga
- (b) Rao Maldeo Rathore
- (c) Maharana Pratap
- (d) Raja Jai Singh

16. He started an English weekly newspaper, The Hitavada (The People's Paper). In 1905, he also founded the Servants of India Society.

Which of the following personalities is being described above?

- (a) Dadabhai Naoroji
- (b) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
- (c) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- (d) Lala Lajpat Rai

17. Buddha Purnima also known as 'thrice-blessed day' marks which of the following three key events in the life of Gautama Buddha?"

- 1. Birth of Gautama Buddha
- 2. Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree
- 3. Buddha's visit to Sarnath
- 4. Mahaparinirvana at Kushinagar

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

18. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha in 1952 and subsequently to the Lok Sabha in 1967. His presidency is notable for his decision to proclaim a state of emergency by the advice of the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, in 1975.

Which of the following personalities has been described above?

- (a) Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed
- (b) Zakir Husain
- (c) V. V. Giri
- (d) Neelam Sanjiva Reddy

19. Consider the following:

- I. The Vaishnavism school of Hinduism was a dominant force in the eighteenth century.
- II. It has its own classical dance form.
- III. It shares an International border with Myanmar.

Which of the following Indian States describe the above features?

- (a) Manipur
- (b) Nagaland
- (c) Mizoram
- (d) Tripura

20. Pushkar Kumbh is associated with which confluence of rivers?

- (a) Ganga and Yamuna
- (b) Yamuna and Saraswati
- (c) Bhagirathi and Alaknanda
- (d) Alaknanda and Saraswati

21. Rajon ki Baoli, recently seen in the news, was built during which dynasty?

- (a) Mughal Dynasty
- (b) Tughlaq Dynasty
- (c) Lodhi Dynasty
- (d) Khilji Dynasty

- 22.** Shirui Lily Festival, recently seen in the news, is primarily associated with which of the following states?
- (a) Nagaland
 - (b) Sikkim
 - (c) Tripura
 - (d) Manipur

- 23.** With reference to the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, consider the following statements:
1. The Ministry of External Affairs organizes this Kailash Yatra through two different routes - Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand), and Nathu La Pass (Sikkim).
 2. China and India are the only two countries involved in the route of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 24.** With reference to Nalanda University, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. The ancient Nalanda University was established by the Pala dynasty in the 8th century CE.
 2. Chinese scholar Hsüan-tsang visited Nalanda and studied under the guidance of Shilabhadra.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 25.** What is the significance of identifying a temple as Agamic in Tamil Nadu?
- (a) It allows the temple to receive government funds.
 - (b) It allows temples to practice any religion freely.
 - (c) It makes the temple eligible for UNESCO heritage status.
 - (d) It ensures appointments and rituals follow traditional and constitutional norms.
- 26.** The art form, also called Thingna, often features geometrical designs and motifs like horses, elephants, birds, and human figures, painted using earth colours (white, red, yellow, black). It is related to which of the following?
- (a) Madhubani painting
 - (b) Gond painting
 - (c) Warli painting
 - (d) Kalighat painting
- 27.** He founded the secret society “Abhinav Bharat” in 1904, he served as president of Hindu Mahasabha for about seven years. He authored The First War of Independence, highlighting the 1857 revolt.

Which among the following personalities have been described above?

- (a) Vinayak Damodar Savarkar
- (b) Madan Mohan Malviya.
- (c) Chakravarti Rajagopalachari
- (d) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

28. 'Njattadi Festival' is celebrated in which of the following Indian States?

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) Assam
- (c) Kerala
- (d) Odisha

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

1. They are traditionally painted on silk cloth by male artisans.
2. They are known for their intricate line drawings filled with bright, earthy colors and tribal motifs.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

30. With reference to the Ahilyabai Holkar, consider the following statements:

1. She ruled the Malwa region in the 18th century after receiving formal sanction from the Mughal Emperor.
2. She renovated the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi in 1780.
3. She promoted the traditional Maheshwari textile craft, which empowered local artisans.
4. During her reign, she abolished the law that allowed the state to seize the property of childless widows.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

31. Consider the following statements about Goa:

1. Afonso de Albuquerque captured Goa from the Bahmani Sultans in 1510 AD.
2. Goa became an independent state in 1961 after being liberated from Portuguese rule.
3. The Mandovi and Zuari are among the major rivers flowing through Goa.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

Context

- PM Modi remembered the profound wisdom of Jagadguru Basaveshwara on the occasion of Basava Jayanthi.

Jagadguru Basaveshwara

- Jagadguru Basaveshwara (also known as Basavanna or Basaveśvara) was a **12th-century philosopher**, poet, and social reformer, primarily active in the Kalyana region of Karnataka.
- He served as a minister under **King Bijjala II** of the **Kalachuri dynasty**, and played a pivotal role in shaping the **Lingayat religious tradition**.
 - Lingayats had been classified as a Hindu subcaste called “**Veerashaiva Lingayats**” and they are considered to be **Shaivites**.

2. (a)

Adi Shankaracharya Jayanti was celebrated recently.

- Adi Shankaracharya was a brilliant philosopher, visionary, and spiritual teacher.
- He was recognized for his exceptional intellect from a young age, he composed **Balabodha Sangraha** at six and **Kanakadhara Stotra** after a touching incident involving a poor woman’s generosity.
- He established four mathas (monastic centers) across India and mentored four key disciples—Padmapada, Sureshvara, Totaka, and Hastamalaka.
- His major works include Vivekachudamani, Upadesha Sahasri, Bhaja Govindam, Soundaryalahari, and over 100 compositions combining profound philosophy with devotional depth.

3. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Lakkundi emerged as a significant cultural and religious hub during the reign of the Kalyana Chalukyas (10th–12th centuries CE), also known as the Western Chalukyas. The Chalukyan rulers were great patrons of temple architecture, and Lakkundi reflects their artistic excellence and spiritual patronage. It houses several shrines dedicated to Shaivism, Vaishnavism, and Jainism, making it a prominent religious site in medieval Karnataka.

Statement 2 is correct: Lakkundi was an important Jain center in medieval South India. Among the many temples in the village, there are several well-preserved Jain temples, including a large and prominent one dedicated to Lord Mahavira, which is considered among the oldest and most ornate Jain shrines in the region. This showcases the religious pluralism and patronage of diverse faiths during that period.

Statement 3 is not correct: Although Karnataka is home to many riverine temple towns, Lakkundi is not located on the banks of the River Tungabhadra. It is situated inland in the Gadag district of Karnataka, and no major river flows directly through or adjacent to the site. The presence of over 101 stepped wells (Kalyanis) within the village was essential to sustain water needs in the absence of a river nearby.

4. (c)

Context

- The Thrissur Pooram has officially begun with the ceremonial flag hoisting (Kodiyettam) marking the start of festivities at the participating temples.

Thrissur Pooram

- **Location:** The Thrissur Pooram is an **annual Hindu temple festival** held in **Thrissur, Kerala**.
- **Timing:** Celebrated during the months of April-May.
- It was started by **Shakthan Thampuran, Maharaja of Kochi** and includes the participation of **10 different temples** from Paramakkavu, Thiruvambadi Kanimangalam, Karamucku, Laloor, Choorakottukara, Panamukkampally, Ayyanthole, Chembukkavu and Neythilakavu.

5. (b)**In News**

- Adi Shankaracharya Jayanti was celebrated recently.

Adi Shankaracharya

- He was a brilliant philosopher, visionary, and spiritual teacher.
 - The historical data states that Shankara was born in 788 A.D. in Kalady, Kerala to the couple Shivaguru and Aryamba, who were great devotees of Lord Shiva.
- He was recognized for his exceptional intellect from a young age, he composed **Balabodha Sangraha** at six and **Kanakadhara Stotra** after a touching incident involving a poor woman's generosity.
- He met **Govindapadacharya** on the banks of the Narmada and became his disciple after reciting the **Dashashloki**.
 - In three years, he mastered scriptures and was tasked with writing commentaries.
- **By twelve, Shankara** was already a leading exponent of **Advaita Vedanta** and began writing on the Prasthanas Traya—Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and Brahmasutras.

Contributions

- He established four mathas (monastic centers) across India and mentored four key disciples—Padmapada, Sureshvara, Totaka, and Hastamalaka.
- His major works include **Vivekachudamani, Upadesha Sahasri, Bhaja Govindam, Soundaryalahari**, and over 100 compositions combining profound philosophy with devotional depth.
- He is renowned for his profound commentaries on ancient texts, including the **Brahma Sutra**.
- He also wrote commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita and the ten principal Upanishads.

6. (a)**Context**

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has documented 11 new inscriptions in the Gundaram Reserve Forest near Peddapalli, Telangana.

Key findings

- These inscriptions date from the **1st century BCE to the 6th century CE** and provide crucial insights into the **Satavahana period** and the early cultural-political landscape of the Deccan region.
- **Scripts and Language:** The inscriptions are in early Brahmi script and Prakrit language.
- **Inscription 1:** A person from the **Haritiputra lineage** (linked to Chutu dynasty) excavated a cave for Buddhist monks, mentioning friendship with **Kumāra Hakusiri**, a Satavahana prince.
- **Inscription 2:** It begins with a **trident and damaru**, religious symbols typically associated with Shaivism.
 - It mentions that land east of the hill belonged to **Siri Devarana**, a **mahatalavara (high-ranking official)**.

7. (d)

Satavahana period

- **Time Period:** 1st century BCE – 3rd century CE
- **Capital:** Pratishthana (modern Paithan in Maharashtra).
- **They ruled over the Deccan region**, which includes parts of modern-day **Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana**.
- The dynasty was founded by **Simuka**, who established the early foundations of the Satvahana rule.
 - However, the Satvahanas reached their zenith under the reign of **Gautamiputra Satakarni**.

8. (b)

Context

- A three-year-old girl battling a brain tumour died after her parents initiated her into the **Jain ritual of Santhara**.

What is Santhara?

- Santhara—also known as **Sallekhana or Samadhi Maran**—is a solemn vow in **Jainism**, where one gradually **gives up food and water** to embrace death with spiritual detachment, believed to cleanse the soul of karma.
- Jain scriptures emphasize that this vow should only be undertaken when death is near, or in cases of extreme old age, incurable illness, or unavoidable hardship (like famine).
 - For example, if someone's worsening eyesight leads them to unknowingly harm living beings – violating the principle of **ahimsa** – they may choose Santhara.
- However, the recent death of a toddler has raised serious **ethical and legal concerns**. Child rights activists and medical professionals argue that a child cannot give informed consent for such a life-ending ritual, which is meant for spiritually aware adults.

9. (b)

In News: India takes swift action to prevent auction of sacred Piprahwa Relics.

Statement 1 is not correct: The site where Buddha delivered his first sermon is Sarnath, near Varanasi, not Piprahwa. That sermon, known as “Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta” (Turning the Wheel of Dharma), was delivered to his five disciples and marks the beginning of the Buddhist Sangha. Piprahwa, on the other hand, is associated with the Sakya clan and believed to be the site of ancient Kapilavastu, where Prince Siddhartha (Buddha) spent his early years.

Statement 2 is correct: In 1898, William Claxton Peppe, a British colonial officer, excavated a stupa at Piprahwa and discovered a stone casket containing relics. The casket bore an inscription in ancient Brahmi script, which translates to:

- This casket contains the relics of the Buddha, the Blessed One, which are the share of the Sakyas of his own clan.
- This discovery supports Buddhist tradition that Buddha's ashes were divided among various groups, including his own Sakya clan.

Statement 3 is correct: India has shared portions of the Piprahwa relics with several predominantly Buddhist countries, as part of religious diplomacy and cultural outreach. These relics were sent to **Sri Lanka**, Myanmar, **Thailand**, and even South Korea, on permanent display or temporary exhibitions. The gesture reinforces India's soft power and its role as the birthplace of Buddhism. These relic tours are often part of Buddha Jayanti celebrations, state visits, or religious conventions to foster Buddhist solidarity.

10. (a)

In Context

- Archaeological research in Mangar has uncovered prehistoric tools and rock paintings dating back to the Lower Palaeolithic age (200,000–500,000 years ago).

About Mangar Bani

- Mangar Bani is a **Paleolithic archaeological site** and a sacred grove hill forest located in the Aravalli ranges along the Delhi-Haryana border.
- It lies within the **only primary forest of the Delhi NCR region**. Despite its forest-like features, Mangar Bani is **not officially notified as a forest under the Forest (Conservation) Act**.
 - A primary forest is an ecologically mature ecosystem, naturally regenerated and minimally disturbed by human activity, comprising native tree species.

11. (c)

In News

- The Maharashtra government will make a film on Ahilyabai Holkar's life for her 300th birth anniversary in 2025.

Ahilyabai Holkar

- She was the **Holkar Queen of the Malwa kingdom**.
- She is regarded as one of the most visionary female rulers of India.
- In the 18th century, as the Maharani of Malwa, she was instrumental in spreading the message of **dharma and propagating industrialization**.
- She is widely known for her wisdom, courage, and administrative skills.

Contribution

- She promoted industry—most notably the **Maheshwari saree textile** trade—encouraged the arts, and supported religious and public welfare projects across India.
- Her most notable contribution was the renovation of the **Kashi Vishwanath Temple** in 1780.

Legacy

- Known as the '**Philosopher Queen**,' Ahilyabai Holkar passed away on 13 August 1795.
- Her enduring legacy is reflected in the many temples, rest houses, and charitable works she commissioned across the country.

12. (b)

Context

- Civil services are crucial in **maintaining and strengthening democracy** but there is a **need for lateral entrants and greater transparency**.

History of Civil Services in India

- Lord Cornwallis** is considered as 'Father of Civil Services in India'.
- Lord Wellesley** founded the College of **Fort William in Calcutta in 1800** to educate young recruits for the Civil Services.
 - But the directors of the Company, in 1806, replaced it with their own **East Indian College at Haileybury in England**.
- Before 1853 East India Company directors used to appoint Civil Servants. Board of Control members were allowed to make some nominations.
- The Charter Act of 1853** abolished the patronage system and introduced open competitive examinations.
- The first competitive exams for the Indian Civil Services (ICS) were held in London in **1855**.

- **Satyendranath Tagore** was the first Indian to clear ICS in **1864**.

Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 309** empowers Parliament and State Legislatures to regulate recruitment and conditions of service.
- **Article 310** of the Constitution states that civil servants of the Union and the States hold office during the pleasure of the President or the Governor, respectively.
- **Article 311** provides safeguards for civil servants against arbitrary dismissal.
- **Article 312** outlines the process for creating All India Services, such as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), the Indian Police Service (IPS), and the Indian Forest Service (IFS).
- **Articles 315 to 323** of the Indian Constitution establish Public Service Commissions (PSCs) for both the Union (UPSC) and each state (SPSC).

13. (c)

In News

- During the UN Day of Vesak 2025 celebrations in Vietnam, an MoU was signed between the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) and the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (VBS) to deepen cooperation and promote shared Buddhist values of compassion, wisdom, and peace.

UN Vesak Day

- It is observed on the full moon in May and it is the most sacred day for Buddhists.
- It was on the Day of Vesak two and a half millennia ago, in the year 623 B.C., that the **Buddha was born**.
 - It was also on the Day of Vesak that the **Buddha attained enlightenment**
 - It was on the Day of Vesak that the **Buddha** in his **eightieth year passed away**.
- **It was** recognized by the UN General Assembly in 1999.
- It is celebrated annually at UN Headquarters and offices worldwide

Importance

- The day reflects the Buddha's teachings of compassion, peace, and service to humanity.
- It honors Buddhism's enduring contributions to global spirituality.

14. (c)

Context

- PM Modi paid tributes to Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore on his Jayanti.

About

- **Rabindranath Tagore** was an **Indian polymath** who worked as a poet, writer, playwright, composer, philosopher, social reformer, and painter of the Bengal Renaissance.
 - He founded **Visva-Bharati University** in **1921**.
- **Literary Contributions:** Tagore reshaped Bengali literature and music by incorporating Contextual Modernism, blending tradition with contemporary themes.
 - **Gitanjali:** A collection of devotional poems.
 - **Gora:** A philosophical novel reflecting ideas of nationalism and identity.
 - **Ghare-Baire (The Home and the World):** A critique of aggressive nationalism.

Legacy

- In **1913**, Tagore became the **first non-European** to win a Nobel Prize in any category (**for Gitanjali**), and also the first lyricist to win the Nobel Prize in Literature.
- Tagore was known by the sobriquets **Gurudev, Kobiguru, and Biswokobi**.

15. (c)

Maharana Pratap was born on **May 9th 1540** in Kumbhalgarh, Rajasthan.

- He was the **54th ruler of Mewar** in present-day Rajasthan in the line of the **Sisodiya Rajputs**.
- **Battle of Haldighati (1576):** Fought between Maharana Pratap and the Mughal forces led by **Raja Man Singh I of Amber**.
 - The battle is famous for heroic Rajput resistance against heavy odds.
 - The Battle of Haldighati failed to break the stalemate between Akbar and Rana Pratap, with the latter retreating into the hills of southern Mewar.
 - His horse Chetak is also legendary for its loyalty and bravery.

16. (b)

Context: Recently, the birth anniversary of Gopal Krishna Gokhale was observed.

About: Gopal Krishna Gokhale

- Born on May 9, 1866, in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra (then Bombay Presidency) in a Brahmin family.
- He was one of the founding leaders of the Indian national movement.
- He started an English weekly newspaper, **The Hitavada** (The people's paper).
- The **Servants of India Society** was founded by him in 1905 in Pune, Maharashtra.

17. (b)

Context

- This year the Vaishakh Buddha Purnima is being celebrated on 12th May.

Buddha Purnima

- Buddha Purnima is the **most sacred festival** for Buddhists, observed on the full moon day of Vaishakh (**April-May**).
 - The festival acts as a reminder to live a life of **kindness, non-violence and wisdom**.
- **In India** and other South and Southeast Asian nations, Buddha Purnima is celebrated as the **"thrice-blessed day."** It marks the three major life events in the life of Gautama Buddha:
 - **Birth** at Lumbini
 - **Enlightenment** (Nirvana) at Bodh Gaya
 - **Mahaparinirvana** (Death) at Kushinagar
- Since **1999** it has also been recognized by the United Nations as the **'UN Day of Vesak'**.

18. (a)

News: The President of India paid floral tributes to Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, former President of India on his birth anniversary (May 13).

Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed

- He joined the Indian National Congress and was a loyal follower of Mahatma Gandhi, participating in the **individual Satyagraha and Quit India Movement for which he was arrested in 1942**.
- He was elected to the Rajya Sabha in 1952 and subsequently to the Lok Sabha in 1967.
- He served as the fifth President of India, holding the office from August 24, 1974, until his death on February 11, 1977.
- His presidency is notable for his decision to proclaim a **state of emergency** by the advice of the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, in 1975.

19. (a)

Historically, Manipur has been a **center for Krishna consciousness**. The **Vaishnavism school of Hinduism** became a **dominant force in Manipur** in the eighteenth century with its rulers like king Pamheiba or Raja Garib Niwaj declaring it as the **official state religion**.

- It is known for its **classical dance form, Manipuri**.
- It shares border with:
 - **Nagaland** (204Km) in the north
 - **Mizoram** (95Km) in the south
 - **Assam** (204.1Km) in the west
- **International Borders: Myanmar** (352Km) in the east as well as in the south.

20. (d)

In News

- After a 12-year interval, Uttarakhand is hosting the **Pushkar Kumbh Mela** at **Keshav Prayag in Mana village**.

About Pushkar Kumbh

- Pushkar Kumbh is a sacred **Vaishnavite pilgrimage** held every **12 years at Keshav Prayag**, the confluence of the **Alaknanda and Saraswati rivers in Mana village, Uttarakhand**, when Jupiter enters Gemini.
- It holds deep spiritual significance as the site where **Ved Vyas composed the Mahabharata**. Saints like **Ramanujacharya and Madhvacharya are believed to have received divine knowledge from Goddess Saraswati here**.
- Though smaller than traditional Kumbhs, it attracts devotees, especially from South India, and is seen as a bridge uniting India's diverse spiritual traditions.

21. (c)

Context

- The Archaeological Survey of India restored the 16th- century stepwell, Rajon ki Baoli.

About the Rajon ki Baoli

- Built around **1506** by the **Daulat Khan during the Lodi dynasty** (at the reign of the Ibrahim Lodi), Rajon ki Baoli stands as a testament to **Lodhi-era architecture and traditional water engineering**.
 - The name 'Rajon Ki Baoli' comes from the **masons (Raj Mistri)** who were living at the Baoli and using its water.
- This **four-tiered stepwell** was thoughtfully designed not only to store water but also to offer shade and rest to travellers.
- Its elegant arched colonnades, ornate stucco medallions with floral and geometric patterns, and finely carved stone elements reflect the artistic sophistication of the time.

22. (d)

Context

- The Shirui Lily festival returns to Manipur after a two-year pause because of the long-drawn conflict in the state.

About the Festival

- **Organised by: Manipur Department of Tourism**, first held in **2017**.
- **Named after: the Shirui Lily (state flower of Manipur)**, the festival coincides with the flower's **blooming season** (April to June).

- **Location:** Ukhrul district, home to the Tangkhul Naga community.
- **Purpose:** Promote eco-tourism, cultural heritage, and awareness about the endangered Shirui Lily.
- **Key Highlights:** cultural performances, music concerts, a beauty pageant, a trash collection marathon, and a cooking competition.

23. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Kailash Mansarovar Yatra holds profound spiritual significance for followers of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Bon—the indigenous religion of Tibet.

- The **Ministry of External Affairs** organizes this **Kailash Yatra** during **June to September each year** through **two different routes** - Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand), and Nathu La Pass (Sikkim).

Statement 2 is not correct: The KMY is open to **eligible Indian citizens**, holding valid Indian passports.

- **The route involves three countries:** India, Nepal, and China.

24. (b)

Context

- Eminent economist Sachin Chaturvedi, took charge as the **Vice-Chancellor of Nalanda University** in Bihar.

About

- The Parliament of India established the Nalanda University through the **Nalanda University Act, 2010**.
- It started functioning in **2014** from a makeshift location with 14 students, and construction work started in 2017.
- The new campus of Nalanda University is close to the site of the **ancient ruins of Nalanda** in Rajgir, Bihar.

Ancient Nalanda University

- The ancient **Nalanda University** was established in the **5th century** by the Gupta ruler **Kumaragupta I**.
- It includes **stupas, shrines, viharas** (residential and educational buildings) and important art works in stucco, stone and metal.
- It was patronized by various rulers including King **Harshavardhana of Kannauj** (7th century CE) and the **Pala rulers** (8th – 12th century CE).
- It flourished for 800 years before it was burnt down by **Bakhtiar Khilji** in the **12th century**.
- The site after its decline was first discovered by **Sir Francis Buchanan** and was systematically excavated and consolidated by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Significance

- Chinese scholar **Xuanzang (Hsüan-tsang)** visited Nalanda in 637 and 642 CE, and studied under the guidance of **Shilabhadra**.
- It attracted students from all over the world and stands out as the **most ancient university** of the Indian Subcontinent.
- **In 2016** it was inscribed as a **World Heritage Site by UNESCO**.

25. (d)

Context

- The Supreme Court has ordered the status quo on the appointment of archakas (priests) in **Agamic temples** in Tamil Nadu.

Background

- Tamil Nadu has witnessed debates over **caste-based priesthood, temple autonomy, and ritual conformity**.
- Identifying Agamic temples ensures that appointments (archakars/maniyams) follow traditional procedures and constitutional norms.

What are Agamas?

- Agamas are a collection of scriptures that **lay down rituals, temple architecture, idol worship methods**, and daily worship procedures in temples.
- They are **distinct from the Vedas** and form the scriptural foundation of temple-based Hinduism, particularly in South India.
- Agamas are central to the Shaiva, Vaishnava, and Shakta traditions.
 - **Shaiva Agamas:** Worship of Lord Shiva
 - **Vaishnava Agamas (Pancharatra and Vaikhanasa):** Worship of Lord Vishnu
 - **Shakta Agamas (Tantras):** Worship of Goddess Shakti.

26. (b)

In News

- The **artists of Gond art and Madhubani art** met President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan as part of the Artists in Residence programme- Kala Utsav.

Gond paintings

- Gonds are one of the prominent tribes in India. They are mainly settled in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. The Akbar Nama, a history of Akbar's reign, mentions the Gond kingdom of Garha Katanga that had 70,000 villages.



- Gond tribals belong to the Dravida race, and are very fond of dance, music and storytelling.
- Gond **paintings, also called Thingna**, often feature geometrical designs and motifs like horses, elephants, birds, and human figures, painted using earth colours (white, red, yellow, black).
 - Homes are decorated with these motifs, especially around doors, windows, and courtyards, often with relief work made from cow dung and rice husk.

27. (a)

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883–1966), also known as Veer Savarkar, was a **freedom fighter, poet, writer, and political ideologue**.

- He urged Indians to **embrace revolution to achieve independence**.
- While studying at Fergusson College in Pune, he founded the secret society **“Abhinav Bharat”** in **1904**, advocating armed resistance against British rule.
- In London, he established the **“Free India Society”** and **authored The First War of Independence, highlighting the 1857 revolt**.

- He was arrested in **1910** for his revolutionary activities (opposition to the Morley-Minto reforms), and was sentenced to 50 years in the Cellular Jail.
- After his release in 1937, he joined the **Hindu Mahasabha** and served as its **president for about seven years**.
 - He worked relentlessly for the **removal of untouchability**.
- In **1951**, he dissolved the revolutionary organisation “Abhinav Bharat” and devoted his time and energy to the ideals of the **Hindu Mahasabha**.

28. (c)

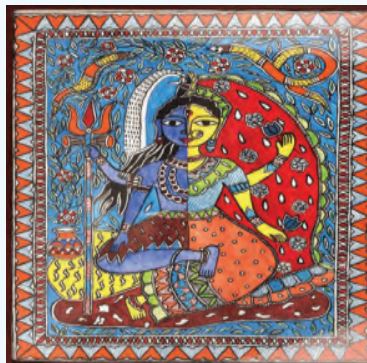
Njattadi Festival is a **traditional agricultural festival celebrated in Kerala**, particularly among the farming communities.

- The term “**Njattadi**” comes from the **Malayalam word “Njattuvela”**, which refers to a period in the Malayalam calendar that is **considered ideal for sowing paddy (rice) seeds**.
- The festival marks the **beginning of the paddy cultivation season**.
- Njattadi often features **folk songs (Vanchipattu, Njattu Pattu) and traditional dances**.

29. (b)

In News

- The **artists of Gond art and Madhubani art** met President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan as part of the Artists in Residence programme- Kala Utsav.



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

30. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: While Ahilyabai Holkar did rule the Malwa region in the 18th century, her ascension to power was not through formal sanction from the Mughal Emperor. Instead, after the deaths of her husband, father-in-law, and son, she assumed control of the Holkar dynasty with the support of her army and the Maratha Peshwa.

Statement 2 is correct: Ahilyabai Holkar is renowned for her extensive contributions to temple architecture and restoration across India. In 1780, she commissioned the reconstruction of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi, which had been destroyed by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in 1669.

Statement 3 is correct: Ahilyabai Holkar played a pivotal role in revitalizing the Maheshwari textile tradition. She invited skilled weavers from various regions to settle in Maheshwar, fostering a thriving handloom industry that empowered local artisans and preserved a rich cultural heritage.

Statement 4 is correct: Ahilyabai Holkar repealed a regressive law that permitted the state to confiscate the property of childless widows, thereby safeguarding their rights and setting a precedent for social justice.

31. (c)

In News: Goa recently achieved a significant milestone on its statehood day, becoming the second state in India (after Mizoram) to attain Full Functional Literacy under the ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme).

About Goa State

- Goa was liberated from **Portuguese rule** in 1961 and subsequently formed as a Union Territory, gaining full statehood in **1987**.
- Afonso de Albuquerque did capture Goa in 1510 AD, it was from the **Sultan of Bijapur**, not the Bahmani Sultans.
- Significant rivers flowing through the state include the **Mandovi, Zuari**, and Chapora.



ECONOMY

1. Vizhinjam International Seaport is located in which of the following states of India?
 - (a) Maharashtra
 - (b) Tamil Nadu
 - (c) Gujarat
 - (d) Kerala
2. With reference to Insider Trading, consider the following statements:
 1. It refers to trading in securities using publicly available price-sensitive information.
 2. It is regulated and prohibited in India by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
 3. Insider trading includes both trading based on confidential information and sharing such information with others.

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. With reference to the Foreign portfolio investment (FPI), which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. FPI consists of securities and other financial assets held by investors in another country.
 2. It does not provide the investor with direct ownership of a company's assets.

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. With reference to the Agriphotovoltaics, consider the following statements:
 1. These offer a dual solution for food and energy production by integrating solar panels with farming.
 2. These create microclimatic conditions that reduce water evaporation and protect crops from extreme heat.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Consider the following statements with reference to the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project:
1. It is a multi-purpose irrigation project on the Satluj River.
 2. It is the world's largest multi-stage lift irrigation project.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed rice varieties – DRR Rice 100 (Kamla) and Pusa DST Rice 1. These are:
- (a) The first genome-edited rice varieties in India
 - (b) The first biofortified rice varieties in India
 - (c) The first hybrid rice varieties developed using radiation breeding
 - (d) The first genetically modified rice varieties in India
7. Who was the Chairperson of the Committee formed in 2024 to recommend a framework for the Repairability Index in India?
- (a) Amitabh Kant
 - (b) Sunil Soni
 - (c) R.S. Sharma
 - (d) Bharat Khera
8. With reference to the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. FTAs involve complete elimination of all tariffs on trade between member countries.
 2. FTAs can cover trade in both goods and services.
- 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. With reference to Coal Sector of India, consider the following statements:
1. India is the largest coal producing country globally.
 2. The major coal fields in India are located in the eastern states of Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

- 10.** Under the Competition Act, 2002, which of the following best defines predatory pricing?
- Setting product prices based on international benchmarks to encourage exports
 - Charging excessively high prices to exploit consumers
 - Selling goods or services below the cost of production to eliminate competitors
 - Offering free products for a limited time as a marketing strategy

- 11.** Which of the following conditions are best suited for Cardamom cultivation?

- High altitude tropical regions
- Temperature range between 10°C and 35°C
- Alkaline soil with pH above 7.5
- Partial shade and high humidity

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1, 2 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 4 only
 - 2, 3 and 4 only
 - 1, 3 and 4 only
- 12.** With reference to the 'India's Textile & Apparel Sector', consider the following statements:
- It is the second largest employment generator in India, only after agriculture.
 - India is the 6th largest exporter of Textiles & Apparel in the world.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 13.** With reference to the Most Favoured Status (MFN), consider the following statements:
- The MFN principle was designed to prevent countries from giving different treatment to one partner over the other.
 - There is a formal procedure for suspending MFN treatment.
 - India has never suspended the MFN status of any country.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

- 1 and 2 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 1, 2 and 3
- 14.** With reference to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), consider the following statements:
- It is a specialised agency of the United Nations, founded in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference.
 - The Board of Governors is the highest decision-making body of the IMF.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- Only 1
- Only 2
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

15. With reference to types of inflation, consider the following pairs:

Type of Inflation	Description
1. Creeping Inflation	Extremely high inflation, >50% per month
2. Hyperinflation	Price rise of about 2-3% annually
3. Galloping Inflation	Very rapid increase in price levels

Which of the pairs is/are correctly matched?

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

16. With reference to the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a specialised Development Finance Institution (DFI), set up in 2021 under the Ministry of Finance.
- 2. It is aimed at supporting the country's infrastructure sector, which can significantly gain from an enabling credit flow.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

17. Which of the following statements is true about Account Aggregators (AAs)?

- (a) They store financial data permanently for users.
- (b) They act as intermediaries between Financial Information Providers and Financial Information Users without storing data.
- (c) They replace banks in providing loans.
- (d) They provide investment advice to customers.

18. As per the Jalan Committee (2019), what was the recommended range for the Contingency Risk Buffer (CRB) to be maintained by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?

- (a) 2.0% – 3.0% of the gross fiscal deficit
- (b) 4.0% – 5.0% of India's foreign exchange reserves
- (c) 6.0% – 7.0% of the central government's total liabilities
- (d) 5.5% – 6.5% of the RBI's balance sheet

19. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Rare earth elements are a series of seventeen substances that are present in the earth's crust and occur rarely in nature.
- 2. The USA is the world's largest producer of rare earths followed by China.

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 financial derivatives, consider the following statements:

1. Derivative derives its value from an underlying asset such as stocks, indices, or commodities.
2. In a futures contract, the buyer has the right but not the obligation to buy the underlying asset at a predetermined price.
3. The use of derivatives is limited only to speculation and not for risk management.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

21. Consider the following statements regarding Makhana (*Euryale ferox*):

1. It is an aquatic crop primarily cultivated in saline water bodies found in tropical and subtropical regions of Africa and South America.
2. India accounts for over 90% of the global production of Makhana, with the Mithila region of Bihar being the dominant contributor.
3. Despite its rich nutritional profile, including essential amino acids and low fat, it is known for its high glycemic load.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

22. Consider the following statements regarding Iron Ore deposits in India:

1. India possesses Asia's largest iron ore reserves, mainly consisting of high-quality haematite and magnetite ores.
2. The majority of these reserves are found near coal fields in the northwestern plateau.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

23. With reference to the Economic Capital Framework (ECF), consider the following statements:

1. It guides how the RBI manages its capital reserves and determines the surplus it can transfer to the Government of India.
2. It was formulated based on the recommendations of the Raghuram Rajan Committee.

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. Consider the following statements:

1. Real GDP is the inflation-adjusted measure of a country's total economic output.
2. Nominal GDP is measured at current market prices without adjusting for inflation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

25. Consider the following statements :

1. Cotton is primarily grown in the Northern, Central, and Southern zones of India.
2. Cotton is a vital commercial crop in India, contributing about 24% to global cotton production.
3. India is the 2nd largest producer and consumer of cotton in the world.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

26. Consider the following statements regarding honey production in India:

1. India is the second largest honey producer after China.
2. Uttar Pradesh is the leading honey-producing state in India.
3. More than 50% of the honey produced in India is consumed domestically.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

27. Consider the following statements regarding banana production and export:

Statement I: India is the largest producer of bananas in the world but contributes only about 1% to global banana exports.

Statement II: Latin America and the Caribbean account for the majority of banana exports globally.

Statement III: Karnataka is the largest banana-producing state in India.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- (a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and both of them explain the low export share of India.
- (b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but only one of them explains the low export share of India.
- (c) Only one of the Statements I and II is correct and that explains Statement III.
- (d) Statement I and II are correct, but Statement III is incorrect.

28. With reference to Index of Industrial Production (IIP), often mentioned in news, consider the following statements:
1. The IIP is calculated using Laspeyre's formula, which involves a simple weighted arithmetic mean of production relatives.
 2. India's IIP currently excludes construction, gas, and water supply due to limitations in data availability.
 3. The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 percent of the weight of items included in the IIP.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All the three
 - (d) None
29. With reference to Organic farming in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. India ranks third globally in terms of number of farmers practicing organic farming.
 2. Madhya Pradesh has the largest area under organic certification in 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
30. Consider the following statements regarding the NK Singh Committee on the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Review:
1. The Committee suggested using debt as the primary target for fiscal policy.
 2. The Committee proposed to create an autonomous Fiscal Council with a Chairperson and two members appointed by the Centre.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

Context

- PM Modi commissioned the Vizhinjam International Seaport in **Kerala**, which was completed at an estimated cost of **₹8,867 crore**.

About

- The Seaport was developed under a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model**, between the Kerala government and Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd (APSEZ).
- Vizhinjam is India's first dedicated **transshipment port** and also the country's **first semi-automated port**.
 - It features fully automated yard cranes and remotely operated ship-to-shore cranes for efficient cargo handling.

- The port is equipped with India's first home-built, AI-powered **Vessel Traffic Management System (VTMS)**.
- It is also being developed as a **multi-modal hub**, with direct road access to **National Highway 66** and **Kerala's first cloverleaf interchange** to handle future cargo growth.

2. (b)

In News

- SEBI has accused Pranav Adani of insider trading by allegedly sharing price-sensitive information about Adani Green's 2021 SB Energy acquisition with his brother-in-law.

Insider trading

- Insider trading is the illegal practice of trading a company's securities using **unpublished price-sensitive information (UPSI)** by individuals with access to such data, like employees, directors, or associates.
- It involves buying or selling securities based on **confidential**, material nonpublic information, violating a duty of trust.
- It also includes **sharing such information ("tipping")** and trading by those who receive or misuse it.
- SEBI regulates and **prohibits insider trading** to ensure market fairness and protect investors.

3. (c)

Context

- **Domestic institutional investors (DIIs)** overtook **foreign portfolio investors (FPIs)** in ownership of NSE-listed companies in the March quarter of 2025.

Foreign portfolio investment (FPI)

- FPI consists of securities and other financial assets held by investors in another country.
- It does **not provide the investor with direct ownership of a company's assets** and is relatively liquid depending on the volatility of the market.
- **FPI holdings can include** stocks, American Depositary Receipts (ADRs), Global Depositary Receipts (GDRs), bonds, mutual funds, and Exchange-traded funds (ETFs).
- It is different from **Foreign direct investment (FDI)**, which is an ownership stake in a foreign company or project made by an investor, company, or government from another country.

4. (c)

In News: World Solar Day, as observed on 3rd May, highlighted the transformative potential of solar energy, particularly in agriculture.

Statement 1 is correct

- Agriphotovoltaics (APVs) offer a **dual solution for food and energy production by integrating solar panels with farming**.
- It involves elevating solar modules to allow sunlight to reach crops while harnessing solar power, and maximizes land-use efficiency, allowing crops to grow beneath elevated solar panels while generating electricity.

Statement 2 is correct

- APVs create **microclimatic conditions** that reduce water evaporation and protect crops from extreme heat, improving agricultural resilience.
- Farmers **can sell excess solar power back to the grid** at a predetermined feed-in tariff, ensuring stable revenue streams.

5. (b)

In News : India's National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) has reported "irreparable damage" to the structures of three barrages in the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP)

Statement 1 is not correct but statement 2 is correct : The Kaleshwaram project on the **Godavari** is the **world's largest multi-stage lift irrigation project**.

- In lift irrigation projects, water is not transported by gravity. Instead, it is **lifted using pumps or surge pools** to a main delivery chamber at the highest point of the project, from where it is distributed to the fields for irrigation.
- The project was officially opened on June 21, 2019 and It is located on the **Godavari River** in Telangana.
- It spans 500 km through 13 districts, utilizing an extensive canal network of more than 1,800 km.

6. (a)

Context

- The Union Agriculture Minister announced the development of two genome-edited rice varieties and said the technological advancement would lead to a second green revolution in the country.

ICAR's Genome-Edited Rice

- ICAR has developed India's first genome-edited rice varieties – **DRR Rice 100 (Kamla) and Pusa DST Rice 1**.
- In 2018, ICAR initiated genome-editing research to improve two major rice varieties – **Samba Mahsuri and MTU 1010** – under the **National Agricultural Science Fund**.
- These new varieties were developed using genome-editing technology based on **CRISPR-Cas**.

7. (d)

Context

- The Committee constituted for the Framework on Repairability Index (RI) in Mobile and Electronic Sector has submitted its Report to the Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), Government of India.

Background

- India ranks as the **third-largest producer of electronic waste** globally, following China and the United States.
 - The surge in electronic consumption, coupled with limited repair options, has contributed significantly to this issue.
- Between **2022 and 2025**, consumer complaints related to mobile phones and tablets increased from **19,057 to 22,864**, underscoring the need for improved repair accessibility and transparency in post-sale services.
- In September 2024, the DoCA established a committee under the chairmanship of **Bharat Khera** to develop a framework for the Repairability Index.

8. (b)

Context

- India and the United Kingdom have signed a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA) after nearly three years of negotiations.

What is a Free Trade Agreement or FTA?

- FTAs are arrangements between two or more countries or trading blocs that primarily agree to **reduce or eliminate customs tariff and non tariff barriers** on substantial trade between them.
 - They can cover both goods and services.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect because** FTAs usually reduce or eliminate tariffs, not necessarily all tariffs.

9. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: India surpassed **one billion tonnes of coal production** in FY 2024-25, with a **4.99% growth in output** compared to the previous year.

- India is the **second largest coal producing country** globally.

Statement 2 is correct: Coal Fields: The major coal fields in India are located in the eastern states of Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal, as well as in central states like Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

10. (c)**In News**

- The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has notified the “**Determination of Cost of Production Regulations, 2025**”, replacing its 2009 framework.

About

- This regulatory shift aims to empower the watchdog to better **scrutinize predatory pricing and deep discounting**, especially in the e-commerce and quick commerce sectors.

Background: Predatory Pricing and Competition Law

- Predatory pricing is defined under the **Competition Act, 2002** as “the sale of goods or provision of services, at a **price below the cost of production with a view to reduce competition or eliminate competitors.**”
- Such practices are deemed abuse of dominant position under **Section 4 of the Act.**
- The earlier Cost Regulations (2009) were increasingly seen as outdated amid the rise of digital markets, which involve complex pricing structures, cross-subsidies, and non-monetary value exchanges.

11. (b)**Context**

- In Kerala’s Idukki district, a promising cardamom season is being threatened by a snail infestation.

About

- Snails feed on the young panicles and flowers of cardamom, causing considerable damage to the crop.
- In response, farmers are using chemical molluscicides, such as **metaldehyde pellets**.
- However it is raising serious concerns about the long-term ecological impact on the Western Ghats’ biodiversity.

Cardamom (Elettaria cardamomum)

- **Cardamom, a tropical spice**, is produced from the seeds of the plant *Elettaria cardamomum*, a member of the ginger family.
- This plant is native to **southern India and Sri Lanka**, and is now cultivated widely in other tropical regions.

- **Growing conditions:** Cardamom thrives in warm, **humid climates** with well-drained, organic-rich soil and **partial shade**.
 - It needs a temperature range of **10 to 35 degrees Celsius** and prefers a **pH between 4.6 and 6.5**.
 - It is typically grown in **highland areas**, generally at altitudes between **600 and 1500 meters** above sea level.
 - It is cultivated mainly in States like **Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu**.

12. (c)

In News: The recently signed **India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** is expected to enhance exports, create jobs, and strengthen supply chains, with **India's textile sector** being a key beneficiary.

Statement 1 is correct

- India's Textile & Apparel Sector contributes **2.3% to our GDP**, 13% to industrial production, and 12% to exports.
- It is the **second largest employment generator, after agriculture**, with over 45 million people employed directly.

Statement 2 is correct

- India is the **6th largest exporter of Textiles & Apparel** in the world, and exports textiles to **over 100 countries, with a 4.5% share in global trade**.
- India exported textile items worth **US\$ 34.4 billion in 2023-24**, with apparel constituting 42% of the export basket, followed by raw materials/semi-finished materials at 34% and finished non-apparel goods at 30%.
 - It is projected to reach **\$350 billion by 2030**.

13. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: The MFN principle was designed **to prevent countries from giving different treatment to one partner over the other**.

- Each member treats all the other members equally as "most-favoured" trading partners.
- If a country improves the benefits that it gives to one trading partner, it has to give the same "best" treatment to all the other WTO members so **that they all remain "most-favoured"**.
- **Principle:** It seeks to **replace the frictions and distortions** of power-based (bilateral) policies with the guarantees of a rules-based framework where trading rights do not depend on the individual participants' economic or political clout.
- **Statement 2 and 3 are not correct:** There is **no formal procedure for suspending MFN treatment**, it does formally allow the members to increase import tariffs or impose quotas on goods, or even ban them.
 - In 2019 India suspended Pakistan's **MFN status** following Pakistan's terror attack on Pulwama in Jammu & Kashmir.

14. (c)

About International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- **Introduction:**
 - The IMF is a specialised agency of the United Nations, founded in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference.
 - It was created to ensure global monetary stability after the disruptions caused by the Great Depression and World War II.

- **Objectives:**
 - Promote international monetary cooperation.
 - Ensure exchange rate stability and orderly currency arrangements.
 - Facilitate balanced growth of international trade.
- **Membership and Voting Power:**
 - It comprises 190 member countries. Each member contributes a quota (based on GDP and economic indicators), which determines:
 - ♦ Voting power (formula: 1 vote per 100,000 SDRs + basic votes). (US has the highest share)
 - ♦ Access to financial resources.
 - **SDRs (Special Drawing Rights):** An international reserve asset created by the IMF. Not a currency but can be exchanged for freely usable currencies like USD, EUR, JPY, GBP, and CNY.
- **Organisational Structure:**
 - **Board of Governors:** Highest decision-making body; usually finance ministers or central bank governors of member countries.

15. (c)

Pair 1 is not correct: Creeping inflation refers to a very slow and mild increase in the price level, typically in the range of 1-3% per year.

Pair 2 is not correct: Hyperinflation is characterized by an extremely rapid and out-of-control increase in price levels, often exceeding 50% per month.

Pair 3 is correct: Galloping inflation (also known as running or jumping inflation) refers to a rapid increase in the price level, typically in the double or triple-digit range annually. While not as extreme as hyperinflation, it signifies a serious economic problem.

16. (c)

Both the statements are correct: National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development is a **specialised Development Finance Institution (DFI)**, set up in **2021**, by an Act (The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Act, 2021).

- **Ministry: Ministry of Finance.**
- It is aimed at **supporting the country's infrastructure sector**, which can significantly gain from an enabling credit flow by means of attractive instruments and channelized investment.

17. (b)

Context

- With the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023 and Draft DPDP Rules, 2025, India aims to expand its consent-based data-sharing system by building on the **Account Aggregator model**.

What is an Account Aggregator (AA)?

- **Definition:** An Account Aggregator is a type of **Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC-AA)** regulated by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.
 - It helps individuals **securely and digitally access and share information** from one financial institution to another in a real-time, consent-based, and secure manner.
 - It acts as an **intermediary** between Financial Information Providers (FIPs) and Financial Information Users (FIUs).
 - The AA does not store or process the data; it simply facilitates the encrypted transfer of data.
 - The system is based on a '**consent layer**', ensuring user control and privacy.

- **Working:** Users link their bank accounts to an AA.
 - Gives consent to share data (e.g., bank statement) with a Financial Information User (FIU) like a bank or NBFC.
 - The AA fetches the data from the Financial Information Provider (FIP), like a bank, and shares it securely with the FIU.
- **Examples of licensed Account Aggregators (AAs):**
 - **CAMS FinServ:** A subsidiary of Computer Age Management Services (CAMS).
 - **PhonePe AA:** A subsidiary of PhonePe, leveraging its digital reach.

18. (d)

Context

- The central board of directors of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reviewed the Economic Capital Framework (ECF) to assess risk provisioning and surplus distribution.
 - It is estimated that in FY 2024–25, the RBI may transfer ₹2.5–₹3 lakh crore to the central government, up from ₹2.11 lakh crore in FY 2023–24.

Policy on Surplus Distribution

- The “surplus” is the net of income over expenditure, and it is transferred to the Central Government under **Section 47 of the RBI Act, 1934**, after provisioning for: Bad debts, Depreciation, Staff benefits and Contingency reserves.
- While there is no explicit policy on surplus, recommendations have been made over the years:
 - **Malegam Committee, 2013:** Advocated higher transfer of surplus to the government.
 - **Jalan Committee, 2019:** Recommended maintaining a Contingency Risk Buffer (CRB) at 5.5–6.5% of RBI’s balance sheet, with excess transferred as surplus.

19. (d)

Both the statements are not correct: Rare earth elements are a series of **seventeen substances** that are **present in the earth’s crust**.

- Unlike what the name may indicate, **rare earths occur plentifully in nature**, but the **rarity comes from the ability to isolate them chemically** and make them usable in industrial applications.
- **China** is the world’s largest producer of rare earths followed by the USA.

20. (b)

Statement 1 correct: Derivatives derive value from an underlying asset such as stocks, indices, or commodities.

- **Derivatives are a helpful tool for those** informed traders who use them as a **hedging strategy** (to mitigate losses).

Statement 2 and 3 are not correct: In a futures contract, **both the buyer and seller are obligated to transact at the agreed-upon price**. The “right but not obligation” applies to options, not futures.

- Derivatives are used not just for speculation, **but also for hedging or risk management**.

21. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Makhana (*Euryale ferox*) is cultivated in freshwater ecosystems, particularly in stagnant ponds and wetlands, not saline water. It is native to South and Southeast Asia, especially India, not Africa or South America.

Statement 2 is correct: India, particularly Bihar’s Mithila region, is the largest global producer of Makhana, contributing more than 90% of world production.

Statement 3 is correct: Makhana is celebrated precisely because of its low glycemic index, making it suitable for diabetics. It’s high in protein, low in fat, and rich in essential amino acids.

22. (a)

In News: The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has given in-principle forest clearance to Lloyd Metals and Energy Limited to process raw iron ore in Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra.

Statement 1 is correct: India has the largest iron ore reserves in Asia. According to the Indian Bureau of Mines, India leads in haematite and is a significant player in magnetite reserves as well.

Statement 2 is not correct: The majority of India's iron ore reserves are located in the eastern and southern regions, notably in Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Karnataka.

23. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Economic Capital Framework (ECF) guides how the RBI manages its capital reserves and determines the surplus it can transfer to the Government of India.

Statement 2 is not correct: It was originally formulated based on recommendations from the Bimal Jalan Committee (2019) and adopted in RBI's 578th meeting in 2019.

- The Bimal Jalan Committee had recommended a 5-year periodic review of the ECF.

24. (c)

In News: Recently, NITI Aayog CEO B.V.R. Subrahmanyam informed that India has surpassed Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy (nominal GDP), and poised to displace Germany in the next 2.5 to 3 years.

Statement 1 is correct

- **Real GDP:** It measures the total value of goods and services produced in an economy, adjusted for inflation.
 - It reflects the actual growth in production by using constant prices from a base year.

Statement 2 is correct

- **Nominal GDP:** It measures the total value of goods and services produced at current market prices, without adjusting for inflation.
 - It means that if prices rise due to inflation, Nominal GDP may appear higher even if actual production remains unchanged.

25. (c)

In News: India's cotton production is expected to decline by 2% in the 2025–26 season, according to the US Department of Agriculture, due to a shift in farmer preference toward more profitable crops like maize and groundnut.

Statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct : Cotton is a vital commercial crop in India, contributing about 24% to global cotton production and sustaining the livelihoods of millions of farmers and workers.

- It plays a crucial role in India's foreign exchange earnings through exports of raw cotton, intermediate products, and finished goods.
- India has the largest cotton acreage globally; ranks 36th in productivity.
- India is the 2nd largest producer and consumer of cotton in the world.
- India grows all four species of cotton: G. Arboreum, G. Herbaceum (Asian cotton), G. Barbadense (Egyptian cotton) and G. Hirsutum (American Upland cotton).
- Cotton is primarily grown in the Northern, Central, and Southern zones of India.

26. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: India is the 7th largest honey producer globally. China remains the top global producer and exporter, dominating both production volume and international trade.

Statement 2 is correct: Areas of Production: Uttar Pradesh (17%), West Bengal (16%), Punjab (14%), Bihar (12%) and Rajasthan (9%).

Statement 3 is not correct: More than 50% of India's honey production is exported, not consumed domestically. Major export destinations include the USA, UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

27. (d)

Statement I is correct – India is the largest banana producer but has only 1% share in exports.

- Statement II is correct – Latin America and the Caribbean account for 80% of global banana exports.
- Statement III is incorrect – Andhra Pradesh, not Karnataka, is the largest banana-producing state.

28. (c)

In News: India's industrial production growth dropped to an eight-month low of 2.7% in April, mainly due to a decline in mining output, a high base effect, and slower electricity production.

All the three statements are correct : The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) has been compiling the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) since 1950.

- The IIP measures industrial output using **Laspeyre's formula**, primarily based on physical production data, though some items like machinery are reported in value terms and adjusted using the Wholesale Price Index (WPI)
- The scope of the IIP as recommended by the **United Nations Statistical Office (UNSO)** includes mining, manufacturing, construction, electricity, gas and water supply.
 - But due to constraints of data availability, the IIP compiled in India has excluded construction, gas and water supply sectors.
- The **Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 percent** of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

29. (b)

Context

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), Amul, and Rich Plus have signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to **promote organic farming in India**.

More About the News

- **Launch of Organic Farming Card:** A co-branded Organic Farming Card has been introduced for account holders of IOB who are engaged in organic farming.
 - This card will enable farmers to access discounted organic agricultural inputs through Amul's certified retail outlets.
- IOB has announced a dedicated credit scheme named "**Harit Kranti**", specifically designed to address the financial needs of organic farmers.
- **Richplus** will play a key role in offering **technical expertise** and training to farmers on organic farming practices.

Organic farming in India

- **India ranks at 4th place** in terms of certified area globally as per the report published by International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) Statistics 2022.
- **Madhya Pradesh** has the largest area under organic certification followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka.
 - **Sikkim** is India's first fully organic state, with implementing organic practices on around 75,000 hectares of agricultural land.

- **India ranks first** globally in terms of number of farmers practicing organic farming.
- **The exports of India's organic products** stood at \$708 million in 2022-23 and considering the global market size of around \$138 billion, there is a tremendous scope to increase the organic exports in the near future.

30. (c)

Context

- The Government of India has successfully met its **fiscal deficit target of 4.8% of GDP** for the financial year **2024-25**, as per provisional data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

NK Singh committee recommendation

- **Debt to GDP ratio:** The Committee suggested using debt as the **primary target** for fiscal policy. A debt to GDP ratio of **60%** should be targeted with a **40%** limit for the center and **20%** limit for the states by FY23.
- **The fiscal deficit to GDP ratio of 2.5%** by FY23.
- **Fiscal Council:** The Committee proposed to create an **autonomous Fiscal Council** with a Chairperson and two members appointed by the center. The role of the Council would include:
 - Preparing multi-year fiscal forecasts,
 - Recommending changes to the fiscal strategy,
 - Improving quality of fiscal data,
 - Advising the government if conditions exist to deviate from the fiscal target.
- **Deviations:** The Committee suggested that grounds in which the government can deviate from the targets should be clearly specified, and the government should not be allowed to notify other circumstances.



INDIAN POLITY & CONSTITUTION

1. With reference to the Caste enumeration in the Census exercise in India, consider the following statements:

1. It falls under the Concurrent list under Seventh Schedule of Indian Constitution.
2. The last caste-based enumeration of India's population was conducted in 1931.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. The Supreme Court's judgment in the case of Common Cause v. Union of India (2018) is related to:

- (a) Right to die with dignity
- (b) Disqualification of legislators
- (c) Reservation in promotions for SCs and STs
- (d) Decriminalization of homosexuality

3. Consider the following statements regarding Pangolins:

1. Pangolins are the only mammals globally that possess keratin scales.
2. They primarily feed on a diet consisting of ants, termites, and insect larvae, utilizing their elongated and adhesive tongues.
3. The Indian Pangolin's distribution encompasses arid regions of India such as Rajasthan.

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

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

1. It was established under the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946.
2. It can suo-moto take up investigation of offences only in the Union Territories.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Which of the following is mandatorily required to be submitted while applying for voter registration using Form 6?
 - (a) A certificate of Indian citizenship issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs
 - (b) A notarised copy of birth certificate
 - (c) A self-attested document as proof of age and address
 - (d) A copy of the applicant's passport and PAN card
6. Article 262 of the Indian Constitution is related to which of the following?
 - (a) President's Rule
 - (b) Financial Emergency
 - (c) Inter-state river water disputes
 - (d) Local self-government
7. Consider the following statements:
 1. India is a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention.
 2. India does not have any national refugee policy or a refugee law.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. The Lily Thomas v. Union of India judgment (2013) by the Supreme Court of India directly addressed the issue of disqualification of lawmakers upon conviction. What was the primary ruling of this judgment?
 - (a) It upheld the provision allowing convicted lawmakers to continue in office until their appeals were exhausted.
 - (b) It mandated the immediate disqualification of a lawmaker upon conviction for two years or more in specified offences.
 - (c) It broadened the definition of "Office of Profit" leading to the disqualification of more legislators.
 - (d) It provided guidelines for the interpretation of the Tenth Schedule concerning disqualification on grounds of defection.
9. Article 191 of the Constitution is related to which of the following?
 - (a) President's Rule
 - (b) Centre-State Relations
 - (c) Seat of the Supreme Court of India
 - (d) Disqualification of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)
10. Consider the following statements regarding the National Defence Fund (NDF):
 1. Contributions made to the NDF are eligible for tax exemption under Section 80(G) of the Income Tax Act.
 2. The National Defence Fund receives annual budgetary allocations from the Government 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

11. Which among the following legal frameworks outlines the procedure for the removal of a Supreme Court judge?

- (a) Judges Inquiry Act, 1968
- (b) Judicial Standards and Accountability Act
- (c) Indian Penal Code
- (d) Code of Civil Procedure

12. With reference to Article 143 of the Indian Constitution, consider the following statements:

1. The President can refer any question of law or fact of public importance to the Supreme Court for its advisory opinion.
2. The Supreme Court is constitutionally bound to respond to every reference made under Article 143.
3. The advisory opinion given by the Supreme Court under Article 143 is not legally binding.

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. With reference to the appointment of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Chairman, consider the following statements:

1. A UPSC chairman is appointed for a term of six years or until attaining 65 years of age.
2. The UPSC Chairman can be reappointed after completing their term.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

14. With reference to the Sikkim State in India, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. West Bengal is the only Indian state that shares a border with Sikkim.
2. Sikkim became the 15th state of India in 1975, under the leadership of Lhendup Dorjee Khangsarpa.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- 15.** With reference to the Supreme Court's judgment in K. Veeraswami vs Union of India (1991), consider the following statements:
1. The judgment declared that judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court are not considered public servants under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.
 2. It mandated that prior consultation with the Chief Justice of India is necessary before registering an FIR against a judge of the Supreme Court or a High Court.
 3. In case the Chief Justice of India is the subject of the complaint, the President must consult the Prime Minister before proceeding.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2 only
 - (b) 1 and 3 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 16.** The K. Veeraswamy case, 1991, primarily dealt with which of the following issues?
- (a) Investigation and prosecution of High Court and Supreme Court judges under anti-corruption laws
 - (b) Judicial appointments by the executive
 - (c) Impeachment of judges
 - (d) Corruption charges against legislators
- 17.** With reference to the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA), consider the following statements:
1. The CWMA was established in 2018 under the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956.
 2. It is responsible for implementing the awards of the Cauvery Water Tribunal and the Supreme Court.

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.** Consider the following statements regarding the NITI Aayog Governing Council:
1. The Chief Ministers of all States and Union Territories with a legislature are permanent members of the Governing Council.
 2. The primary function of the Governing Council is to act as a policy think tank for the Government of India.
 3. The Prime Minister of India serves as the Chairperson of the NITI Aayog, but not necessarily the Governing Council.

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

19. The case *Shanti Bhushan vs. The Supreme Court of India* (2018), recently seen in the news, is related to which of the following issues?
- Electoral bonds and political funding in India
 - The powers and role of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) as the 'Master of the Roster'
 - Reservation in promotion for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
 - The powers of the Election Commission in conducting free and fair elections
20. The Sixth Schedule applies to tribal areas in which of the following states?
- Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura
 - Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh
 - Meghalaya, Sikkim, Nagaland, Tripura
 - Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh
21. With reference to the Deputy Speaker, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- The Deputy Speaker presides over the joint sitting of Parliament in the absence of the Speaker.
 - The Deputy Speaker is elected by both Houses of Parliament in a joint sitting.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

In News: Recently, the **Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA)**, chaired by Prime Minister of India, has decided to include **caste enumeration** in the upcoming **Census exercise**, marking a **significant shift in India's approach** to demographic data collection.

Statement 1 is not correct

- As per **Article 246** of the Constitution of India, the Census is a Union subject, listed in the **Union List under the Seventh Schedule**.
- It ensures that **caste enumeration, conducted as part of the main Census**, will have a uniform and transparent framework across the country.

Statement 2 is correct

- The last caste-based enumeration of India's population was conducted in 1931, during British rule, and it counted the **total number of castes was 4,147**.
- Although caste details were **gathered in 1941**, they were **never published** due to the **outbreak of World War II**.
- Post-Independence**, only Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) have been counted in the **decennial Census**.

2. (a)

Context

- The Supreme court emphasized that digital access is a crucial component of the Right to Life under Article 21.

Article 21 of the Indian Constitution

- No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law.
- **Article 21** is part of the **Fundamental Rights, Part III** of the Constitution. It is guaranteed to all persons, citizens and non-citizens alike.
- It places a restriction on the state from arbitrarily interfering with a person's life and liberty.
 - Over time, courts have interpreted it to also impose **positive obligations** on the state to ensure a dignified life.

Rights Included Under Article 21 (Judicial Interpretation)

Right	Landmark Case
Right to livelihood	Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985)
Right to clean environment	Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar (1991)
Right to education (prior to Article 21A)	Mohini Jain v. State of Karnataka (1992)
Right to privacy	Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017)
Right to die with dignity	Common Cause v. Union of India (2018)

3. (a)

About Pangolin

- Pangolins are mammals covered in keratin scales, the only such mammals on Earth.
- They feed on ants, termites, and larvae using their long sticky tongues.
- When threatened, they use volvation (rolling into a ball) to protect themselves with their armor-like scales.
- They are considered “**ecosystem engineers**” due to their role in soil aeration and pest control.
- **Indian Pangolin (Manis crassicaudata)**
 - **IUCN Status:** Endangered
 - **Habitat:** Widely distributed across India, **except arid zones (e.g., Rajasthan)**, High Himalayas & North-Eastern states
 - Also found in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
- **Chinese Pangolin (Manis pentadactyla)**
 - **IUCN Status:** Critically Endangered
 - **Habitat:** Himalayan foothills – Eastern Nepal, Bhutan, Northern India, Northeast Bangladesh, Southern China

4. (b)

In News: Recently, the **high-level committee**, headed by the Prime Minister of India, met to select the **next Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)**.

- Due to the lack of consensus on a new appointment, incumbent CBI Director is all set to get a one-year extension.

Statement 1 is not correct

- 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**.

- However, it **functions under DoPT**, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions, and derives its **investigative powers** from the **Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946**.

Statement 2 is correct

- The Central Government can authorize CBI to investigate such a crime in a State **but only with the consent** of the concerned State Government.
- The **Supreme Court and High Courts** can order CBI to investigate such a crime anywhere in the country **without the consent of the State**.
- CBI can **suo-moto** take up investigation of offences **only in the Union Territories**.

5. (c)

Context

- Following the Pahalgam terror attack, several deported Pakistani nationals were found to possess Indian identity documents like Aadhaar, ration cards, and even **Voter IDs**.

Constitutional and Legal Framework

- **Article 326** of the Constitution states that every Indian citizen **aged 18** years or above has the right to vote in elections to the Lok Sabha and state/Union Territory Assemblies.
- **Section 16** of the **Representation of the People Act, 1950** disqualifies a person from being registered on an electoral roll if:
 - They are not a citizen of India,
 - Are of unsound mind, as declared by a competent court, or
 - Are disqualified under any law relating to corrupt practices or offences in connection with elections.

Procedure for Voter Registration

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) mandates new voters to apply using **Form 6**.
- Applicants must submit:
 - **Self-attested proof of age and address** (such as utility bills, passport, etc.)
 - **A declaration of Indian citizenship**, which they must personally sign.
 - Proof of citizenship (such as passport or birth certificate) is not strictly required unless the ERO suspects the applicant's credentials.

6. (c)

Constitutional Provisions: Article 262 of the Indian Constitution **empowers Parliament** to legislate for adjudication of inter-state river water disputes.

- **Bars the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court** or any other court in such matters if a law is made under this provision.
- **Parliament enacted the below-mentioned Acts according to Article 262** of the Indian Constitution:
 - **River Board Act, 1956:** The Act empowered the Central Government to establish boards for Interstate Rivers and river valleys in consultation with State Governments. However, no board has been created to date.
 - **Inter-State Water Dispute Act, 1956:** If the State Government(s) approach the Central Government for the constitution of the Tribunal, the Centre may form a Tribunal after trying to resolve the dispute through consultations.
 - ♦ The Supreme Court shall not question the Award or formula given by the Tribunal but it can question the working of the Tribunal.

7. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: India is **not a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol** relating to the Status of Refugee.

Statement 2 is correct: India does not have any national refugee policy or a refugee law. **All foreign undocumented nationals** are governed as per the provisions of **The Foreigners Act, 1946, The Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939, The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 and The Citizenship Act, 1955.**

- As per the MHA foreign nationals who enter into the country **without valid travel documents** are treated as **illegal immigrants**.

8. (b)

The **Supreme Court's judgment in Lily Thomas v. Union of India (2013)** was a landmark decision concerning the disqualification of convicted legislators under the Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1951.

Key Highlights of the Judgment:

- Struck down Section 8(4) of the RPA, 1951, which allowed sitting MPs and MLAs a three-month window to appeal their conviction without losing their seat.
- Held that such a provision was ultra vires (beyond the powers) of the Constitution, as Articles 102 and 191 do not provide any exception for sitting lawmakers.
- Clarified that a lawmaker stands disqualified immediately upon conviction if sentenced to imprisonment of **two years or more** for offences specified under Section 8(1), 8(2), or 8(3) of the RPA.

9. (d)

The **disqualification of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)** in India is primarily governed by **Article 191 of the Constitution, the Representation of the People Act, 1951, and the Tenth Schedule (anti-defection law).**

- The **disqualification of a Member of Parliament (MP)** in India is governed **primarily by Article 102 of the Constitution, Representation of the People Act, 1951, along with the Tenth Schedule (anti-defection law).**

10. (a)

About National Defence Fund (NDF)

- Established:** 1962
- Objective:** To utilize voluntary donations for the welfare of armed forces personnel and their families.
- Administration:** The fund is managed by an Executive Committee, with the Prime Minister as the Chairperson. Other members include the Defence Minister, the Home Minister, and the Finance Minister, who also serves as the Treasurer.
- Funding:** The NDF relies entirely on voluntary contributions from the public and receives **no budgetary support from the government.**
- Tax Exemption:** All contributions made to the NDF are exempt from Income Tax under **Section 80(G) of the Income Tax Act.**

11. (a)

Context

- Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai was sworn in by President Droupadi Murmu as the 52nd Chief Justice of India.

Removal of CJJ

- The constitution provides that a judge can be removed only **by an order of the president**, based on a motion passed by both houses of parliament.
- The procedure for removal of judges is elaborated in the **Judges Inquiry Act, 1968**. The Act sets out the following steps for removal from office:

IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

- ▶ A **removal motion** signed by 100 members (in case of Lok Sabha) or 50 members (in case of Rajya Sabha) is to be given to the Speaker/Chairman.
 - ▶ If the motion is admitted, then a **three-member committee to investigate** into the charges is constituted.
 - ▶ If the committee finds the judge to be guilty of the charges (**misbehaviour or incapacity**), the House in which the motion was introduced, can take up the consideration of the motion.
- Special majority: Majority of total membership of the House & majority of not less than two thirds members present and voting.**
- ▶ Once, the House in which removal motion was introduced passes it with **special majority**, it goes to the second House which also has to pass it with a special majority.
 - ▶ After the motion is passed, an **address** is presented to the President for removal of the judge. The President then passes an order removing the judge.

12. (c)**Context**

- President Droupadi Murmu sought the Supreme Court's advisory opinion **under Article 143** on **whether the President and governors need to follow timelines to decide on state bills**.

Article 143 – Power of President to consult Supreme Court

- **Article 143(1):** The President can refer any question of law or fact that is of public importance to the Supreme Court for its advisory opinion.
 - The Court may choose to answer or **decline**.
 - The opinion is **not binding**, but is highly respected.
- A similar power to make references was granted to the Federal Court of India under Section 213 of the **Government of India Act, 1935**.
- **Article 145(3)** requires any such reference to be heard by **five judges**, after which the SC returns the reference to the President with the **majority opinion**.
- **Need for the Article:** Under the Constitution, the President acts on the aid and advice of the Cabinet.
 - The advisory jurisdiction allows her the means to **seek independent advice to act on certain constitutional matters**.
 - It is a power that the President has invoked on at least 15 occasions since 1950.

13. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: President Droupadi Murmu has appointed **Dr. Ajay Kumar** as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission under **Article 316 (1) of the Constitution**.

- **Members:** Besides the chairman, it can have a **maximum of 10 members**.
 - A UPSC chairman is appointed for a **term of six years** or until attaining **65 years of age**, **all members have the same term**.

Statement 2 is not correct: Reappointment: The UPSC Chairman is **not eligible for reappointment** after completing their term.

14. (a)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his wishes on the occasion of the **50th anniversary of Sikkim's statehood**.

About

- Sikkim became the **22nd state of India** on **May 16, 1975**, under the leadership of **Lhendup Dorjee Khangsarpa**, the state's first Chief Minister.
 - Sikkim was earlier referred to as the **Chogyal Kingdom**, ruled by Chogyals.
- **Location:** Sikkim is located in the **northeastern part of the country**, in the eastern Himalayas. It is bordered by;
 - the **Tibet Autonomous Region of China** to the north and northeast,
 - by **Bhutan** to the southeast,
 - by the **Indian state of West Bengal** to the south, and
 - by **Nepal** to the west.

15 (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: The **K. Veeraswami judgment** actually held that Judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court **are public servants for the purposes of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988**. This was a significant clarification, bringing judges within the ambit of anti-corruption legislation.

Statement 2 is correct: This is a core aspect of the K. Veeraswami judgment. To protect the independence of the judiciary and prevent frivolous complaints, the Supreme Court laid down a procedure that no FIR shall be registered against a judge of the Supreme Court or a High Court without prior consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI).

Statement 3 is not correct: The K. Veeraswami judgment did not state this. It stipulated that if the Chief Justice of India himself is the subject of the complaint, then the President of India would be the authority to consider the complaint, and the President would then consult with a panel of senior-most judges of the Supreme Court. The Prime Minister is not mentioned in this specific procedure within the judgment for such a scenario.

16. (a)

Context

- The Vice-President of India, has stated that it is time to revisit the K Veeraswamy judgement of 1991.

Background

- The case arose when K. Veeraswami, a former Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, was charged under the **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947**.

- **Issue:** Whether judges of the High Courts and Supreme Court can be investigated and prosecuted under anti-corruption laws, and if so, what safeguards must be observed to maintain judicial independence.

Supreme court ruling

- The Supreme Court held that judges of the higher judiciary are indeed '**public servants**' under the Prevention of Corruption Act.
- **Mandatory Prior Sanction:** No FIR or investigation can be initiated against a sitting judge of the High Court or Supreme Court without the prior sanction of the CJI.
 - If allegations are made against the Chief Justice of India, the mandatory consultation must be conducted with other senior judges of the Supreme Court.

17. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) was constituted in **2018**, under Section 6A of the **Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956**, following the **Supreme Court judgment on the Cauvery Water Dispute 2018**.

- **Purpose:** The distribution of Cauvery waters among the states of **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and the Union Territory of Puducherry**.
- **Parent Ministry:** Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- **Functions of CWMA include:**
 - Ensuring implementation of the Tribunal's and Supreme Court's award.
 - Monitoring storage, release, and inflow data of major reservoirs on the Cauvery.
 - Supervising reservoir operations and regulating water releases as per schedules.
 - Adjudicating or managing disputes related to water releases among the basin states.

18. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Chief Ministers of all States and Union Territories with a legislature are permanent members of the Governing Council. Permanent Members include: Chief Ministers of all States, Chief Ministers of UTs with legislature (Delhi, Puducherry) & Lt. Governors of other UTs.

Statement 2 is not correct: While NITI Aayog as an organization acts as a policy think tank, the primary function of the Governing Council is to "Discuss national development issues and align State visions with national goals," "Promote coordination on inter-sectoral and inter-departmental issues," and "Provide a platform for collective policy formulation and decentralised planning." The "policy think tank" role is attributed to NITI Aayog's overall core functions, not specifically the Governing Council's primary function.

Statement 3 is not correct: The Prime Minister is the Chairperson for both "NITI Aayog Governing Council" and "NITI Aayog".

19. (b)

Context

- Former Supreme Court Judge, Justice A.S. Oka, emphasized in a more democratic and institutionalised manner rather than being heavily centered around the Chief Justice of India (CJI).

The Need for Reform

- **Master of the Roster Doctrine:** As reaffirmed in **Shanti Bhushan vs. Supreme Court of India (2018)**, the CJI alone decides;
 - Which bench hears which case,
 - Which judges are assigned to benches,
 - When the case is listed for hearing.

- **Constitution Bench Control:** Although Constitution Bench cases must consist of at least five judges, it is often the CJI who;
 - Decides when such benches are constituted, and
 - Frequently presides over them.
- **Control Over Court Administration:** According to **State of Rajasthan v. Prakash Chand (1998)**, while the Chief Justice is '**first among equals**' in judicial matters, in administrative functions he occupies a unique, dominant role. This includes;
 - Control over court registry,
 - Determination of work allocation, and
 - Implementation of administrative decisions without formal consultation.
- **Strengthening the Lower Judiciary:** Justice Oka also emphasised the need to empower the district judiciary, often termed the "backbone" of India's justice delivery system.

20. (a)

Context

- The Union Government is considering a new policy for Ladakh under which **citizens who have had a continuous 15-year stay in the region, beginning 2019**, will be considered domiciles.

Sixth Schedule of the Constitution

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

21. (a)

Context

- The position of the Deputy Speaker has been lying vacant for the last six years raising questions on constitutional adherence and democratic resilience.

Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha

- The Deputy Speaker serves as the **Second-in-Command Presiding Officer** of the Lower House of Parliament of India – the Lok Sabha.

- According to **Article 95(1)**, the Deputy Speaker performs the duties of the Speaker if the post is vacant.
- The Deputy Speaker acts as the Speaker when **the latter is absent from the sitting** of the House.
- The Deputy Speaker **presides over joint sittings** of both Houses of Parliament in case the Speaker is absent from such a sitting.

Election of Deputy Speaker

- The Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha is elected by the Lok Sabha itself from amongst its members.
- **Article 93** states that “The House of the People shall, as soon as may be, choose two members of the House to be respectively Speaker and Deputy Speaker”.



GEOGRAPHY

1. The Cholistan Canal Project is associated with which of the following countries?

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

2. Consider the following statements with reference to Mt. Makalu

- 1. It is situated in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
- 2. It is the fifth highest mountain 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

3. Consider the following statements regarding Western Disturbances:

- 1. They are tropical cyclones originating over the Arabian Sea.
- 2. They primarily develop due to the temperature gradient between tropical and polar air masses in the mid-latitudes.
- 3. They typically gather moisture from the Bay of Bengal before affecting India.
- 4. Their movement towards India is largely influenced by the subtropical westerly jet stream.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

4. Consider the following statements:

- 1. The Chenab River originates from the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers in Himachal Pradesh and eventually merges with the Indus River in Pakistan.
- 2. As per the Indus Waters Treaty, India is permitted to use the waters of the Chenab River without any restrictions for storage and irrigation purposes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Which of the following statements accurately describes the primary mechanism responsible for the phenomenon of airglow?
- (a) Ionization of atmospheric gases by high-energy cosmic rays.
 - (b) Excitation of atoms and molecules in the upper atmosphere by charged particles from the solar wind.
 - (c) Chemiluminescence resulting from reactions between pollutants in the stratosphere.
 - (d) Emission of photons by atoms and molecules in the upper atmosphere as they release energy absorbed from solar ultraviolet radiation.

6. Match the following copper mines with their corresponding states:

Copper Mine/Belt	State
A. Khetri Copper Belt	1. Madhya Pradesh
B. Balaghat Copper Mine	2. Jharkhand
C. Singhbhum Copper Belt	3. Rajasthan

Select the correct option:

- (a) A-3, B-2, C-1
 - (b) A-3, B-1, C-2
 - (c) A-1, B-3, C-2
 - (d) A-2, B-1, C-3
7. Arnala Island, recently seen in the news, is located off the coast of which Indian state?
- (a) Odisha
 - (b) Tamil Nadu
 - (c) Kerala
 - (d) Maharashtra

8. Consider the following countries:

- 1. Armenia
- 2. Azerbaijan
- 3. Iran
- 4. Iraq
- 5. Lebanon

How many of the above countries share its land borders with Türkiye?

- (a) Only two
 - (b) Only three
 - (c) Only four
 - (d) All five
9. Which of the following land degradation types is most commonly associated with the formation of ravines and badlands in India?
- (a) Wind erosion
 - (b) Sheet erosion
 - (c) Salinization
 - (d) Gully erosion

- 10.** Kruger National Park, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following countries?
- South Africa
 - Kenya
 - Namibia
 - Botswana

- 11.** With reference to the Total Fertility Rate (TFR), which of the following statements is/are correct?
- It refers to the average number of children born per 1,000 women in a year.
 - A TFR of 2.1 is considered the replacement level needed to maintain a stable population.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 12.** The Chambal River originates near which of the following locations?
- Aravalli Hills, Rajasthan
 - Amarkantak Plateau, Madhya Pradesh
 - Vindhya Range, Uttar Pradesh
 - Janapav Hills, Madhya Pradesh

- 13.** Consider the following pairs:

Rivers	National Waterway (NW)
1. Brahmaputra	NW-2
2. Godavari & Krishna	NW-3
3. Barak	NW-6
4. Chenab	NW-26

How many of the above pair (s) is / are correctly matched?

- Only one
 - Only two
 - Only three
 - All four
- 14.** Consider the following statements regarding the Tsarap Chu region:
- It is located entirely within the Union Territory of Ladakh.
 - The Tibetan Argali is one of the fauna found in this region.
 - It is the home of Rose Finch, a rare bird species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

15. Consider the following statements:

1. The crude birth rate (CBR) is defined as the number of live births per 1,000 people in a population in a given year.
2. The total fertility rate (TFR) indicates the average number of children a woman is expected to have during her reproductive years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

16. Which of the following are part of New Caledonia which is a French island territory?

1. Grande Terre
2. Belep archipelago
3. The Isle of Pines

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

17. Consider the following statements regarding the Suez Canal:

1. It is an artificial waterway that connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea.
2. The Canal does not have locks and it is essentially a sea-level waterway.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

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

1. The River rises at Trimbakeshwar, Maharashtra in the Western Ghats.
2. It is India's second longest river after the river Ganga.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

19. Consider the following statements regarding the Aravalli Range:

1. It is one of the oldest mountain ranges in the world and predates the formation of the Himalayan ranges.
2. It stretches for approximately 800 Km from Gujarat to Delhi.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

20. Which mountain does the Tsangpo River curve around before entering India?

- (a) Kanchenjunga
- (b) Namcha Barwa
- (c) Nanda Devi
- (d) Annapurna

21. Chagos Island, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following regions?

- (a) East China Sea
- (b) Indian Ocean
- (c) Pacific Ocean
- (d) South China Sea

22. With reference to the North Eastern Region (NER), consider the following statements:

1. The NER shares borders with five countries.
2. It is a critical link in India's Act East Policy, serving as a bridge to Southeast Asia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

23. Which among the following countries surrounds the 'Persian Gulf'?

1. Iran
2. Kuwait
3. Saudi Arabia
4. Bahrain

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

24. The Triveni Sangam at Kaleshwaram, associated with Saraswati Pushkaralu, is the confluence of which rivers?

- (a) Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati
- (b) Godavari, Pranahita, Saraswati
- (c) Krishna, Tungabhadra, Bhima
- (d) Cauvery, Hemavati, Saraswati

25. Consider the following pairs:

Coal Fields	Locations
1. Mokom	Assam
2. Kamptee Valley	Maharashtra
3. Singareni	Telangana
4. Neyveli	Tamil Nadu

How many of the above pair(s) is / are correctly matched?

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

26. The Bairabi–Sairang railway line recently connected which North-Eastern state capital to the national railway network?

- (a) Imphal
- (b) Shillong
- (c) Kohima
- (d) Aizawl

27. Kilauea volcano, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following regions?

- (a) Alaska
- (b) Japan
- (c) Philippines
- (d) Hawaii

28. With reference to Mount Khangchendzonga, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. It is the third-highest mountain in the world.
- 2. It is located on the border between Sikkim in India and Bhutan.

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 Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO), consider the following statements:

- 1. The MJO is a moving system of winds, clouds, and pressure that brings rain as it circles around the equator.
- 2. The effect of the MJO is witnessed mainly in the tropical region, in the band between 30 degrees North and 30 degrees South of the equator.

Which of the above statements is/are not correct?

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

30. Consider the following pairs:

Peaks	Continents
1. Mt. Elbrus	Europe
2. Mt. Kilimanjaro	Africa
3. Mt. Denali	South America
4. Mt. Aconcagua	North America

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

31. Which of the following major rivers originate in the Hindu Kush Himalaya region?

- 1. Volga
- 2. Ganga
- 3. Mekong
- 4. Brahmaputra

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

32. Archaeologists have discovered three ancient tombs in the Dra Abu al-Naga necropolis in Luxor. Luxor is located in which of the following countries?

- (a) Lebanon
- (b) Jordan
- (c) Egypt
- (d) Syria

33. Located in the western part of South America, it has Spanish as its national language. The Loa River is its longest river.

Which of the following countries is being described?

- (a) Peru
- (b) Bolivia
- (c) Chile
- (d) Argentina

34. Consider the following statements about the Siang River:

- 1. It originates in Tibet where it is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo.
- 2. It enters India through the state of Arunachal Pradesh.
- 3. It joins the Lohit and Dibang rivers to form the Brahmaputra in Assam.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

Context

- The Cholistan Canal Project has been temporarily suspended by the Pakistani government following protests in Sindh.

Green Pakistan Initiative

- It is a **\$3.3 billion** project, launched by Pakistan in **2023**.
- GPI seeks to “modernise” Pakistan’s agriculture sector by introducing new technologies, providing farmers high-quality inputs, and creating irrigation infrastructure.

The Cholistan Canal Project

- The Cholistan Canal is one of the **six strategic canals** envisioned under the Green Pakistan Initiative (GPI).
- It is designed to irrigate approximately **5,000 sq km (1.2 million acres)** of land in the arid Cholistan region of southern Punjab.
- The project is expected to cost around **\$800 million** and will primarily use water from the **Sutlej River**.

2. (b)

In News : The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) successfully climbed Mt. Makalu (8,485 m) on April 19 during its first-ever twin summit expedition to Mt. Makalu and Mt. Annapurna, both in Nepal.

Statement 1 is not correct but statement 2 is correct : **Mt. Makalu** is 20 km east of Everest in the Khumbu region of **Nepal** and is the **fifth highest mountain in the world**.

- It lies in the **Makalu Barun National Park** and is known for its perfect pyramid shape with four sharp ridges.
- North of the mountain lies Tibet and it has two notable subsidiary peaks.
 - Kangchungtse, or Makalu II, 7,678 m lies north-northwest of the main summit.
 - The other is Chomo Lonzo which lies just north of the main peak.

3. (b)

About Western Disturbance

- Western Disturbances are **cyclonic storms** that form over land. These are referred to as **middle latitude or extra tropical cyclones**, because of development in the **mid and high latitude**.
- They occur mostly in the **Mediterranean region** due to a temperature gradient caused by the mixing of warm air from the tropics and cold air from the northern polar regions.
 - They **collect moisture from the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and Caspian Sea** and traverse over **Iran and Afghanistan** before hitting the **western Himalayas**.
- While the storm systems occur throughout the year, they travel to India mostly between December and April because of the trajectory of the **subtropical westerly jet stream**.

4. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The Chenab originates at the confluence of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers at Tandi in Himachal Pradesh and flows through Jammu & Kashmir into Pakistan, where it joins the Indus River.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Indus Waters Treaty allocates the Chenab to Pakistan. India can use the river for limited irrigation and non-consumptive uses like run-of-the-river hydroelectricity, but not for unrestricted storage or large-scale irrigation.

5. (d)

Option (d) is correct: Airglow is a faint emission of light by a planetary atmosphere. In Earth's case, it occurs in the upper atmosphere (mainly mesosphere and thermosphere), and is primarily caused by: Absorption of solar ultraviolet (UV) radiation during the day, which excites atmospheric atoms and molecules (like oxygen and nitrogen). These excited species emit photons when they return to their ground state, producing the characteristic glow seen during night.

Option (a) is not correct: While cosmic rays do interact with the atmosphere, they are not the primary driver of the continuous airglow phenomenon. Their effects are generally less widespread and consistent compared to solar radiation.

Option (b) is not correct: This describes the mechanism behind auroras, not airglow. Auroras are caused by charged particles from the solar wind interacting with the upper atmosphere, particularly near the magnetic poles.

Option (c) is not correct: Chemiluminescence involves the emission of light from a chemical reaction. While chemical reactions do occur in the upper atmosphere, the primary energy source for airglow's excitation is solar UV radiation, not reactions involving pollutants (which are more concentrated in the lower atmosphere).

6. (b)

A. Khetri Copper Belt (Rajasthan)

- Located in Jhunjhunu district, this is one of India's most important copper mining regions.
- Managed by Hindustan Copper Ltd (HCL), it has been operational since the 1960s.
- Rajasthan contributes over 50% of India's copper reserves, and the Khetri belt plays a central role in this.

B. Balaghat Copper Mine (Madhya Pradesh)

- The Balaghat mines are located in Balaghat district of MP and are among the deepest underground copper mines in Asia. It is operated by HCL and is India's largest copper mine by production volume. Madhya Pradesh holds about 23% of India's copper reserves.

C. Singhbhum Copper Belt (Jharkhand)

- This belt lies in the Singhbhum district of present-day Jharkhand (earlier part of Bihar before state reorganization in 2000). It is one of the oldest copper mining regions in India, with mining dating back to ancient times.

7. (d)

Context

- The Indian Navy took delivery of a **new shallow-water vessel designed for anti-submarine warfare (ASW)**.

About

- INS Arnala is the lead ship of the **Arnala-class anti-submarine warfare (ASW) corvette**, it is named after **Arnala Island**, which is located off the coast of Maharashtra.
- **Indigenously designed** by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.
- **Role:** The ship has been designed for underwater surveillance, search & rescue operations and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO).
- **Features:**
 - The ship is capable of full-scale sub-surface surveillance of coastal waters as well as search and attack. It can also carry out ASW operations in coordination with aircraft.
 - Arnala also boasts a combat management system and armament consisting of lightweight torpedoes and ASW rockets.

8. (c)

In News: Türkiye's support for Pakistan on Kashmir, along with defense collaborations, has raised concerns for India.

- Türkiye is bounded on the **north by the Black Sea**, on the northeast by **Georgia and Armenia**, on the **east by Azerbaijan and Iran**, on the **southeast by Iraq and Syria**, on the southwest and west by the **Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea**, and on the northwest by **Greece and Bulgaria**.
- Türkiye **does not share** its border with **Lebanon**.

9. (d)

Context

- A Scientific Reports paper highlights that gully erosion can derail progress on at least **nine of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, especially zero hunger, clean water and sanitation, and climate action.

What is Gully Erosion?

- Gully erosion is a **severe form of land degradation**, marked by the carving of **deep channels (gullies)** into soil due to surface and subsurface runoff.
- It differs from other erosive forms due to its deeply erosive nature, high specific soil losses, and unpredictable behaviour.
- **Status of Gully Erosion:** In India, gully landforms are observed in **19 states and Delhi**. Most affected regions are Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

10. (a)

Context

- At least 123 vultures died in South Africa's Kruger National Park after consuming a poisoned elephant carcass left by poachers.

Vultures

- They are large, social raptors found on every continent except Antarctica and Australia.
- There are 23 species, split into New World vultures (Americas) and Old World vultures (Europe, Asia, Africa), which evolved separately through convergent evolution and are not closely related.
- India has **nine species of vultures** in the wild.

11. (b)

Context

- The Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report 2021, released by the Registrar General of India (RGI), highlights that **India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** has remained constant at **2.0 in 2021**, the same as in 2020.

Total Fertility Rate (TFR)

- The average number of children born to a woman during her childbearing years.
- A TFR of **2.1** is considered the replacement level needed to maintain a stable population.

12. (d)

In Context: Sand mining in the Chambal River region is a major environmental concern, particularly in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

About Chambal River

- The Chambal River originates from Bhadakla Falls near **Janapav Hills** at an elevation of 843 metres in the Indore district of Madhya Pradesh. It flows for approximately 1,024 km before joining the Yamuna River in Jalaun district, Uttar Pradesh, thus becoming a part of the Ganga river system.
- The river traverses through three Indian states — Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. Its major right-bank tributaries include Banas, Kali Sindh, Parbati, and Shipra. Other important tributaries are Kuno, Seep, Kuwari, Mej, and Gambhir.
- Chambal is often referred to as India's cleanest river, owing to its relatively unpolluted waters. In ancient times, it was known as Charmanvati, and is mentioned in the Mahabharata.

13. (b)

In News: The **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** has established a new **regional office in Srinagar**, committing ₹100 crore to **improve three National Waterways in the region**.

Pair 1 is correctly matched

- **National Waterway 2 (NW-2):** Brahmaputra River (Dhubri to Sadiya, 891 km)

Pair 2 is not correctly matched

- **National Waterway 3 (NW-3):** West Coast Canal, Champakara & Udyogmandal Canals (Kottapuram to Kollam, 205 km)
- **National Waterway 4 (NW-4):** Godavari, Krishna Rivers & Buckingham Canal (Kakinada to Puducherry, 1,095 km)

Pair 3 is not correctly matched

- **National Waterway 16 (NW-16):** Barak River (Lakhipur to Bhanga, 121 km)

Pair 4 is correctly matched

- **River Chenab (NW-26), River Jhelum (NW-49), and River Ravi (NW-84).**

14. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Tsarap Chu region is situated in the Spiti Valley of Himachal Pradesh, not Ladakh. It is bounded by the Union Territory of Ladakh to the north, but it is not entirely within Ladakh.

Statement 2 is correct: The Tibetan Argali (*Ovis ammon hodgsoni*) is the world's largest wild sheep and is found in the Tsarap Chu region. It is one of the notable species in this area.

Statement 3 is correct: The Rose Finch is among the rare bird species found in the Tsarap Chu region, indicating its ornithological richness.

15. (c)**Context**

- The annual crude birth rates for Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Kerala are declining at twice the rate of the national average.

About

- The data from the Sample Registration System (SRS) Statistical Report 2021, was released by the Registrar General of India.
- The SRS is the largest demographic survey in the country, meant to provide annual estimates on fertility and mortality indicators such as birth rates, death rates, etc.
- **The crude birth rate (CBR)** is a demographic measure that indicates the **number of live births per 1,000 people in a population** during a specific time period, usually a year.

Major Findings

- **India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** has remained constant at 2.0 in 2021, the same as in 2020.
 - The average number of children born to a woman during her childbearing years.
 - A TFR of **2.1** is considered the replacement level needed to maintain a stable population.
- **Total fertility rate (TFR):** States such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh had a TFR higher than the national average.
 - The TFR measures the **average number of children expected to be born per woman during her entire span of reproductive period.**

16. (d)

In News: New Caledonia is facing deepened political uncertainty ahead of the November 2025 provincial elections.

New Caledonia is a French island territory of approximately 2,71,400 people in the southwest Pacific Ocean.

- It comprises the main island of Grande Terre (where the capital, Nouméa, is situated), the four Loyalty Islands (Ouvéa, Lifou, Tiga and Maré), the Belep archipelago, the Isle of Pines and some remote islands.

17. (c)**Context**

- In response to the Red Sea security crisis that severely disrupted maritime trade, the Suez Canal Authority (SCA) has announced a 15% discount on transit fees for large container ships from May 15, 2025.

About Suez Canal

- The Suez Canal is a **193-km artificial waterway** that connects the **Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea**, making it the shortest maritime route between Europe and Asia.
 - It was officially opened to ships in **1869**.
- The Canal **does not have locks** and it is essentially a sea-level waterway.
 - This characteristic allows for a **smoother, more efficient passage of vessels**, thus supporting a high volume of maritime traffic.
- It is one of the busiest waterways in the world through which **12–15%** of global commerce passes.

**18. (c)****Context**

- The Justice P C Ghose commission is investigating alleged irregularities in the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project in Telangana.

Godavari River

- **Origin:** The River rises at **Trimbakeshwar**, Nashik, Maharashtra in the **Western Ghats**.
- **Length:** The Godavari River is India's **second longest river** (Dakshina Ganga) after the Ganga river, with a length **1,465 km**.
- **Basin:** The main river flows through the States of **Maharashtra, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh** and drains into the **Bay of Bengal**.
- **The river basin** is considered to be divided into 3 sections:
 - **Upper:** Source to the confluence with Manjira,
 - **Middle:** Between confluence of Manjira and Pranhita and
 - **Lower:** Pranhita confluence to mouth.
- **Tributaries:** Banganga, Purna, Pranhita, Indravati, Pravara, Sindphana, Manjira, Penganga, Wardha, Wainganga, Maner and Sabri.
- **Dams:** Jayakwadi Dam, Devadula Irrigation Scheme, Polavaram Project etc.

19. (c)

About Aravalli Range

The Aravalli Range is one of the oldest mountain ranges in the world, dating back to the Proterozoic Eon, roughly 1.8 to 2.5 billion years ago, predating the formation of the Himalayan ranges. The Aravalli Range extends about 800 kilometers from southwest to northeast, passing through Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Delhi. The Aravalli Range has three significant rivers and their tributaries. These include the Banas and Sahibi rivers, which are affiliated with the Yamuna River, and the Luni River, which ultimately empties into the Rann of Kutch.

20. (b)

Context: Villagers from three central Arunachal Pradesh districts have launched an indefinite sit-in protest against survey activities by security forces for the **Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP)**, also known as the **Siang Dam**.

Siang river

- The Siang originates near **Mount Kailash** in Tibet, where it goes by the name of **Tsangpo**.
- It traverses more than **1,000 km eastward**, before forming a horseshoe bend around the **Namcha Barwa peak**, and enters Arunachal Pradesh as the Siang. Further downstream, in Assam, the river becomes the **Brahmaputra**.
- The **Adi tribe** refers to the Siang as '**Ane**', meaning **mother**, viewing it as sacred.

21. (b)

Context

- The United Kingdom signed an agreement handing sovereignty over the contested and strategically located **Chagos Islands to Mauritius**.
 - Under the agreement, the United Kingdom will pay **Mauritius 136 million** dollars per year to lease back the US-UK military base for at least 99 years.

About Chagos Islands

- The Chagos Archipelago is a group of **seven atolls** comprising more than 60 islands, and is located in the **Indian Ocean**.
- The Chagos Islands, officially known as the **British Indian Ocean Territory** was **separated from Mauritius in 1965**, when Mauritius was still a British colony.
 - However Mauritius has argued that it was illegally forced to give them away as part of a deal

to gain independence from Britain.

- In the late 1960s, Britain invited the US to build a military base on **Diego Garcia**, the largest of the Chagos Islands.

22. (c)

Both the statements are correct: The NER comprises eight States viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

- **This region is culturally and ethnically diverse** having **more than 200 ethnic groups** which have distinct languages, dialects and socio-cultural identities.
- The Region covers **7.97% of the country's geographical area** and **3.78%** of its population.
- **It has 5,484 km of international border** viz. Bangladesh (1,880 km), Myanmar (1,643 km), China (1,346 km), Bhutan (516 km) and Nepal (99 km).
- **Geostrategic Significance:**
 - **International Borders:** The NER shares borders with five countries—China, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Nepal which make it strategically important.
 - **Gateway to ASEAN:** It is a critical link in India's Act East Policy, serving as a bridge to Southeast Asia.
 - ♦ Current India–ASEAN trade: ~\$125 billion, projected to exceed \$200 billion.
 - **Strategic Military Importance:** Due to proximity to China, the region holds significant defense value for national security.

23. (d)

The Persian Gulf is a strategically important and economically vital body of water in **Western Asia**.

- A gulf is a large part of the ocean or sea that is **partially enclosed by land, typically with a narrow opening to the sea**.
- It opens into the **Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea** via the Strait of Hormuz.
- The countries that surround the Persian Gulf are **Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, and UAE**.
- All these nations, except Iran, use the names '**Arabian Gulf**' or just '**Gulf**' to refer to the body of water, and have debated for long that it must be renamed.



24. (b)

Context

- The 11th day of the ongoing Saraswati Pushkaralu witnessed a massive turnout of pilgrims at Kaleshwaram.

Saraswati Pushkaralu

- Saraswati Pushkaram or Pushkaralu is a Hindu river festival that occurs once every **12 years**, aligned with the **entry of Jupiter (Brihaspati)** into the **Gemini (Mithuna)** zodiac sign.
 - It is **observed for 12 days**, starting from the exact moment Jupiter enters the Mithuna rasi.
- The festival is dedicated to **River Saraswati**, often referred to as Antarahini—the invisible river believed to flow beneath the **Triveni Sangam**.
- **The Triveni Sangam at Kaleshwaram**—where **Godavari, Pranahita, and the invisible Saraswati** are believed to meet—is a key pilgrimage site during the festival.

25. (d)

In News: Coal has long been the backbone of India's energy sector, fueling industries, power plants, and economic growth. However, the global shift towards sustainability has necessitated a transformation in how coal is utilized.

Pair 1 is correctly matched

- **Mokom coal field** is located at upper Brahmaputra, **Assam**. It belongs to the **Tertiary Coal deposits**.

Pair 2 is correctly matched

- **Kamptee Valley** is located near Nagpur, **Maharashtra** falls under the **Godavari and Wardha Valley**. It belongs to the **Gondwana Coal deposits**.

Pair 3 is correctly matched

- **Singareni Coalfield** is located in **Telangana**. It falls under the **Godavari and Wardha Valley**. It belongs to the **Gondwana Coal deposits**.

Pair 4 is correctly matched

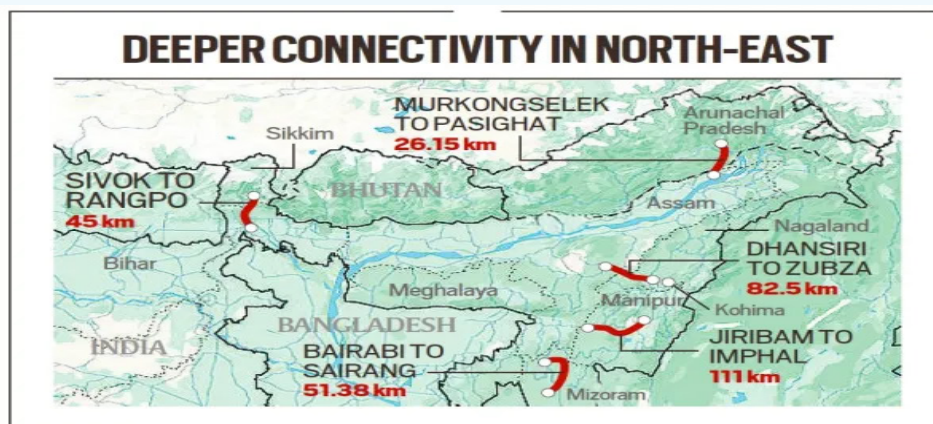
- **Neyveli coal field** is located in Tamil Nadu. It is famous for Lignite coal. It belongs to **Tertiary Coal deposits**.

26. (d)**Context**

- In a major boost for connectivity in the North-East, Mizoram's capital Aizawl is now linked to the national railway network via the Bairabi–Sairang line.

About the Bairabi–Sairang line

- The **51.38-km railway project**, built at a revised cost of ₹5,021.45 crore, extends rail services from Bairabi in Kolasib district—**Mizoram's only previous railhead**—up to Sairang, a satellite town of Aizawl, around 20 km from the city.
- This development makes Mizoram the **fourth North-Eastern state** to have its capital connected by rail, after **Assam, Tripura, and Arunachal Pradesh**. Earlier, trains could only reach up to **1.5 km** inside Mizoram.
- The Bairabi–Sairang line is part of a larger push by the Ministry of Railways to connect **all North-East state capitals** and improve regional infrastructure.
 - New line and doubling projects are underway across Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, and Tripura. However, railway expansion in **Meghalaya** remains slow due to local opposition to rail connectivity.
- This milestone is expected to bring greater economic opportunities, improve transport access, and strengthen integration between the **North-East and the rest of India**.



27. (d)

Context

- The **Kilauea volcano** on Hawaii's Big Island released **lava fountains over 1,000 feet high**, marking the **23rd eruption episode since December 2024**.

About Kilauea

- It is one of **six active volcanoes** in the Hawaiian Islands. It is a shield volcano, known for effusive lava flows rather than explosive eruptions.
- It is located within the **Hawaii Volcanoes National Park**, alongside **Mauna Loa** (the largest volcano in the world).
- Although **smaller** than Mauna Loa, **Kilauea is more active** and draws frequent attention due to its **consistent volcanic activity**. It has been **erupting frequently since 1983**.

28. (a)

Context

- The Chief Minister of Sikkim has urged the Central Government to declare Mount Khangchendzonga, sacred to the people of Sikkim, as out of bounds for mountaineers.
 - The Sikkim government banned all climbing activities on Mt. Khangchendzonga through notifications in **1998 and 2001** under the **Sacred Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991**.

About Kangchenjunga

- It is the **third-highest mountain** in the world at an elevation of **8,586 metres**.
- It is located on the border between **Sikkim in India and eastern Nepal**.
- It is part of a section of the Himalayas known as the **Kangchenjunga Himal**. This section is geographically bounded by the **Tamur River in the west** and the **Teesta River in the east**.

29. (d)

Context

- The early onset of the southwest monsoon over Kerala this year has caught the attention of meteorologists.
 - According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the **Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO)** played a significant role in this development.

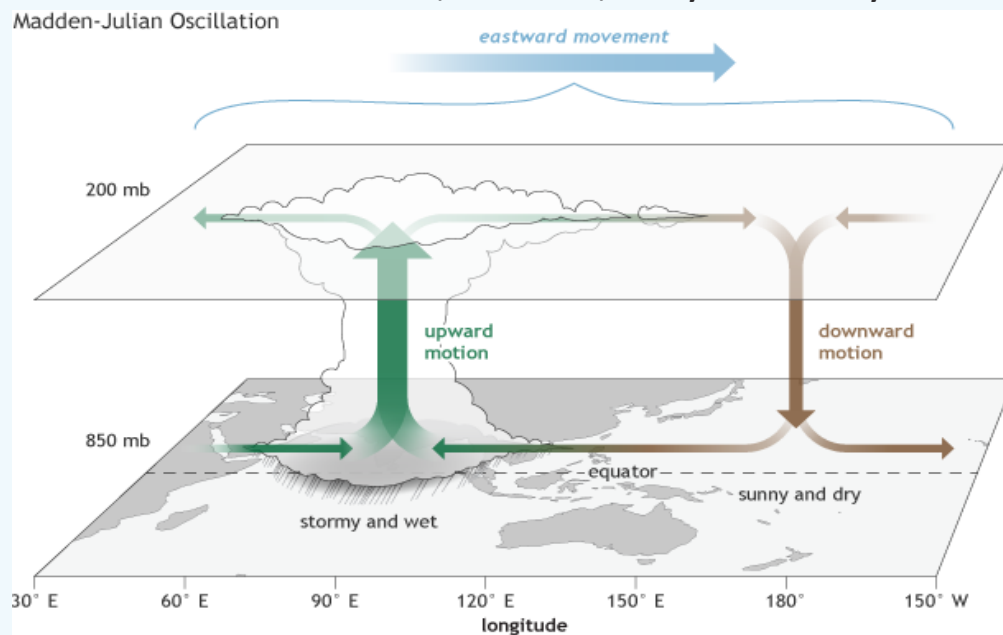
What is Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO)

- The MJO is a moving system of **winds, clouds, and pressure** that brings rain as it circles around the equator.
- It was discovered in **1971** by **Roland Madden and Paul Julian**.

- The system travels eastward at **4–8 m/s** and circles the globe typically every 30–60 days, though it can take up to **90 days**.
- As it moves, strong MJO activity often **splits the planet into two parts** — one in which the MJO is in **active phase** and brings rainfall, and the other in which it suppresses rainfall.

Geographical Influence

- The effect of the MJO is witnessed mainly in the **tropical region**, in the band between **30 degrees North and 30 degrees South** of the equator, even though the mid-latitude regions in both hemispheres also feel its impact.
 - It also includes India, making it a crucial player in the South Asian monsoon system.
- During an active MJO phase, regions within its influence experience above-average rainfall, often due to increased **cloud formation, convection, and cyclonic activity**.



30. (b)

The **Seven Summits** are defined as the **highest peaks on each of the seven continents**; it ranks among the **most prestigious in global mountaineering**.

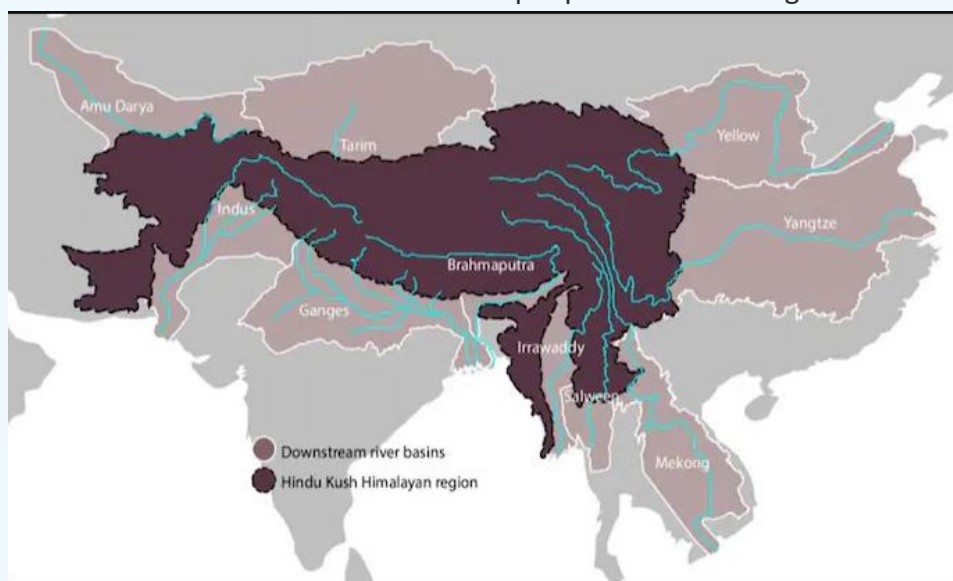
- The first person to complete the Seven Summits was **Richard Bass, an American businessman and mountaineer, in 1985**.
- The seven mountain peaks are **Mt. Everest (Asia), Mt. Kilimanjaro (Africa), Mt. Elbrus (Europe), Mt. Aconcagua (South America), Mount Kosciuszko (Australia), Mt. Vinson (Antarctica) and Mt. Denali (North America)**.
 - Some people define 'continent' differently leading to an **alternate 'seventh summit'** i.e. **Australia: Mount Kosciuszko or Australasia: Carstensz Pyramid**.
- **Mount Everest in Asia is the tallest of the seven, while Mount Kosciuszko in Australia is the shortest**.
 - **The Descending order of Summits:** Mount Everest, Aconcagua, Denali, Mount Kilimanjaro, Mount Elbrus, Vinson Massif, Carstensz Pyramid and Mount Kosciuszko.

31. (c)

Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH)

- The HKH mountains extend around **3,500 km** over **eight countries** — Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Myanmar, and Pakistan.

- These mountains are also called the **“water towers of Asia”** because they are the **origins of 10 crucial river systems** on the continent — Amu Darya, Indus, **Ganga, Brahmaputra**, Irrawaddy, Salween, **Mekong**, Yangtze, Yellow river, and Tarim.
- These river basins provide water to almost one-fourth of the world’s population and are a significant freshwater source for 240 million people in the HKH region.



32. (c)

Egyptian archaeologists have discovered **three ancient tombs in the Dra Abu al-Naga necropolis in Luxor**, dating back to the New Kingdom period (1550–1070 BC).

Luxor is located on the **east bank of the Nile River in Egypt**.

- It is home to numerous historic landmarks, including the Luxor Temple, Karnak Temples, the Valley of the Kings and Queens, and several funerary temples and noble tombs.



- The **newly discovered tombs** belonged to high-ranking officials:
 - **Amum-em-Ipet** from the Ramesside period, who served in the estate of Amun;
 - **Baki**, a grain silo supervisor from the 18th Dynasty;
 - and **“S,”** a senior official and mayor of the northern oases.

33. (c)

In News

- India and Chile have completed the **first round of negotiations** for a proposed comprehensive free trade agreement.

About Chile

- **Location:**
 - The **western part of South America**. The capital and largest city is **Santiago**, and its **national language is Spanish**.



- It occupies a long, narrow strip of land between the **Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west.**
- Chile is the **southernmost country in the world, the closest to Antarctica.**
- **Borders:**
 - It shares land borders with **Peru** to the north, **Bolivia** to the northeast, **Argentina** to the east, and the **Drake Passage** in the far south.
- **Climate and Topography:**
 - Chile is home to a significant portion of the Andes, the **world's longest continental mountain range.**
 - Located in northern Chile, the **Atacama Desert** is renowned as the driest non-polar desert in the world.
 - **Loa River** is the longest river of Chile.
 - Chile is located along a **highly seismic and volcanic zone**, part of the **Pacific Ring of Fire**, due to the **subduction of the Nazca and Antarctic plates** in the South American plate.

34. (d)

Context

- An intense opposition to a proposed mega-dam in the Siang River belt has set off a chain of protests against other hydropower projects in Arunachal Pradesh.

About Siang River

- The river **originates in Tibet**, where it is known as the **Yarlung Tsangpo**.
- It enters India through the state of Arunachal Pradesh and is called the **Siang River or Dihang**.
- **Course:** The river flows eastward for over 1,000 km.
 - It forms a distinctive horseshoe-shaped bend around the Namcha Barwa peak (located in Tibet near the India-China border).
 - After entering Assam, the Siang is joined by two major tributaries: Dibang River and Lohit River.
- After the **confluence of the Siang, Dibang, and Lohit rivers** near Sadiya (Assam), the combined river is **known as the Brahmaputra** in India.

■■■■

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/ INITIATIVES

1. Which of the following statements accurately describes the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) for sugarcane in India?
 - (a) It is a minimum support price announced by the state governments for sugarcane procurement.
 - (b) It is the market-determined price at which sugar mills procure sugarcane from farmers.
 - (c) It is the price declared by the central government, legally binding on sugar mills for sugarcane procurement.
 - (d) It is a price negotiated between sugarcane farmers' associations and sugar mill owners.
2. The 'Jalaj' initiative, recently in news, is mainly associated with which of the following objectives?
 - (a) Promoting inland waterways for cargo transport
 - (b) Promoting eco-tourism and sustainable livelihoods along the Ganga basin
 - (c) Construction of check dams and irrigation infrastructure in drought-prone regions
 - (d) Conservation of wetlands under the Ramsar Convention
3. The ECINET app, recently seen in the news, primarily aims to:
 - (a) Enable online voting for Indian citizens
 - (b) Integrate over 40 electoral apps into a single unified platform
 - (c) Facilitate online registration of new political parties
 - (d) Monitor election funding and expenditures
4. Which of the following statements is correct regarding the NAMASTE scheme?
 - (a) It focuses on rehabilitation of transgender persons and persons engaged in begging.
 - (b) It aims to improve the nutritional and health status of girls in the age group of 11-18 years.
 - (c) It focuses on the safety of sanitation workers by preventing hazardous cleaning and promoting mechanised practices .
 - (c) It aims to rejuvenate the pilgrimage and spiritual experience of tourists by developing infrastructure.
5. With reference to the Multi Agency Centre (MAC) Network, consider the following statements:
 1. It is a counter-terrorism intelligence-sharing platform under the National Investigation Agency (NIA).
 2. It was conceptualized in 2001 after the Kargil war to strengthen national security efforts.Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

6. Consider the following statements regarding the PM E-Drive initiative:
1. The PM E-Drive initiative is implemented by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
 2. The PM E-DRIVE scheme subsumes the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS) 2024.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. With reference to Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Scheme (PM-POSHAN), consider the following statements:
1. It is a Centrally sector Scheme funded by the Ministry of Education.
 2. Under this, hot cooked meals are provided to students in Balvatika and classes 1 to 8.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Which of the following is not a feature of the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme?
- (a) It has a tenure of six years with one year of gestation.
 - (b) It aims to help manufacturers acquire technological capabilities and scale.
 - (c) It attracts both domestic and global investments in electronics component manufacturing.
 - (d) The incentives are linked only to capital investment and not employment generation.
9. The Gyan Bharatam Mission, recently announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, primarily focuses on:
- (a) Promoting digital literacy across India's rural population.
 - (b) Establishing new research institutions dedicated to ancient Indian sciences.
 - (c) Identifying, conserving, digitising, and sharing India's manuscript wealth.
 - (d) Funding archaeological excavations at significant historical sites.
10. With reference to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, consider the following statements:
1. It ensures 100 days of wage employment to every household in India.
 2. Compensation is provided if work is not assigned within 15 days of demand.
 3. Wages must be paid within 15 days of work completion.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 1 and 3 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3

11. Which of the following state governments has launched the flagship initiative “Indira Solar Giri Jal Vikasam” scheme to enhance tribal agriculture and livelihood?
- (a) Kerala
 - (b) Karnataka
 - (c) Telangana
 - (d) Odisha

12. With reference to the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, consider the following statements:
1. The scheme aims at the redevelopment of more than 1,000 railway stations across India.
 2. Gandhinagar was the first railway station to be modernized under this initiative.
 3. Redeveloped station designs are to be inspired by global architectural trends.

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. ‘Area-Based Development (ABD) approach’ and ‘Pan-City Projects’ are related to the provisions of which one of the following?
- (a) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U)
 - (b) Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)
 - (c) Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban (SBM-U)
 - (d) Smart City Mission

14. Consider the following statements with reference to Bharat Forecasting System.
1. It can provide 6 km resolution forecasts for the tropical region that falls between 30 degrees South and 30 degrees North latitudes
 2. It is powered by the supercomputer ‘Pratyush’.

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 Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS), which of the following statements is/are correct?
1. LRS was introduced in 2004 by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
 2. LRS is governed under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

16. With reference to the NAMASTE scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to ensure the safety and dignity of sanitation workers in urban India.
2. The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in convergence with the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

17. Which of the following organisations uncovered the cybercrime network under Operation Chakra-V?

- (a) National Investigation Agency (NIA)
- (b) Enforcement Directorate (ED)
- (c) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
- (d) Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW)

18. Consider the following statements:

1. Centrally Sponsored Schemes are primarily implemented by the Central Government but funded jointly by the Centre and the States.
2. Central Sector Schemes are designed for subjects in the Union List and are entirely funded and implemented by the Central Government.

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 ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme targeting adults (aged 15 years and above) who can't go to school.
2. Recently Goa has achieved the status of first fully literate state under the Programme.

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (c)

The Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) is the minimum price that sugar mills must pay to sugarcane farmers. It is declared by the Central Government (on the recommendation of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices - CACP).

It is statutorily binding under the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966, meaning sugar mills cannot pay less than the FRP to farmers. While some states (like Uttar Pradesh and Haryana) may declare a State Advised Price (SAP) which is higher than FRP, FRP remains the legal floor price.

2. (b)

Context

- The Union Minister of Jal Shakti recently chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of the **Jalaj initiative**.

About the Jalaj initiative

- **Launched by:** National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII).
- **Jalaj centers:** The initiative aims at establishing **75 Jalaj centers** across the Ganga basin, with various models such as Dolphin Safaris, Homestays, Livelihood Centers, and Awareness & Sale Points etc.
- **Complementary Programs:** It will complement and support the existing programme of the Centre under the NMCG's '**Arth Ganga**' concept of sustainable economic development of the river Ganga Basin with people participation.

3. (b)

Context

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced a single-point **App ECINET** for voters and other stakeholders such as election officials, political parties and the civil society.

About the ECINET

- **Purpose:** A one-stop platform that will **integrate and streamline over 40** of the EC's existing **mobile and web apps** in a single and user friendly platform, easing navigation by eliminating the need for multiple logins.
- **Key Apps Being Merged:** Voter Helpline, Voter Turnout, cVIGIL, Suvidha 2.0, ESMS, Saksham, and KYC – with over **5.5 crore total downloads**.
- **Development Process:** Envisioned by the **Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar**.
- **Reach:** The new initiative is expected to benefit nearly **100 crore electors** and the entire electoral administration.

4. (c)

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in convergence with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs have launched the National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme in July 2023 to ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers.

- The focus is on prevention of hazardous cleaning and promotion of safe cleaning practices through trained and certified sanitation workers. The objective of the scheme is to formalize and rehabilitate the persons engaged in hazardous cleaning of sewer and septic tanks.

5. (b)

In News: Recently, the Union Home Minister inaugurated the new MAC network, built at a cost of ₹500 crore, emphasizing its role in dismantling terror networks.

Statement 1 is not correct

- The **Multi Agency Centre (MAC)** is a counter-terrorism intelligence-sharing platform **under the Intelligence Bureau (IB)**, designed to enhance coordination among various security agencies in India.
- It incorporates AI/ML-driven analytics and Geographic Information System (GIS) services to enhance intelligence processing.

Statement 2 is correct

- It was conceptualized in 2001 after the Kargil war to strengthen national security efforts.
- It facilitates 24x7 intelligence exchange among 28 organizations, including RAW, armed forces, and state police.

6. (b)

In News

- The Karnataka government has formally requested the allocation of electric buses under the **PM E-Drive initiative**.

About PM E-Drive

- **Launch:** 2024
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Heavy Industries.
- **Aim:** To accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in India by providing demand incentives, supporting the establishment of charging infrastructure, and fostering the growth of the EV manufacturing ecosystem.
- **Duration:** 2 years (2024 to 2026).
- **Components:**
 - **Subsidies (Demand Incentives):** Financial support for buyers of e-2Ws (electric two-wheelers), e-3Ws (electric three-wheelers including e-rickshaws and e-carts), e-ambulances, e-trucks, and other emerging EV categories. These incentives are provided to reduce the upfront purchase price.
 - **Grants for creation of capital assets:** Financial assistance for the deployment of e-buses, the establishment of a network of public EV charging stations for various vehicle categories, and the upgradation of vehicle testing agencies under the Ministry of Heavy Industries.
- The PM E-DRIVE scheme subsumes the **Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS) 2024**.

7. (a)

Statement 1 is not correct: PM-POSHAN — Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman, formerly known as the midday-meal scheme, is a **centrally sponsored Scheme** under the **Ministry of Education**.

- It operates on a **60:40 funding model** between the **Centre and the states**.

Statement 2 is correct: Provides **hot cooked meals to 11.20 crore students** in Balvatika and **classes 1 to 8**.

- Covers 10.36 lakh govt. & govt.-aided schools.
- Under the scheme, **material cost is provided** for procurement of ingredients such as pulses, vegetables, oil, spices and condiments, and fuel required for cooking the meals.

8. (d)

Context

- The Government of India has received 70 applications, 80% from small and medium enterprises (SMEs), for its Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme.

Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme

- It is a **Rs.22,919 crore** scheme, aims to develop a robust component ecosystem by;
 - Attracting large investments** (global/domestic) in the electronics component manufacturing ecosystem,
 - Increasing Domestic Value Addition (DVA)** by developing capacity and capabilities, and
 - Integrating Indian companies with Global Value Chains (GVCs).
- Salient Features of the Scheme:**
 - The scheme **provides differentiated incentives** to Indian manufacturers tailored to overcome specific disabilities for various categories of components and sub-assemblies so that they can acquire technological capabilities and achieve economies of scale.
 - The tenure of the scheme is six years** with **one year** of gestation period.
 - Payout of a part of the **incentive is linked with employment targets** achievement.

Component Classification under the Scheme

- Category A:** Display modules, camera module sub-assemblies.
- Category B:** Bare components like non-surface mount devices, multi-layered PCBs, lithium-ion cells, IT hardware products.
- Category C:** Flexible PCBs, SMD passive components.
- Category D:** Capital goods and components used in manufacturing of A, B, and C.

9. (c)

The Gyan Bharatam Mission, announced in the Union Budget 2025–26 is an extension under the National Mission for Manuscripts, which aims to digitize and organise Indian manuscripts and create a compiled digital repository of Indian manuscripts for the promotion of Indian traditions, historical knowledge and wisdom worldwide. It builds on the foundation laid by the National Mission for Manuscripts, by expanding the scope, integration of technology and creation of a fully integrated online database.

10. (c)

In News: A recent report by **LibTech India** has raised questions about the effectiveness of **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)** for the financial year 2024–25.

Statement 1 is not correct

- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005** provides 100 days of guaranteed **wage employment in a financial year** to **every rural household** whose adult members volunteer to do **unskilled manual work**.
- It **does not cover every household in India**, only rural households that request work.

Statement 2 is correct

- Under MGNREGA**, workers have a legal right to employment under the Act. Compensation is provided **if work is not assigned within 15 days of demand**.

Statement 3 is correct

- Wages **must be paid within 15 days of work completion**. Worksites must provide basic facilities like drinking water, shade, and first aid.

11. (c)

Context

- The Telangana government has launched a flagship initiative — **Indira Solar Giri Jal Vikasam scheme** — to enhance tribal agriculture and livelihood.

Key Features:

- **Objective:** To provide **solar-powered irrigation** access and economic upliftment of tribal farmers holding land under the **Forest Rights Act (RoFR)**.
- **Budget Allocation:** ₹12,600 crore over five years (2025–26 to 2029–30).
- **Coverage:**
 - Irrigation for **6 lakh acres**.
 - Direct benefit to **2.1 lakh** tribal farmers.
 - **100% subsidy** for solar-powered irrigation systems.
- **Holistic Implementation:**
 - Jointly executed by departments of Forest, Energy, Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural Development, Water Supply, Groundwater, and Health.
 - Includes drip irrigation support, high-quality saplings, and interim income via intercropping.
- **Significance:** Telangana is the **first state** to go beyond just granting RoFR titles by providing dedicated irrigation and livelihood support.

12. (a)

Statements 1 and 2 correct: The origin of the Amrit Bharat Stations scheme can be traced back to **2021**, when **Gandhinagar** became the **first Railway station to undergo modernization**.

- **A total of 1,300 stations** have been identified for redevelopment under the scheme.
 - Out of these, 157 are in Uttar Pradesh, followed by 132 in Maharashtra and 101 in West Bengal.
- The goal of the scheme is to **make stations cleaner, more comfortable, and easier to use**.

Statement 3 is not correct: **Local products** will be sold at kiosks under the **‘One Station One Product’** scheme, and efforts will be made to make stations look **greener and more attractive**.

- The designs of redeveloped station buildings are inspired by **local culture, heritage and architecture**.

13. (d)

In News: Despite significant investments in **India’s Smart Cities Mission**, there are shortcomings particularly in terms of maintenance and sustainability, as recently observed **severe flooding** in cities like Bengaluru and Pune.

- **India’s Smart Cities Mission (SCM)** aims to **address the growing urban challenges** by **integrating technology** and **sustainable development** into city planning.

Approach of Smart Cities Mission (SCM):

- Cities are being developed using an **Area-Based Development (ABD) approach** — such as retrofitting, redevelopment, and greenfield projects, where each of the 100 cities has selected a defined area for targeted interventions.
- Every city has included **Pan-City Projects**, which are technology-driven solutions.
- It aligns with **15 out of 17 SDGs**, focusing on **liveability, economic growth, and sustainability**.

14. (a)

Government will launch the Bharat Forecasting System (BFS)

Statement 1 is correct : Bharat Forecasting System is developed by the **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM)**, Pune, to deliver highly localized weather forecasts with a 6 km resolution—the most **advanced globally**.

- It allows for more precise prediction of small-scale weather events.
- It covers the tropical region (30°S to 30°N), including all of India, and surpasses global models from the **U.S., UK, and Europe**, which operate at 9–14 km resolution.

Statement 2 is not correct : Bharat Forecasting System is powered by the **supercomputer Arka (11.77 petaflops, 33 petabytes)**.

- The previous supercomputer 'Pratyush' used to take up to 10 hours to run the forecasting model.

15. (b)

Context

- India's outward remittances under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) moderated by **6.85 percent** year-on-year (YoY) to **\$29.56 billion in FY25**, after reaching an all-time high of **\$31.73 billion in FY24**.

What is Outward Remittance?

- Outward remittance refers to the **transfer of money in foreign currency** by a resident of India to a person or entity outside India, for purposes such as education, travel, medical treatment, investment, or gifting.

What is the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS)?

- LRS was introduced in **2004** by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.
- It allows resident individuals (including minors) to remit up to **\$250,000 per financial year** for permissible current or capital account transactions.
- Initially launched with a **\$25,000 limit**, later increased to current levels.
- Remittances can be made for;
 - Education and studies abroad,
 - Travel and tourism,
 - Medical treatment abroad,
 - Purchase of property,
 - Investment in foreign securities or businesses.
- LRS is governed under the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999**.

16. (a)

In News

- Recently, a special event was held in Madhya Pradesh to highlight the **National Action Plan for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme**.

NAMASTE Scheme

- The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** in convergence with the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** have launched the National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE) scheme in July 2023 to ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers.
- The **focus** is on prevention of **hazardous cleaning and promotion of safe** cleaning practices through trained and certified sanitation workers.

- It aims to ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers in urban India and enhance their occupational safety through capacity building and improved access to PPE Kits, safety devices and machines.

17. (c)

In News

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has uncovered a transnational cybercrime network under the Operation Chakra- V.

About

- Operation Chakra-V targets sophisticated cybercrime syndicates involved in transnational tech support scams, digital arrest & other financial frauds.
- Measures taken to combat cybercrime are Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team), Cyber Swachhta Kendra etc.

18. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) are funded jointly by the Centre and States, but implemented primarily by the State Governments, not the Centre.

Statement 2 is correct: Central Sector Schemes (CSs) are fully funded and directly implemented by Central Ministries, and they typically relate to subjects under the Union List, such as defence, atomic energy, or space.

19. (a)

Context

- Goa has officially achieved the status of a fully literate state under the ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme).
 - It has become the **second state in India after Mizoram**, to surpass the 95% literacy threshold, as defined by national standards.

ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme)

- It is a **centrally sponsored scheme** implemented from **2022-2027**.
 - The scheme, aligned with NEP 2020, targets adults (**aged 15 years and above**) who can't go to school.
- **It has five components:** Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Critical Life Skills, Basic Education, Vocational Skills and Continuing Education.
- **The vision of the ULLAS Scheme** is to make India **Jan Jan Saakshar** and is based on the spirit of **Kartavya Bodh** and is being implemented on volunteerism.

About Literacy

- As per the Office of the Registrar General of India, a literate person is someone **aged 7 or above** who can read and write with understanding in any language.
- The Department of School Education and Literacy has introduced a refined definition of literacy aligned with **NEP 2020 and SDG 4.6 goals**.
 - Literacy is now defined as the ability to read, write, and compute with comprehension, along with critical life skills such as digital and financial literacy. This expanded definition aims to ensure full societal participation and economic progress.
 - A state/UT achieving **95% literacy** is considered fully literate.

DEFENSE/ INTERNAL SECURITY

1. Operation Bison was launched to:
 - (a) Recapture Zojila Pass from Pakistani forces during the 1947–48 Indo-Pak War
 - (b) Evacuate Indian civilians from East Pakistan during the 1971 war
 - (c) Conduct a peacekeeping mission led by the Indian Army in the Northeast
 - (d) Secure the Siachen Glacier from intrusions by Pakistani troops in 1984
2. With reference to the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. It advises the National Security Council (NSC) on policy matters related to national security.
 2. It consists of only three members who are eminent persons from diverse fields.Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. Recently seen in the news, the Igla-S is:
 - (a) A long-range surface-to-air missile developed jointly by India and Israel
 - (b) An anti-tank guided missile system developed by DRDO
 - (c) A man-portable air-defense system (MANPADS) developed by Russia
 - (d) A hypersonic cruise missile under testing by France
4. Operation Sindoor, recently seen in the news, is related to:
 - (a) Striking terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.
 - (b) A joint naval exercise between India and the United States in the Indian Ocean.
 - (c) A humanitarian relief operation by India in quake-hit Nepal.
 - (d) India's participation in a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Africa.
5. With reference to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, consider the following statements:
 1. It establishes Special Courts to handle money laundering cases.
 2. It aligns with global anti-money laundering frameworks like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. Operation Bandar, recently seen in the news, refers to:
- An air assault operation during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War
 - Surgical strikes conducted across the Line of Control in 2016
 - A preemptive military action to counter Pakistan's presence in the Siachen region
 - The Indian Air Force's airstrike on a Jaish-e-Mohammed training camp in Balakot, Pakistan
7. Which of the following operations was India's response to Pakistan's Operation Gibraltar and Operation Grand Slam during the 1965 Indo-Pak War?
- Operation Ablaze
 - Operation Riddle
 - Operation Vijay
 - Operation Trident
8. Consider the following pairs:
- | Air Defence System | Country |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Iron Dome | Israel |
| 2. Patriot Missile System | China |
| 3. THAAD | USA |
| 4. Barak-8 Missile System | France |
- How many pairs given above are correctly matched?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - Only three
 - All four
9. With reference to the HAROP Drones, consider the following statements:
- It is developed by the Russian Defence Industry.
 - It acts both as a surveillance drone and a precision strike missile.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
10. Consider the following statements regarding the Territorial Army (TA):
- It is a volunteer force that acts as a second line of defence after the regular Indian Army.
 - The Territorial Army was established during the First World War in 1914.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
- Only 1
 - Only 2
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2

11. With reference to the S-400 Triumf, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Russian developed air defence system.
2. It has a range of up to 400 km and detects threats within 600 km.

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. Consider the following statements about the BrahMos missile system:

1. It has the ability to be launched from multiple platforms (land, sea, and air).
2. India has limited export potential due to strategic considerations.
3. It has subsonic speed and follows the 'Fire and Forget' principle of operation.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

13. With reference to the 1267 Sanctions Committee, consider the following statements:

1. It was established under a UNSC resolution in 1999, to focus on combating terrorism.
2. Sanctions measures include Asset freeze and Travel Ban.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

14. Which of the following statements correctly describes the Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS)?

- (a) It is a radar manufacturing program under DRDO for strategic deterrence.
- (b) It is an automated system that consolidates and shares real-time data from all air defence assets.
- (c) It is an air traffic control system developed for civilian airports.
- (d) It is a command system operated jointly by all SAARC nations for regional air surveillance.

15. Consider the following statements regarding the Bhargavastra anti-drone system:

1. It employs a single-layered security system utilizing guided micro-missiles for all drone threats.
2. It is capable of operating effectively at altitudes exceeding 5000 meters.
3. It lacks the capability to integrate soft kill options like jamming and spoofing.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 16.** Consider the following statements regarding the Akashteer Air Defence System:
1. It is a stationary system meant for fixed base operations and is not compatible with satellite-based navigation systems.
 2. Akashteer is an imported system integrated into India's defence network to supplement the Akash Missile system.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

- 17.** Consider the following statements about the Intelligence Bureau (IB):
1. The IB is India's oldest intelligence agency, established in 1887 during the British colonial era.
 2. The IB operates under the Ministry of Defence and handles foreign intelligence gathering.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

- 18.** The Indian Navy recently inducted the INSV Kaundinya at a ceremonial event held at Naval Base, Karwar. It is based on which of the following;
- (a) A ship model from the Indus Valley seals
 - (b) A Mauryan-era riverboat described in Kautilya's Arthashastra
 - (c) A Chola-era naval vessel depicted in temple inscriptions
 - (d) A 5th-century CE ship depicted in Ajanta Caves

- 19.** Which of the following military decorations are awarded for acts of conspicuous gallantry in the presence of the enemy?
1. Param Vir Chakra
 2. Mahavir Chakra
 3. Vir Chakra
 4. Shaurya Chakra
 5. Kirti Chakra

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

- 20.** Which of the following provisions are included in the Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control & Discipline) Rules, 2025?
1. Residuary powers are to be referred to the Union Government.
 2. In absence of a Commanding Officer, the Defence Secretary will automatically assume command.

3. Service-specific rules continue to apply even under ISO command.
4. The Union Government may issue directions to ISOs on grounds of national security or public interest.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - (b) 1, 3 and 4 only
 - (c) 2 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
21. The NOMADIC ELEPHANT is a Joint Military Exercise between India and which one of the following countries?
- (a) Kazakhstan
 - (b) Malaysia
 - (c) Tajikistan
 - (d) Mongolia

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

Context: Zojila Pass, reopened early this year, enabling tourist access to the Siachen base camp without prior authorization.

Zojila Pass

- It is one of the **most critical and challenging high-altitude passes** in the world .
- It is located at 3,528 metres in Jammu and Kashmir.
- It is a vital link between the **Kashmir Valley and Ladakh**.
- It is known for its strategic importance and stunning Himalayan scenery.

Do you know?

- During the 1947–48 Indo-Pakistani War, Pakistani forces captured the pass, prompting **Operation Bison** by the Indian Army.
 - In a landmark move, tanks were deployed at high altitude, surprising the enemy and reclaiming the pass.
 - This operation, led by **Lt Col Rajinder Singh 'Sparrow'**, was crucial in reopening access to Kargil and Leh, and is remembered as a remarkable feat in military history.

2. (a)

Context

- The government has reconstituted the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) and appointed former Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) chief **Alok Joshi** as its new chairman.

About

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) is a part of the National Security Council (NSC) structure and **advises the NSC** on strategic and security issues, including long-term policy planning on national security matters.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The NSAB **does not have a fixed number of three members**. In fact, its composition varies and typically includes experts from strategic, economic, foreign policy, intelligence, and defense backgrounds. It usually has several members, not just three.

3. (c)

In News

- The Indian Army has received fresh supplies of the Russian-made **Igla-S missiles**.

About Igla-S missiles

- They are the Russian-made man-portable air-defense system (MANPADS) designed to engage low-flying aircraft, helicopters, drones, and cruise missiles.
- The missile uses infrared (IR) homing to lock onto the heat signatures of aerial targets.
- It has enhanced ability to resist jamming and decoy flares due to its dual-band IR seeker.
- It can engage targets at ranges up to 6 km and altitudes up to 3.5 km.
- The Igla-S is an advanced version of the Igla missile system, which has been in service since the 1990s.

4. (a)

Context

- The Indian Armed Forces launched 'OPERATION SINDOOR', hitting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir from where terrorist attacks against India have been planned and directed.

About

- Touted as the Indian military's biggest and deepest strike yet, 'Operation Sindoor' marks the first full-scale **tri-service operation** since the **1971 war**.
- The name — Operation Sindoor — given by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, is a symbolic tribute to the Pahalgam victims, avenging those killed for their faith while their sindoor-wearing wives were spared.
- The strategic operation targeted and destroyed **Jaish-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen** training bases, with India deploying some of its most advanced weaponry.

5. (c)

In News: Recently, the Supreme Court of India has **initiated a review of its 2022 ruling** on the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**, which granted extensive powers to the **Directorate of Enforcement (ED)**.

- PMLA 2002** is India's primary legislation to combat money laundering and financial crimes, enforced since July 1, 2005.
- It empowers authorities to investigate, prosecute, and confiscate assets linked to illicit financial activities.
- It **aligns with global anti-money laundering frameworks**, including recommendations from the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**.
- PMLA 2002** establishes **Special Courts** to handle money laundering cases.
 - Appeals can be filed before the **Appellate Tribunal and High Court**.
- Banks, financial institutions, and intermediaries must verify client identities, maintain transaction records, and report suspicious activities.
 - Non-compliance can lead to penalties and legal action.

6. (d)

In News

- Operation Sindoor marks a shift in India's approach to naming military actions, moving from traditional displays of power to a more emotional tribute.

- Unlike earlier operations with conventional or mythological names like Riddle, Meghdoot, and **Bandar**, this name reflects a more human-centric narrative.

Operation Bandar (2019 Balakot air strikes)

- It was India's response to the February 2019 Pulwama terror attack that killed 40 CRPF personnel.
 - Under this operation, the Indian Air Force conducted air strikes on a **Jaish-e-Mohammed training camp** in Balakot, Pakistan, marking the first cross-LoC air strike since 1971.
 - The operation led to brief aerial skirmishes between India and Pakistan.

7. (b)

Operation Riddle (1965 Indo-Pak War)

- It was the Indian military's response to the offensive launched by Pakistan under the code names of **Operation Gibraltar and Grand Slam** in 1965.
- As Pakistan violated the Line of Control (LoC) and entered Jammu and Kashmir, India launched this operation, targeting Lahore and Kasur on September 6, 1965.
 - The operation had a crippling effect on the Pakistan military.

8. (b)

In News: Recently, India thwarted Pakistani aerial attacks along the western border through its air defence systems, and successfully neutralized an air defence system in Lahore, Pakistan.

Pair 1 is correctly matched

- **Iron Dome (Israel):** It is designed for short-range missile interception, particularly effective against rocket attacks.
- It is used extensively by Israel to protect urban areas and military installations.

Pair 2 is not correctly matched

- **Patriot Missile System (United States):** It is widely deployed for missile interception and aerial threat neutralization.
 - It is used by the U.S., Germany, Japan, and Saudi Arabia for high-altitude defense.

Pair 3 is correctly matched

- **Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) – United States:** It is a high-altitude missile defense system capable of intercepting ballistic missiles in their terminal phase.
 - It is deployed by the U.S., South Korea, and Japan for regional security.

Pair 4 is not correctly matched

- **Barak-8 Missile System:** It is jointly developed by **India and Israel**, and provides high-speed interception against airborne threats.
 - It enhances naval and land-based air defence capabilities.

9. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: It is developed by **IAI (Israel Aerospace Industries)** and is the **second-generation system following the HARPY platform**.

Statement 2 is correct: They cause **destruction by crashing into their targets** with the explosive payload that they carry, earning names such as **"suicide drones" and "kamikaze drones"**.

- **Dual-Role Capability:** Acts both as a surveillance drone and a precision strike missile.

10. (a)

Context

- The Central Government empowered the **Chief of the Army Staff** to call out every officer and personnel of the **Territorial Army** to provide for essential guard or for supporting and supplementing the regular army.

What is the Territorial Army (TA)?

- **Volunteer force:** It is a **volunteer force** that acts as a **second line of defence** after the regular Indian Army. Unlike full-time soldiers, TA members are **civilians who take time out of their regular jobs** (doctors, engineers, business owners, and more) to train and serve the country in times of need.
- **History:** The genesis of the Territorial Army in India can be traced back to the **first war of Independence** in **1857**, when a Volunteer Force was raised. The TA in its current form came into being when the **Territorial Army Act** was enacted on **Aug 18, 1948**.
- **Rank:** It comprises officers, junior commissioned officers (JCOs), non-commissioned officers (NCOs), and other ranks — all holding **ranks identical to the regular Indian Army**.

11. (c)

Statement 1 and 2 are correct: S-400 or Sudarshan Chakra: S-400 is among the most cutting-edge long-range surface-to-air missile systems across the globe.

- India signed an agreement with Russia in 2018 to buy five S-400 units.
- It was deployed in Punjab in 2021 to strengthen the defences against Pakistan and China threats.
- It has a range of up to 400 km and detects threats within 600 km.

12. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: The BrahMos missile is a supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from land-based mobile launchers, naval warships, submarines, and aircraft (like the Sukhoi Su-30MKI).

Statement 2 is not correct: There were earlier strategic hesitations (due to MTCR regulations), India is now actively promoting BrahMos exports. The Philippines signed a deal in 2022, and other countries like Vietnam and Indonesia have shown interest.

Statement 3 is not correct: BrahMos is not subsonic. It is supersonic, with a speed of Mach 2.8 to 3.0, which actually makes interception much more difficult. BrahMos follows the “fire and forget” principle, meaning it does not require further guidance after launch, reducing vulnerability and increasing effectiveness.

13. (c)

Both the statements are correct: 1267 Sanctions Committee

- It is also called the **ISIS and Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee**, was established under a UNSC resolution in **1999**, to focus on **combating terrorism linked to ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and related groups**.
- **Member States** may at any time submit to the **Committee listing requests** for inclusion of individuals, groups, undertakings and entities.
- The Committee **comprises all 15 members** of the Security Council and makes its **decision by consensus**.
- **Sanctions Measures Include:**
 - **Asset Freeze:** All assets of designated individuals/entities are frozen.
 - **Travel Ban:** Listed individuals are banned from entering or transiting through any member state.
 - **Arms Embargo:** Prohibition on supplying arms or related material.

14. (b)

Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS) is an **automated command and control system** that **integrates data from all air defence assets**.

- It is developed by the public sector aerospace and defence electronics company **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**.
- The availability of the consolidated dataset, along with real-time updates, provides military commanders at multiple levels with a **comprehensive picture and overall situational awareness during air operations**.

15. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: The Bhargavastra anti-drone system uses a multi-layered security mechanism, not just a single-layered one. It combines both hard kill (e.g., guided micro-missiles) and soft kill methods.

Statement 2 is correct: The Bhargavastra system has the ability to function above 5000 meters, making it effective in high-altitude regions like Ladakh or Siachen, where many other systems struggle.

Statement 3 is not correct: Bhargavastra can integrate soft kill technologies such as jamming, spoofing, and cyber takeover, alongside its hard kill capabilities.

16. (d)

Context

- Akashteer played a pivotal role in the recent conflict following Operation Sindoor, wherein India targeted 9 terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

About the Akashteer

- **Fully indigenous** automated Air Defence Control and Reporting System developed by **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**.
- Designed to **intercept and neutralize** incoming enemy aircraft, drones, and missiles with high precision.
- **Integrates multiple radar systems** such as: Tactical Control Radar (REPORTER), 3D Tactical Control Radars, Low-Level Lightweight Radar and Akash Weapon System radar.

Key Features

- Enables real-time coordination between control rooms, radars, and ground defence guns.
- Automates detection, tracking, and engagement — reducing manual error and **minimizing friendly fire**.
- Functions as part of India's **C4ISR** framework: Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance.
- Interoperable with **ISRO satellites and NavIC GPS**, enhancing situational awareness and precision.
- **Vehicle-based and mobile**, enabling rapid deployment and adaptability in high-threat zones.

17. (a)

Context

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has given a **one-year extension** to Tapan Kumar Deka, the chief of Intelligence Bureau (IB) till June 2026.

About

- This is the **second time his tenure** has been **extended by a year**.
- The extension comes in the **wake of the evolving security situation** following **Operation Sindoor**.

- His extension is “in relaxation of the provisions of FR 56 (d) and Rule 16 (1A) of All India Services (Death cum Retirement Benefits) Rules, 1958”.
 - The rules allow the central government to **extend in “public interest”** the services of the chiefs of **IB and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)**, Cabinet Secretary, Home Secretary and others, **beyond 60 years age of superannuation**.

Intelligence Bureau (IB)

- IB is India’s **oldest intelligence agency** formed in **1887** during the British colonial era.
- It is India’s **internal security agency** responsible for managing **domestic threats**.
- IB is under the governance of the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- It is responsible for counterterrorism, counterintelligence, and intelligence collection in border areas, infrastructure protection, and anti-secession activities.

18. (d)

Context

- The Indian Navy inducted and named the Ancient Stitched ship as INSV Kaundinya at a ceremonial event held at Naval Base, Karwar.

About

- **INSV Kaundinya** is a **stitched sail ship**, based on a **5th century CE ship** depicted in the paintings of **Ajanta Caves**.
 - The project was initiated through a tripartite agreement signed in 2023.
- **Construction Method:** it was built using traditional shipbuilding techniques from Kerala.
 - Planks were stitched together using **coir rope, coconut fibre, and natural resin**—a method historically used in India before the use of iron nails.
 - The project was undertaken by a team led by master shipwright **Shri Babu Sankaran**.
- The ship is named after **Kaundinya**, a legendary Indian mariner believed to have sailed across the Indian Ocean to Southeast Asia.

19. (a)

In News : President Droupadi Murmu conferred Kirti Chakras and Shaurya Chakras to the personnel of the Armed Forces, Central Armed Police Forces and State/Union Territory Police during Phase-I of the Defence Investiture Ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Param Vir Chakra is the highest wartime gallantry award for supreme valor in the **presence of the enemy**.

- **Maha Vir Chakra** is Second-highest wartime award for conspicuous bravery **in the face of the enemy**.
- **Vir Chakra** is the Third-highest wartime award for bravery in the face of the enemy.

Ashoka Chakra is the highest **peacetime gallantry award** for exceptional bravery not in direct combat.

- **Kirti Chakra** is **Second-highest peacetime** award for conspicuous gallantry.
- **Shaurya Chakra** is Third-highest peacetime award for valor away from enemy combat.

20. (b)

In News: The Ministry of Defence recently notified the Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control & Discipline) Rules, 2025, under the Inter-Services Organisations (ISO) Act, 2023.

About Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control & Discipline) Rules, 2025

- **Empowerment of Commanders:** The Commander-in-Chief (CiC) of a Joint Services Command (JSC), the Officer-in-Command (OiC) of Inter-Service Establishments, and the Commanding Officer (CO) of Inter-Services Units will have full disciplinary and administrative powers over all personnel posted or attached, regardless of their parent service.
- **Retention of Service Acts:** While authority is delegated, the original service rules (Army Act, Navy Act, Air Force Act) still apply to individuals, maintaining service-specific identities.
- **Residuary Powers:** Any matter not explicitly covered under these rules or the Act will be escalated to the Central Government for resolution.
- **Chain of Command:** If the CiC, OiC, or CO is absent or on leave, a replacement will be notified officially. In emergencies, higher formations can appoint interim officers until formal notification.



21. (d)

Context

- The Indian Army contingent has departed for the **17th edition** of the India-Mongolia Joint Military Exercise **NOMADIC ELEPHANT**, scheduled to be held in **Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia** from 31st May to 13th June 2025.

About the Exercise

- Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT is an **annual bilateral military exercise** conducted alternately in **India and Mongolia** since **2006**. The last edition of the same exercise was held in Meghalaya, India in 2024.
- The **aim of the exercise** is to enhance interoperability between the two forces while employing a joint task force in **semi conventional operations** in semi urban/ mountainous terrain under **United Nations mandate**.

■■■■

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. With reference to the Legislative Processes in India, consider the following statements:
1. Private Member Bills allow non-Minister Members of Parliament (MPS) to introduce legislation.
 2. The last two and half hours of the Sitting everyday are allotted for the transaction of Private Members' business.

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. OPEC+ was formed in 2016 primarily in response to which of the following developments?

- (a) Rising demand from Asian oil markets
- (b) Collapse of the Kyoto Protocol
- (c) Sanctions on Iran and Venezuela
- (d) Falling oil prices from rising U.S. shale output

3. With reference to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), consider the following statements:

1. It is a leading multilateral development bank supporting sustainable, inclusive, and resilient growth across Asia and the Pacific.
2. It was founded in 1966 and is owned by 69 members—50 from the region.

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 the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1969, and is currently headquartered in Saudi Arabia.
2. The membership is open to all the United Nation's 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

5. Consider the following statements regarding decision-making in the International Monetary Fund (IMF):
1. Each country in the IMF has an equal vote, similar to the United Nations.
 2. Abstention is the only way to express dissent in IMF decisions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

6. Consider the following statements regarding China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI):
1. The BRI comprises a land-based Silk Road Economic Belt and a sea-based Maritime Silk Road.
 2. Membership in the BRI requires countries to sign binding international treaties with China.
 3. The BRI has been integrated into the Chinese Constitution as part of its foreign policy strategy.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

8. Which of the following statements regarding the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is/are correct?
1. It was established as an independent agency outside the framework of the United Nations.
 2. India is a member state of the IAEA.
 3. The IAEA is a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

9. India is a part of which of the following Regimes/Arrangements/Treaties?
1. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).
 2. Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).
 3. Australia Group.

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

- 10.** With reference to the UN Peace Keeping Mission, consider the following statements:
1. UN Peacekeeping is a key mechanism used by the United Nations to maintain global peace and security.
 2. Troops and police are contributed by UN member states.
 3. Missions operate with the consent of the host country.
- 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.** Consider the following statements regarding the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC):
1. It is a multi-modal transport network linking India to Europe via Iran and Russia.
 2. It provides a shorter alternative to the Suez Canal route.
 3. It was initiated by India, Iran, and Russia in 2000.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
- 12.** With reference to the European Union (EU), consider the following statements:
1. The EU traces its roots to the European Coal and Steel Community, which was founded in 1950.
 2. European Coal and Steel Community had only 4 members i.e. Belgium, France, Italy and the United Kingdom.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 13.** With reference to the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), consider the following statements:
1. It is a Tokyo-based intergovernmental body established in 1961.
 2. Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam are among the founding members of APO.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 14.** With reference to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), consider the following statements:
1. The FATF issues public documents annually to identify jurisdictions with weak measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

2. Placing a country on the “grey list” does not result in immediate penalties but subjects it to heightened monitoring and scrutiny.
3. Currently two countries are in the black list of FATF.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
 - (b) Only two
 - (c) All three
 - (d) None
15. What is the primary purpose of Interpol’s Silver Notice, recently launched in January 2025?
- (a) To share alerts and request information on assets of wanted criminals
 - (b) To issue arrest warrants for terrorists
 - (c) To warn about environmental crimes
 - (d) To locate missing persons internationally
16. Which of the following countries identified India as a priority country in its ‘Opening Doors to India’ Policy?
- (a) New Zealand
 - (b) Maldives
 - (c) Seychelles
 - (d) Indonesia

EXPLANATIONS

1. (a)

In News: Despite its potential to introduce progressive laws, India’s Private Member’s Bill mechanism has steadily eroded over the years because frequent disruptions, adjournments, and the prioritization of government business.

- **A Bill is a statute in draft**, and no Bill can become law until it has received the approval of both the Houses of Parliament and **assent of the President of India (Article 111)**.
- India’s legislative framework allows for **two types of Bills**:
 - **Public Member Bills** (introduced by Ministers), aka **Government Bills**; and
 - **Private Member Bills** (introduced by MPs who are not Ministers).

Statement 1 is correct

- **Private Member Bills** allow non-Minister MPs to introduce legislation reflecting personal convictions, constituency demands, or emerging social needs.

Statement 2 is not correct

- The **last two and half hours of the Sitting every Friday** (not everyday) are usually allotted for the transaction of Private Members’ business.
- **Alternate Fridays** are made available for **Private Members’ Bill**, the other Friday being devoted to **Private Members’ Resolutions**.

2. (d)

Context

- Oil prices plunge to multi-year low as OPEC+ plans to accelerate production hikes.

OPEC+

- **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 September 2016 and signing of the '**Vienna Agreement**' in November 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**.

3. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Asian Development Bank (ADB)

is a leading **multilateral development bank** supporting **sustainable, inclusive, and resilient growth across Asia and the Pacific**.

- **Founded in 1966**, ADB is owned by **69 members—50 from the region**.
- **Headquarters:** Manila, Philippines
- **Primary Goal:** To alleviate poverty and foster sustainable economic growth, inclusive development, and regional integration.
- **Structure:**
 - **Board of Governors:** One representative from each member country.
 - **Board of Directors:** 12 members who supervise the bank's operations.
 - **President:** Elected by the Board of Governors; oversees ADB's management.

4. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Established: 1969, in Rabat, Morocco.

- **Trigger Event:** Response to the arson attack on Al-Aqsa Mosque
- **Headquarters:** Currently in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Statement 2 is not correct: Membership: Open to UN member states with a Muslim majority (57 member states as of 2024).

- **Goals and Mandate:** Present itself as the "collective voice of the Muslim world"
 - Promote solidarity and unity among members.

5. (b)

Context: Despite India's objection, the IMF has approved the immediate disbursement of about \$1 billion to Pakistan under the ongoing Extended Fund Facility.

How are these decisions made at the IMF?

- Unlike the United Nations, where each country has one vote, IMF voting power is based on the **economic size of each member**. For instance, countries like the United States hold a disproportionately high voting share.
- IMF decisions are made by consensus. Since IMF rules don't allow a formal "no" vote, **abstention is the only way** to register dissent.
- Pakistan has received IMF aid in 28 out of the last 35 years, including four programs just in the past five years.

7. (c)

In News: Colombia formally agreed to join China's Belt and Road infrastructure initiative.

Statement 1 is correct: The BRI has two main components:

Silk Road Economic Belt (land route connecting China to Europe via Central Asia)

Maritime Silk Road (sea route through the South China Sea, Indian Ocean, and up to Europe).

Statement 2 is not correct: BRI participation does not require countries to sign binding international treaties. Most arrangements are through Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), which are non-binding in nature.

Statement 3 is correct: In 2017, the Belt and Road Initiative was written into the Constitution of the Communist Party of China during the 19th Party Congress, underscoring its significance as a core element of China's foreign policy.

8. (c)

Statement 1 is not correct: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was established in 1957 and though it is an **autonomous organization**, it works in close partnership with the United Nations. It reports to both the UN General Assembly and the Security Council, especially on matters related to nuclear safety and non-proliferation.

Statement 2 is correct: India is a member of the IAEA and has been actively participating in its programs since its inception.

Statement 3 is not correct: The IAEA itself is not a signatory to the NPT. Rather, it is the designated international body responsible for verifying compliance with the safeguards obligations under the NPT for the countries that are signatories.

9. (b)

Signed in **1968** and entered into **force in 1970**, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) aims to prevent the **spread of nuclear weapons and promote disarmament**.

- **India, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan** have not signed the NPT.
- India also changed its export laws to line up with the **NSG, MTCR, Wassenaar Arrangement, and Australia Group** — the four key nuclear control regimes.
- **Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR):** Established in 1987, MTCR is an “informal political understanding among states that seek to limit the proliferation of missiles and missile technology”.
 - It has 35 members. **India** was admitted in 2016. China is not a member.
- **Australia Group:** It is “an informal forum of countries which, through the harmonisation of export controls, seeks to ensure that exports do not contribute to the development of chemical or biological weapons.”
 - In 2018, **India** formally became the 43rd member of the Australia Group.
- **Wassenaar Arrangement (WA):** The WA, formally established in 1996, aims to promote “transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies”, so there are no “destabilising accumulations”, and terrorists do not acquire them.
 - In 2017, India joined WA as the 42nd Participating State.

10. (d)

All the 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).

11. (d)

About International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

- It is a 7,200-km-long multi-modal transportation network **involving sea, rail, and road routes**.
- **INSTC was established in the year 2000**, with the founding agreement signed in **St. Petersburg by India, Iran, and Russia**.
- It aims to link the **Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf with the Caspian Sea** via Iran, and then further onward to **Northern Europe via Russia's St. Petersburg**.
- The corridor significantly shortens trade routes between India and Europe, offering a faster and cheaper alternative to the Suez Canal route.
- Currently, there are **13 member countries**: India, Iran, Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, Oman, and Syria. Additionally, **Bulgaria has joined as an Observer State**.
- India plays a pivotal role in the INSTC, with the Chabahar Port in Iran serving as a key node, facilitating access to Afghanistan and Central Asia while bypassing Pakistan.

12. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: The European Union (EU) is a political and economic alliance of **27 countries**.

- **Background:** The EU traces its roots to the European Coal and Steel Community, which was founded in **1950**.

Statement 2 is not correct: The European Coal and Steel Community had just **six members: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands**.

- It became the **European Economic Community in 1957** under the Treaty of Rome and subsequently was renamed the European Community (EC).
- **European Union (EU)**, Organization of European countries, formed in **1993** to oversee their economic and political integration.
- It was created by the **Maastricht Treaty** and ratified by all members of the European Community (EC), out of which the EU developed.

13. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Established in **1961**, the Asian Productivity Organization is a **Tokyo-based intergovernmental body** that promotes productivity enhancement across the **Asia-Pacific region** through **mutual cooperation and capacity building**.

Statement 2 is not correct: **Eight founding members:** Taiwan, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, and Thailand.

- The APO currently comprises **21 member economies**.
- The **Governing Body** is the APO's **highest decision-making authority** and **meets annually** to set the organization's strategic direction, approve major proposals, and review Secretariat performance.

14. (b)

Statement 1 is correct: The FATF identifies jurisdictions with weak measures to combat money laundering and terrorist financing (AML/CFT regimes) in two public documents that are issued three times a year — in February, June and October, not twice.

Statement 2 is correct: The grey list, officially “Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring”, comprises countries that have significant deficiencies in their AML/CFT regimes but are actively working with the FATF to address these within agreed timeframes.

- Countries in the grey list are **subject to increased monitoring** by the FATF. Currently, there are **25 countries in this list (as of feb 2025)**.
- It carries **adverse economic and reputational impacts**, which affect the **inflow of foreign investment and international aid**.
- Pakistan being on the grey list from 2018 to 2022 had **helped curtail illicit fund flows into India**.
- **The black list**, officially “High-Risk Jurisdictions subject to a Call for Action”, comprises countries with “**serious strategic deficiencies**” in their AML/CFT regimes.
 - The FATF urges all other jurisdictions to **apply enhanced due diligence while dealing with such countries** and also apply **counter-measures to protect the international financial system** from the risks emanating from the country.
 - Three countries are in the black list at the moment — **North Korea, Myanmar, and Iran**. Hence, **Statement 3 is not correct**.

15. (a)

Context

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said that the Interpol has issued its first two silver notices against two individuals wanted by India.

What is Interpol?

- **Interpol** is an intergovernmental organization, which stands for International Criminal Police Organization.
- **Background:** It was founded in **1923** at the International Police Congress in Vienna as the **International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC)**. In 1956, the ICPC adopted the name Interpol.
- **Members:** It has **196 member** countries, including India.
- **Headquarters:** Lyon, France
- **Mandate:** It connects police around the world – both technically and in person. It is the world’s largest and only organization with the mandate and technical infrastructure to share police information globally.

Interpol Notices

- Interpol Notices are **international requests** for cooperation or alerts allowing police in member countries to share critical crime-related information.
- Notices are **published by the General Secretariat** at the request of a National Central Bureau and are made available to all our member countries.

About Silver Notice

- Silver Notice was launched by the Interpol in **January 2025** as part of a pilot phase involving 51 countries and territories.
- The new colour-coded notice **enables sharing of alerts and requests for information on assets of wanted criminals worldwide**.
- Under the programme, each country can get nine Silver Notices published.



16. (a)

In News: Recently, New Zealand's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs visited India and emphasized **India's role** as a **'geopolitical giant' and an 'indispensable security actor'**.

- India and New Zealand collaborate on regional and global security issues, particularly in the **Indo-Pacific**. They emphasize freedom of navigation, maritime security, and counterterrorism efforts.

New Zealand identified India as a priority country in its **'Opening Doors to India' policy** notified in October 2011, which was **reiterated in 2015**.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1. Which of the following countries are part of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) Project?

1. India
2. China
3. Russia
4. Japan
5. South Korea

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

2. Recently, a new type of antivenom was developed using the blood of a man who deliberately exposed himself to snake venom for years. This method of developing immunity is known as;

- (a) Pasteurization
- (b) Immunotherapy
- (c) Mithridatism
- (d) Inoculation

3. With reference to the Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles (FCEVs), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. FCEVs use hydrogen gas to generate electricity through a chemical process in fuel cells.
2. They emit water vapor as a byproduct, making them environmentally friendly.

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. What is the primary purpose of the Gaganyaan mission?

- (a) To demonstrate the capability to send humans to low Earth orbit and bring them back safely
- (b) To place a satellite in geostationary orbit
- (c) To test reusable rocket technology
- (d) To launch a space station into orbit

5. The principle of piezoelectricity is based on which of the following?
- Heat conduction through symmetric crystal structures
 - Magnetic realignment under electric field
 - Asymmetric crystal structures generating electric charge under stress
 - Electric current generation due to photonic vibrations
6. Consider the following statements:
- India is currently among seven countries in the world that have a publicly known nuclear weapons programme.
 - Homi Jehangir Bhabha is credited with pioneering India's nuclear programme.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
7. Consider the following statements:
- Statement I: Lafora Disease is more common in populations with a high rate of consanguineous marriages.
- Statement II: Lafora Disease is inherited in an autosomal recessive manner, requiring both parents to pass on a defective gene.
- Which one of the following is correct?
- Both Statement I and Statement II are correct, and Statement II is the correct explanation of Statement I.
 - Both Statement I and Statement II are correct, but Statement II is not the correct explanation of Statement I.
 - Statement I is correct, but Statement II is incorrect.
 - Statement I is incorrect, but Statement II is correct.
8. Chandrayaan-5, also known as LUPEX, is a joint lunar mission between which two countries?
- India and Russia
 - India and Japan
 - India and France
 - India and USA
9. In India, why are some nuclear reactors kept under "IAEA safeguards" while others are not?
- Some use uranium and others use thorium
 - Some use imported uranium and others use domestic supplies
 - Some are operated by foreign enterprises and others are operated by domestic enterprises
 - Some are State-owned and others are privately owned
10. Consider the following statements about the Akash Missile System:
- It is a long-range ballistic missile system developed by DRDO.
 - In 2022, Armenia became the first foreign buyer of Akash missile systems.

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 Shingles, consider the following statements:

1. Shingles is caused by varicella-zoster virus (VZV), the same virus that causes chickenpox.
2. Currently there is no vaccine available against Shingles.

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. Grail (Gravity Recovery And Interior Laboratory) Mission recently seen in the news, is a mission for research on which of the following celestial bodies?

- (a) Jupiter
- (b) Moon
- (c) Mars
- (d) Sun

13. Consider the following statements regarding Gene Editing and CRISPR-Cas9:

1. CRISPR-Cas9 enables targeted modification of DNA within the genome.
2. It can only be applied to somatic cells and not germline cells.
3. India has legalised the commercial use of germline editing in humans.

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

14. With reference to the Trachoma, consider the following statements:

1. Trachoma is a disease of the eye caused by infection with the bacterium *Chlamydia trachomatis*.
2. India is the only South East Asian country to eliminate trachoma.

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 Kala-Azar, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is caused by protozoan parasites, transmitted by the bite of infected female phlebotomine sandflies.
2. It is one of the neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) identified by WHO.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

16. Tianwen-2 Mission, recently seen in the news, is related to:

- (a) Establishing a permanent lunar base on the Moon
- (b) Sending a rover to Mars for atmospheric studies
- (c) Collecting samples from an asteroid
- (d) Building a space station in low-Earth orbit

17. What is the primary mechanism through which ELQ-based antimalarial agents prevent malaria transmission?

- (a) They genetically modify mosquito populations to suppress reproduction.
- (b) They prevent the bite of mosquitoes through repellents.
- (c) They destroy the oocyst stage of the Plasmodium parasite inside the mosquito.
- (d) They induce immunity in humans upon exposure.

18. Consider the following statements:

1. Mendel is known as the father of genetics because of his ground-breaking work on inheritance.
2. Mendel chose pea plants and focused on seven traits for his study.

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. Which of the following statements about the “Battery Aadhaar Initiative” is correct?

- (a) It aims to align with international regulatory frameworks like the EU Battery Regulation.
- (b) Its primary objective is to regulate the import duties on all battery components.
- (c) The system is designed to be exclusive to electric vehicle batteries and does not cover other applications.
- (d) The initiative was conceived and is being developed solely by NITI Aayog.

20. With reference to Measles, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Measles is a highly contagious bacterial disease, which mostly affects children.
2. John Enders developed the first effective measles vaccine from the Edmonston-B strain.

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

21. Consider the following statements:

1. Cholera is an acute diarrheal disease caused by the *Vibrio cholerae* virus.
2. Cholera can be treated by Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT).

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: Scientists have completed the main magnet system for **ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor)**, with India playing a significant role in building critical infrastructure.

- The International Thermo-nuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) Project is currently under construction in a **180-hectare site in Southern France**.
- **Over 30 countries**, including **India, China**, the **US, Russia, Japan, South Korea**, and the **EU** are collaborating to build the **world's largest tokamak**, a magnetic fusion device to prove the feasibility of **nuclear fusion** as a **large-scale** and carbon-free source of energy.
- It aims to demonstrate **fusion energy** as a safe and carbon-free power source.
 - Unlike fission, fusion does not produce radioactive waste.
- It will produce 500 megawatts of energy from 50 megawatts of input, creating a self-sustaining plasma state known as "burning plasma", crucial for unlocking fusion energy.

2. (c)

Context

- Scientists have developed an "unparalleled" antivenom from the blood of a man who deliberately injected himself with snake venom for nearly two decades.

What is Mithridatism?

- Mithridatism is the **practice of building immunity to a poison** by gradually self-administering non-lethal doses of that poison.
- The term is derived from **Mithridates VI**, the King of Pontus, who supposedly practiced this method to protect himself from poisoning.

3. (c)

Context

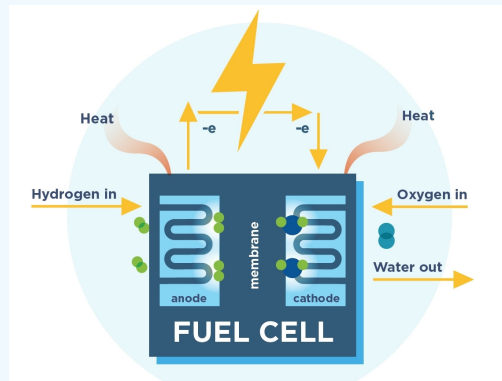
- As the world moves towards sustainable transportation, Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles (FCEVs) present an alternative to the battery electric vehicles (BEVs) currently dominating the market.

Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs)

- BEVs are powered by **electricity stored in rechargeable batteries**.
- They require regular **charging from external power sources**, typically through the electric grid.

Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles (FCEVs)

- FCEVs use **hydrogen gas to generate electricity** through a chemical process in fuel cells.
- They emit only **water vapor as a byproduct**, making them environmentally friendly.



4. (a)

Context

- The Union Minister of State for Science and Technology said that India's first human spaceflight under the Gaganyaan programme is expected to take place in the first quarter of 2027.

Gaganyaan mission

- Purpose:** To demonstrate the capability to **launch human beings** (three crew members) to **low earth orbit** and bring them back safely to earth by landing.
- Launch vehicle:** The Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3) is the launch vehicle for the Gaganyaan mission.
- Crew Escape System (CES):** HLVM3 consists of CES powered by a set of quick acting, high burn rate solid motors which ensures that Crew Module along with the crew is taken to a safe distance in case of any emergency either at launch pad or during ascent phase.

5. (c)

Context

- Researchers have developed ultrasound-activated piezoelectric nanostickers to boost stem cell regeneration, offering a promising non-invasive treatment to Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).

What is Piezoelectricity?

- Piezoelectric Effect** is the ability of certain materials to generate an electric charge in response to applied mechanical stress.
- History:** Piezoelectricity was discovered in **1880 by Pierre and Paul-Jacques Curie**, who found that when they compressed certain types of crystals including **quartz, tourmaline, and Rochelle salt**, along certain axes, a voltage was produced on the surface of the crystal.

Piezoelectric Principle

- Principle:** The piezoelectric effect arises from certain materials with **asymmetric crystal structures**.
 - Under mechanical stress, this **asymmetry causes a shift in electric charge distribution**, producing a small electric current.
- Some materials also exhibit the inverse piezoelectric effect, where applying an electric current leads to mechanical deformation.

6. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: India is currently among **nine countries** in the world that have a publicly known nuclear weapons programme.

Statement 2 is correct: **Homi Jehangir Bhabha** is credited with pioneering India's nuclear programme.

7. (a)

Statement I is correct: Lafora disease is a rare, progressive, and fatal genetic disorder of the nervous system, classified under Progressive Myoclonic Epilepsies (PMEs). It was named after Spanish neuropathologist Gonzalo Rodríguez Lafora who first identified it. Mainly caused by mutations in the EPM2A or EPM2B (NHLRC1) genes. It is mostly common in consanguineous marriages (marriage between close relatives).

Statement II is correct: Lafora Disease is inherited in an autosomal recessive pattern, meaning a person must inherit two defective copies of the gene (one from each parent) for the disease to manifest.

8. (b)

Context

- Indian and Japanese space agencies working on the Chandrayaan-5 mission will soon commence the preliminary design phase of the lander and the rover.

About the Mission

- Objective:** Chandrayaan-5, also known as **LUPEX (Lunar Polar Exploration)**, is a joint project between **ISRO and JAXA to study water and water-ice** both on the lunar surface and the subsurface.
- Weight:** Weighing **6.5 tonnes**, it is proposed to lift off on a **Japanese rocket, H3**, sometime in 2027-28.
- Mission life:** Approved by the Cabinet in March this year, the mission is proposed to be for **3.5 months (100 days)**.
- Lander and Rover:** **ISRO** is developing the lander, while **JAXA** is building and programming the 350-kg rover to traverse the lunar surface and climb slopes up to **25 degrees**.

9. (b)

AEA Safeguards are international protocols under which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) monitors nuclear materials to ensure they are not diverted for military use. India is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) but agreed to place certain civilian nuclear reactors under IAEA safeguards as part of the Indo-U.S. Civil Nuclear Agreement (2008). Under this agreement, nuclear reactors using imported uranium are placed under IAEA safeguards. In contrast, those using domestic uranium (primarily indigenous PHWRs) are not under IAEA safeguards, preserving India's strategic autonomy for its nuclear weapons program.

10. (b)

Context

- The indigenously developed Akash missile system was pivotal in thwarting Pakistan's sustained aerial attacks during Operation Sindoor.

About the Akash Missiles

- Type:** It is a mobile **short-to-medium-range surface-to-air missile (SAM) system**.
- Development:** Developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), it is currently in service with the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Indian Army.
 - The **IAF inducted Akash into in 2014**, and the Army in 2015.
- Purpose:** It provides air defence cover to vital assets against enemy aircraft, cruise missiles, and UAVs, and can engage multiple targets simultaneously.

Do you know?

- In **December 2020**, the Union Cabinet approved **exports** of the Akash missile.
- In **2022**, **Armenia** became the **first foreign buyer**, signing a deal worth **₹6,000 crore** for 15 Akash missile systems.

11. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Shingles is a **viral infection that causes painful rashes**.

- Shingles is caused by **varicella-zoster virus (VZV)**, the same virus that causes chickenpox.
- Once a person has chickenpox, the virus stays in their body. The virus can **reactivate later in life and cause shingles**.

Statement 2 is not correct: People who never had chickenpox or didn't get chickenpox vaccine can get **infected with VZV from someone who has shingles**.

- **Vaccination:** The shingles vaccine, which prevents the reactivation of the varicella-zoster virus, is recommended primarily to individuals **over the age of 50 years**.
 - It may also be recommended to adults living with a weakened immune system due to conditions such as HIV.

12. (b)

GRAIL Mission Overview

- **Agency:** NASA
- **Launch Date:** September 10, 2011
- **Orbit Start:** December 31, 2011
- **End of Mission:** December 17, 2012 (controlled crash into the Moon)
- **Spacecraft:** Two identical satellites named Ebb and Flow.
- **Goal:** Map the **Moon's gravitational field** with unprecedented precision to better understand its internal structure and geological evolution.

13. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: CRISPR-Cas9 is a revolutionary gene-editing tool that allows for precise, targeted modifications to DNA sequences within the genome. It utilizes a guide RNA to direct the Cas9 enzyme to a specific location in the DNA, where it introduces a double-stranded break. This break can then be repaired by the cell's natural mechanisms, allowing for the insertion, deletion, or alteration of genetic material.

Statement 2 is not correct: CRISPR-Cas9 technology can be applied to both somatic (non-reproductive) and germline (reproductive) cells. While somatic cell editing affects only the individual and is generally more accepted ethically, germline editing involves changes that are heritable and passed on to future generations. Due to ethical and safety concerns, germline editing is subject to stricter regulations and is prohibited in many countries, including India.

Statement 3 is not correct: India prohibits the commercial use of germline editing in humans. India has stringent regulations that restrict any form of heritable genome editing. While research in somatic cell gene editing is permitted under regulatory oversight, germline editing remains off-limits due to ethical, legal, and social considerations.

14. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: India has been awarded the **Certificate of Elimination of Trachoma** as a Public Health Problem by the **World Health Organisation (WHO)** at the **78th World Health Assembly in Geneva**.

- **Trachoma** is a disease of the eye caused by **infection with the bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis**.

- It is a public health problem in **38 countries** and is responsible for the blindness or **visual impairment of about 1.9 million people**.
 - **Blindness from trachoma is irreversible.**

Statement 2 is not correct: India became the **third country in the Southeast Asia region** to reach this public health milestone.

- The government has taken various steps under the **National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCBVI)** to eliminate Trachoma.

15. (c)

Context

- Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to eliminate Kala-azar, during an event co-organised by the African Union and WHO on the sidelines of the **78th World Health Assembly in Geneva**.

Kala-azar (visceral leishmaniasis)

- Leishmaniasis is caused by **protozoan parasites** which are transmitted by the bite of infected **female phlebotomine sandflies**.
- The term “kala-azar,” meaning “**black disease**,” refers to the skin discoloration associated with the infection.
- The parasite primarily targets the **reticuloendothelial system**, particularly affecting the bone marrow, spleen, and liver.
- It is one of the 20 **neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)** identified by WHO.
- **Symptoms:** Prolonged fever, Weight loss, Fatigue, Enlargement of the spleen and liver, Anaemia etc.

16. (c)

In News

- China is set to launch its **first asteroid sampling mission** called **Tianwen-2**.

About Tianwen-2 Mission

- The mission will investigate **469219 Kamoʻoalewa**, a **near-Earth asteroid** that orbits the Sun close to Earth.
- It aims to collect samples from Kamoʻoalewa using a “**touch-and-go**” **technique** or possibly an “**anchor and attach**” **method**.
- It aims to advance scientific understanding of asteroids and demonstrate China’s growing capabilities in deep-space exploration.
 - If successful, China will join the ranks of the U.S. and Japan as one of the few countries to have collected and returned asteroid samples.

17. (c)

ELQ-based antimalarial agents are chemical compounds that target the malaria parasite inside Anopheles mosquitoes, without killing the mosquito itself.

ELQ-based antimalarial agents (Endochin-like quinolones) target the Plasmodium parasite inside the mosquito, particularly during the oocyst development stage. These compounds:

- Do not kill the mosquito.
- Do not require the mosquito to ingest the drug, but work even via contact exposure.
- Block the maturation of the parasite inside the mosquito, effectively breaking the transmission cycle.

18. (c)

Both the statements are correct: Mendel is known as the **father of genetics** because of his ground-breaking work on **inheritance in pea plants 150 years ago**.

- **He focused on seven traits:** pea seed shape (round or wrinkled), pea seed colour (green or yellow), pod shape (constricted or inflated), pod colour (green or yellow), flower colour (purple or white), plant size (tall or dwarf) and position of flowers (axial or terminal).
- **Mendel chose pea plants because** they have easily observable traits (e.g., flower color, seed shape), grow quickly, and can be self- or cross-pollinated.
- Over many years of experiments, involving thousands of plants, he established **fundamental rules of inheritance**, how characteristics are passed down through the generations, and single-handedly **laid the groundwork for the science of genetics**.

19. (a)

The Battery Aadhaar Initiative was recently launched by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) during the Battery Summit 2025.

About Battery Aadhaar Initiative

Battery Aadhaar is a digital identification and lifecycle traceability framework for each battery pack, aimed at building a resilient, transparent, and sustainable battery ecosystem in India.

- It assigns a unique digital identity to each battery.
- Enables end-to-end tracking of its manufacturing, safety, and performance parameters.
- Designed to align with international battery passport regulations such as the EU Battery Regulation and other emerging global standards.

20. (b)

Context

- Measles has seen a dramatic decline in global mortality rates due to the development and scale-up of effective vaccination programs.
 - Since the introduction of the measles vaccine an estimated 9 crore (90 million) deaths have been prevented worldwide

Measles

- Measles is a **highly contagious viral disease**, which affects mostly children.
- **Transmission:** It is transmitted via droplets from the nose, mouth or throat of infected persons.
- **Symptoms** usually appear 10–12 days after infection, including high fever, runny nose, bloodshot eyes, and tiny white spots on the inside of the mouth.
- **Complications:** Pneumonia, encephalitis, blindness, and death, especially in children with poor nutrition or immune deficiency.
- **Prevention:** Community-wide vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles.
 - **John Enders** developed the first effective measles vaccine in **1963**, from the '**Edmonston-B**' strain.

21. (b)

In News:

Statement 1 is not correct

- **Cholera** is an **acute diarrheal disease** caused by the **bacterium *Vibrio cholerae***, primarily transmitted through contaminated food and water.

Statement 2 is correct

- **Symptoms:** Severe watery diarrhea, vomiting, dehydration, and muscle cramps.
- **Prevention:** Access to clean drinking water, improved sanitation, and vaccination.
- **Treatment:** **Oral rehydration therapy (ORT)** and antibiotics in severe cases.



ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

1. Consider the following statements:

1. India has supported the inclusion of Chlorpyrifos under Annex A of the Stockholm Convention for global elimination.
2. The Stockholm Convention, adopted in 2001, aims to protect human health and the environment from Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).
3. India has signed and ratified the Stockholm Convention, and is legally obligated to adhere to all its provisions without reservations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

2. The Nagoya Protocol is primarily associated with which of the following objectives?

- (a) Protection of migratory species of wild animals
- (b) Regulation of genetically modified organisms in agriculture
- (c) Conservation of wetlands of international importance
- (d) Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources

3. Consider the following statements regarding the Saola (*Pseudoryx nghetinhensis*):

1. It is more closely related to antelopes than to cattle.
2. Both male and female Saolas possess long, parallel horns.
3. It is endemic to the rainforests of the Western Ghats in India.
4. The species is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

4. The Rotterdam Convention, recently seen in the news, is primarily related to:

- (a) Protection of cultural heritage in conflict zones
- (b) Conservation of marine biodiversity
- (c) Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions
- (d) Regulating trade in hazardous chemicals and pesticides

5. The 'Global Methane Tracker 2025', recently seen in the news, was released by which of the following organizations?
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
 - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
 - World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
 - International Energy Agency (IEA)
6. With reference to the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), consider the following statements:
- It was formalized through the Commission for Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021.
 - Its jurisdiction includes only Delhi and Punjab.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- Only 1
 - Only 2
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
7. Consider the following statements:
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (ICZMP) is a World Bank-assisted project in India to protect and conserve marine environments.
 - Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI) is developed by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).
 - The National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) is an attached office of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All three
 - None
8. With reference to the Tapanuli Orangutan (*Pongo tapanuliensis*), consider the following statements:
- It is found in Northern Sumatra, Indonesia.
 - It is listed as critically endangered under the IUCN red list of threatened species?
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
9. Yala Glacier, recently declared "dead," is situated in which of the following national parks?
- Sagarmatha National Park
 - Langtang National Park
 - Chitwan National Park
 - Makalu Barun National Park

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

1. It aims to control the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes.
2. India is a party to the Basel 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

11. With reference to the Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) in India, consider the following statements:

1. It enhances India's energy security by reducing dependence on crude oil imports.
2. Ethanol blending contributes to lowering greenhouse gas emissions compared to pure petrol.

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

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

12. The MARPOL Convention primarily deals with:

- (a) Prevention of marine pollution from ships
- (b) Protection of marine biodiversity through protected zones
- (c) Controlling the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes
- (d) Regulation of emissions from international aviation

13. Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF), a method aimed at reducing input costs, is primarily promoted by which of the following individuals?

- (a) M.S. Swaminathan
- (b) Thomas Jefferson
- (c) Verghese Kurien
- (d) Subhash Palekar

14. Rhizobia and Azospirillum brasilense, recently seen in the news, are:

- (a) Invasive plant species
- (b) Artificial sweeteners
- (c) Beneficial bacteria
- (d) Chemical fertilizers

15. What is the primary function of SNAP-X Bio-Ink, recently seen in news for restoration of coral reefs?

- (a) Acts as a nutrient-rich food for coral polyps
- (b) Stimulates rapid reproduction of fish near coral reefs
- (c) Generates oxygen for marine species during photosynthesis
- (d) Creates a microhabitat by slowly releasing chemical cues to aid coral larvae settlement

16. With reference to Olive Ridley Turtles, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. They are herbivores and primarily feed on seagrass.
2. Their mass nesting phenomenon is known as Arribada.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

17. With reference to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), consider the following statements:

1. The GEF was established in 1992 as a financial mechanism to assist developing countries in meeting international environmental goals.
2. It serves as the financial mechanism for all major United Nations environmental conventions.
3. The World Bank acts as the Trustee for the GEF's trust funds.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

18. Euthalia malaccana, the newest member of India's butterfly family, has been recorded from which of the following states?

- (a) Assam
- (b) West Bengal
- (c) Karnataka
- (d) Arunachal Pradesh

19. Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, recently seen in the news, is located in which of the following states?

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

20. With reference to the Clownfish (*Amphiprion percula*), consider the following statements:

1. It lives in the shallow waters of the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the western Pacific.
2. It is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

21. With reference to the Asiatic Lion (*Panthera leo persica*), consider the following statements:

1. Asiatic lions are slightly smaller than African lions.
2. It is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

22. With reference to the International Day for Biological Diversity, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It commemorates the adoption of the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992 during the Rio Earth Summit.
2. The 2025 theme is "Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development."

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. With reference to the 'National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)', consider the following statements:

1. It operates under the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).
2. It is responsible for administering India's Antarctic Programme, including the maintenance of research stations Maitri and Bharati.

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. Consider the following statements regarding the White Himalayan Lily (*Lilium polyphyllum*) and Tree Ferns:

1. The White Himalayan Lily is classified as 'Critically Endangered' by the IUCN.
2. Tree Ferns are non-vascular plants that reproduce primarily through seeds.
3. Both the White Himalayan Lily and Tree Ferns are known to possess traditional medicinal properties.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

25. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted at which international conference?

- (a) United Nations Water Conference 2023
- (b) COP28 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- (c) COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- (d) COP26 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

26. With reference to Dugong, often mentioned in news, consider the following statements:

1. It is the only existing species of herbivorous mammal that lives exclusively in the sea.
2. It occurs only in the Gulf of Mannar and Andaman and Nicobar islands.
3. It is listed as 'vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List for Threatened Species.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

27. Consider the following statements regarding Stingless Bees:

1. They are generally smaller than typical honeybees.
2. They are known to be important pollinators in tropical ecosystems.
3. Their distribution is limited to South America and Southeast Asia.

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

28. With reference to *Moringa oleifera*, consider the following statements:

1. It is native to the foothills of the Himalayas in India and is now cultivated in parts of Africa and the Americas.
2. It is known for its anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and anti-diabetic properties.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

29. Which of the following statements regarding Dholes is/are correct?

1. They are native to Southeast Asia.
2. They are classified as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
3. Their population is mainly distributed in India and Thailand.

Select the correct answer using the codes below:

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

30. With reference to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), consider the following statements:

1. The goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels is a legally binding obligation under the agreement.

2. The Paris Agreement requires countries to submit and update their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every five years.
3. A permanent breach of the 1.5°C limit refers to a single year of warming above the threshold.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

31. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Flamingos?

1. Flamingo can live in lagoons, estuaries and mudflats.
2. The Greater Flamingo is the State bird of Gujarat.
3. The American flamingo is classified as 'Least Concern' by the IUCN Red List.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

32. Consider the following statements regarding 'Biostimulants':

1. They are substances or microorganisms that directly provide essential nutrients to plants, similar to traditional fertilisers.
2. Seaweed extracts and humic acids are examples of biostimulants.
3. They were incorporated as a distinct category of fertilisers under the Fertiliser Control Order (FCO) in 2021.

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

33. With reference to Amazon Rainforests, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The region belongs to nine nations of the South American continent.
2. Brazil holds the largest share of the Amazon Rainforest area.

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

34. With reference to the recent collapse of Birch Glacier in Switzerland, consider the following statements:

1. The collapse was primarily attributed to rising global temperatures and the thawing of alpine permafrost.

2. Switzerland has experienced the highest glacial loss in terms of percentage among all European countries since 2000.
3. Permafrost in alpine regions acts as a natural binding agent that stabilizes mountain slopes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATIONS

1. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: There have been global efforts to list **chlorpyrifos under Annex A of the Stockholm Convention**, but India has not supported its inclusion. India has opposed the listing of chlorpyrifos under Annex A, which calls for a global ban. India has been resistant to including chlorpyrifos in Annex A of the Stockholm Convention.

Statement 2 is correct: The Stockholm Convention was adopted in 2001 and entered into force in 2004. Its primary objective is to protect human health and the environment from POPs by eliminating or restricting their production and use.

Statement 3 is not correct: Although India ratified the Stockholm Convention, it made a specific declaration under **Article 25(4) of the Convention**. This declaration states that any amendment to **Annex A, B, or C** will enter into force for India only upon its ratification of the amendment. Therefore, India is not automatically bound by all amendments to the Convention and retains the right to accept or reject specific provisions.

2. (d)

Context

- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has notified the **Biological Diversity (Access to Biological Resources and Knowledge Associated thereto and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits) Regulation, 2025**.
- The rules are notified to streamline and regulate benefit sharing from the use of biological resources and associated knowledge.

Nagoya Protocol

- The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the **Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS)** is a supplementary agreement to the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**.
- It provides a transparent legal framework for the effective implementation of one of the three objectives of the CBD: **the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources**.
- It was adopted in **2010 in Nagoya, Japan** and entered into force in **2014**.

3. (b)

Statement 1 not correct: Though Saola resembles an antelope in appearance, genetically it is a bovid, and hence more closely related to cattle, not antelopes.

Statement 2 is correct: Both males and females have two long (approx. 20 inches), straight, parallel horns, which is a distinguishing feature.

Statement 3 is not correct: Saola is not found in India. It is endemic to the Annamite Mountains along the Vietnam–Laos border.

Statement 4 is correct: The Saola is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, due to habitat loss and accidental trapping.

4. (d)

Context

- Countries like India and Russia argue that listing chlorpyrifos (and other pesticides) under the Rotterdam Convention could affect their trade.

About

- The Rotterdam Convention is a **multilateral environmental agreement** which prescribes obligations on the **importers and exporters of certain hazardous chemicals**.
- The Convention establishes a **prior informed consent (“PIC”)** procedure to ensure that certain hazardous chemicals are not exported to countries that do not wish to receive them.
- Its **objective** is to promote shared responsibility and cooperative efforts among parties in the international trade of listed chemicals in the Rotterdam Convention, to protect human health and the environment, and to contribute to the environmentally sound use of chemicals.
- **Adopted** on September 10, 1998, the Rotterdam Convention entered into force on February 24, 2004. **India ratified it** on May 24, 2005.

5. (d)

In News

- The International Energy Agency (IEA) released Global Methane Tracker 2025.

The IEA’s Global Methane Tracker

- It is a vital tool for reducing methane emissions in the energy sector.
- It offers updated estimates of emissions using the latest satellite and ground-based data, alongside information on the costs and opportunities for reduction.
- The 2025 update will include new features such as country-level data on historical emissions, projections for 2030 and 2035, an interactive tool for exploring global methane initiatives, and estimates for emissions from abandoned fossil fuel facilities.
- Additionally, it provides an open-access model for exploring methane reduction options in oil and gas operations.

6. (a)

Context

- **The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)** in the National Capital Region and adjoining areas **announced a 19-step directive for state governments to eliminate stubble burning**.

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)

- Formalized through the Commission for **Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021**.
- **Jurisdiction:** Covers Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh — especially areas contributing to air pollution in the NCR.
- CAQM is meant to provide an integrated and permanent mechanism for:
 - Coordinated response to air pollution.
 - Ensuring synergy across different ministries and states.
 - Replacing the fragmented approach that involved multiple agencies with overlapping responsibilities.

7. (c)

In News: A recent study has found that **geotubing technology deployed at Poonthura, Kerala**, has been highly effective in controlling coastal erosion.

Statement 1 is correct

- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (ICZMP):** It is a **World Bank-assisted project** aimed to protect and conserve coastal and marine environments through sustainable practices, implemented in **Gujarat, Odisha, and West Bengal**.

Statement 2 is correct

- **Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI):** The **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)** has developed the CVI to assess and map the vulnerability of different coastal regions based on various parameters.

Statement 3 is correct

- The **National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR)** (an attached office of the Ministry of Earth Sciences) has been monitoring shoreline changes since 1990, using remote sensing and GIS mapping techniques.

8. (c)

Tapanuli Orangutan (*Pongo tapanuliensis*)

- It is the most endangered species of great ape; only discovered as a **distinct species in 2017**.
- **Region:** North Sumatra, Indonesia
- **Threats:**
 - Habitat destruction from hydropower development and agriculture.
 - Small and isolated population.
- **IUCN Status: Critically Endangered.**



9. (b)

Context

- Glaciologists and local communities mourned the loss of Nepal's Yala glacier, believed to be the first Nepalese glacier to be declared "dead".

About

- **Location:** It is situated in **Langtang National Park**, in Nepal's Himalayan region.
- **Altitude:** It lies at an elevation of about **5,000 meters** above sea level.
- **Type:** It is a small plateau glacier often used as a training site for glaciological studies and mountaineering.
- **Size:** It has shrunk by **66%** and retreated **784 meters** since the 1970s. It is expected to vanish completely by **2040**.

10. (c)

Context

- India, now among the top global generators of electronic waste (e-waste), faces a critical challenge in managing the growing volume of obsolete electronic devices.

Basel Convention

- The Basel Convention is a **global treaty aimed at controlling the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes** and their disposal, ensuring that such wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner.
- It was adopted in **1989** and entered into force in **1992**.
- India is a party** to the Basel Convention.

11. (d)

In Context: The Union Government approved an additional 2.8 million tonnes of rice from the **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** stock for ethanol production, raising the total allocation for the Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2024–25 to 5.2 million tonnes.

What is Ethanol and the EBP Programme?

- Ethanol is an alcohol-based biofuel made through the **fermentation of sugar, starch, or cellulose** derived from crops like sugarcane, maize, and rice. When blended with petrol, it helps reduce vehicular emissions and dependence on fossil fuels.
- The **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme** was launched in 2003 and accelerated since 2014. It mandates the blending of ethanol with petrol.
- India has achieved its E20 target — 20% ethanol blending in petrol by 2025 — and now aims to reach 30% blending by 2030.

Significance of the Move

- Energy Security:** Helps reduce India's import dependence on crude oil and promotes energy self-reliance.
- Climate Benefits:** Ethanol is a cleaner fuel that emits fewer greenhouse gases compared to pure petrol.
- Rural Economy Boost:** Creates demand for surplus agricultural produce, potentially benefiting farmers through better prices.
- Policy Push for Green Energy:** Aligns with India's commitment under the Paris Agreement and targets for renewable energy use.

12. (a)

Context

- At the 83rd session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC-83) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), a landmark vote was held to adopt a Market-Based Measure (MBM) for decarbonising international shipping.

About

- The MARPOL Convention (Marine Pollution)** is the main international treaty to prevent pollution from ships, whether from operational discharges or accidental spills.
- It includes six technical annexes addressing different sources of pollution like oil, noxious substances in bulk, harmful substances in packaged form, sewage, garbage, and air pollution from ships.

13. (d)

Context

- In a bid to boost consumer trust and farmer incomes, the central government is likely to introduce a nationwide **Natural Farming Certification System (NFCS)**.

What is Natural Farming?

- Natural Farming is a **chemical-free farming system** rooted in Indian tradition enriched with modern understanding of ecology, resource recycling and on-farm resource optimization.

**Key Features of Natural Farming**

- Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF):** A popular model promoted by **Subhash Palekar**, aimed at drastically reducing input costs.
- Core practices:**
 - Beejamrit:** Natural seed treatment.
 - Jeevamrit:** Soil inoculation using fermented cow dung and urine.
 - Mulching and Waaphasa:** Moisture retention and aeration of soil.
- Low input, high sustainability:** Reduces dependence on market-bought inputs.

14. (c)

Context

- Brazilian microbiologist **Mariangela Hungria**, has been named the 2025 World Food Prize Laureate.

About

- Hungria developed seed and soil treatments using beneficial bacteria like **rhizobia** and **Azospirillum brasilense**.
- Her innovations help soybeans fix nitrogen naturally and enhance root growth in crops like corn, improving nutrient and water uptake.

World Food Prize

- The World Food Prize is the **foremost international award** recognizing the accomplishments of individuals who have **advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food** in the world.
- The award was **established in 1986** by Nobel Peace Prize laureate **Dr. Norman E. Borlaug**.
 - It is often referred to as the **Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture**.

15. (d)

Context

- Scientists have developed a new bio-ink to enhance coral larva settlement by over 20 times.

About SNAP-X Bio-Ink

- SNAP-X is a **transparent, bio-engineered ink**, infused with metabolites derived from **Crustose Coralline Algae (CCA)**.
 - CCA is a type of **rocky pink algae** known to attract coral larvae.
- Crustose Coralline Algae release chemical cues into the seawater which are followed by coral larvae during the settlement phase.
- SNAP-X slowly releases these cues over a month, creating a suitable microhabitat for coral larvae to settle and grow.

16. (b)

Context

- **Operation Olivia** helped protect a record of over **6.98 lakh** Olive Ridley turtles nested at the **Rushikulya river** mouth in **Odisha**.

About Olive Ridley Turtles

- The olive ridley gets its name from the olive green color of its heart-shaped shell.
 - These are **carnivores** and feed mainly on jellyfish, shrimp etc.
- **Distribution:** Olive ridleys are found throughout the world primarily in the tropical regions of the **Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic oceans**.
- **Major nesting sites in India:** Rushikulya rookery coast (Odisha), Gahirmatha beach (Bhitarkanika National park) and the mouth of the Debi River.
- **Features:** They are known for their unique mass nesting called **Arribada**, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Vulnerable
 - **CITES Appendix I**
 - **Schedule I** of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

17. (b)

In News: The study found that although the GEF plays a central role in achieving the \$200 billion annual biodiversity finance target under Target 19 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), most Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) received little to no direct funding support.

Statement 1 is correct: The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established in 1992 during the Rio Earth Summit. It was created to provide financial assistance to developing countries for projects that help achieve the objectives of major international environmental conventions (e.g., climate change, biodiversity, desertification, etc.).

Statement 2 is not correct: The GEF does not serve all UN environmental conventions.

It acts as a financial mechanism for the following five conventions:

- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
- Minamata Convention on Mercury

Statement 3 is correct: The World Bank serves as the Trustee of the GEF Trust Fund, managing its financial operations and fund disbursement.

18. (d)

Euthalia malaccana, the newest member of India's butterfly family, has been recorded from Arunachal Pradesh.

- **E. malaccana** was previously thought to be a **subspecies of Euthalia adonia**, but is now recognized as a **distinct species primarily found in Southeast Asia**.
- This marks the **first definitive record of the species** in India, supported by photographic and morphological analysis.
- The butterfly is identifiable by:
 - A blue apical spot on male forewings (larger in females).
 - Reduced red spots on the hindwings.
 - These traits help differentiate it from similar species like Euthalia lubentina.
- This discovery extends E. malaccana's **known range into the Indo-Australian region** and contributes to the growing knowledge of butterfly diversity in northeastern India.

19. (c)

Context

- As per the 16th Lion Population Estimation, India has reported a **32% increase** in its lion population between 2020 and 2025.

Key Findings

- **Population Increase:** The total number of Asiatic lions has risen from 674 in 2020 to 891 in 2025.
- **Habitat Distribution:**
 - **55.78%** of lions are located in forested areas.
 - **44.22%** reside in non-forested landscapes, reflecting the growing range and adaptability of the species.
- **Frequency of Census:** Conducted every five years to monitor population trends and guide conservation strategies.

Asiatic Lion (*Panthera leo persica*)

- It is one of the **five big cat species** found in India.
- **Distribution:** Barda Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the **state of Gujarat** and is one of the important protected areas supporting the conservation of the Asiatic lion (*Panthera leo persica*).
 - Along with Gir National Park, Paniya, and Mityala Wildlife Sanctuaries, Barda forms part of the extended lion habitat in Gujarat.

20. (a)

In News

- A study found that adult clownfish can shrink and regrow in response to heat stress.
 - Shrinking helped lower death risk by 78%, while fish that didn't shrink had the highest mortality.

Clownfish (*Amphiprion percula*)

- There are at least 30 known species of clownfish, most of which live in the shallow waters of the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the western Pacific.

- The clownfish can be many different colours, depending on its species, including yellow, orange, red, and black.
- The IUCN Red List of threatened species classifies them as Least Concern.

21. (c)

Context

- As per the 16th Lion Population Estimation, India has reported a **32% increase** in its lion population between 2020 and 2025.

Asiatic Lion (*Panthera leo persica*)

- It is one of the **five big cat species** found in India.
- **Physical Characteristics:** Asiatic lions are slightly **smaller than African lions**.
 - Males have **less developed manes**, leaving their ears visible.
 - Prominent **longitudinal fold of skin** along the belly (a distinguishing feature from African lions).
- **Distribution:** In India, concentrated in the state of Gujarat in and around the Gir Forest mainly in;
 - Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Paniya Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Mityala Wildlife Sanctuary
 - Barda Wildlife Sanctuary
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List status:** Endangered
 - **CITES:** Appendix I
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I

22. (c)

Context: The International Day for Biological Diversity is celebrated every year on **22 May**.

Background

- The IDB commemorates the adoption of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** on **22 May 1992** during the **Rio Earth Summit**.
- The day creates awareness among the citizens and stakeholders on the importance and need for the conservation of biological diversity.
- The 2025 theme is **“Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development.”**

23. (b)

In News: Recently, the Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated **Sagar Bhavan** and **Polar Bhavan** at the **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)** in Goa.

Statement 1 is not correct: The National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) was established in 1998, operates under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)** and plays a crucial role in scientific exploration, environmental monitoring, and international collaborations in the **Arctic, Antarctic, and Southern Ocean realms**.

Statement 2 is correct: NCPOR is responsible for:

- Administering **India’s Antarctic Programme**, including the maintenance of research stations **Maitri and Bharati**.
- Conducting polar science research, focusing on climate change, glaciology, oceanography, and biodiversity.

- Leading geoscientific surveys to explore mineral resources, gas hydrates, and deep-sea ecosystems.
- **Managing India's Arctic research station**, Himadri, and contributing to global climate studies.

24. (c)

Statement 1 is correct: The White Himalayan Lily (*Lilium polyphyllum*) is a rare and Critically Endangered species, found in high-altitude regions of the western Himalayas (in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh). It faces threats from habitat loss and overharvesting, especially due to its medicinal and ornamental value.

Statement 2 is not correct: Tree Ferns are vascular plants, not non-vascular. They belong to the group Pteridophytes and reproduce through spores, not seeds. Non-vascular plants include mosses, liverworts, etc., not ferns.

Statement 3 is correct: The White Himalayan Lily is known in traditional medicine for its anti-inflammatory and rejuvenating properties. Tree Ferns have also been used in ethnomedicine, particularly by indigenous communities, for wound healing and other remedies.

25. (c)

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

- The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was concluded at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in **Montreal, Canada, in 2022**.
- This framework is a landmark agreement aimed at addressing the global biodiversity crisis.
- It features **23 targets to be met by 2030** and **four global goals for 2050** to preserve biodiversity for current and future generations.
- The agreement is **not binding** on members.

26. (b)

In News: World Dugong Day is celebrated on May 28 to raise awareness about dugongs

Statements 1 and 3 are correct : Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) are also called 'Sea Cow' and are one of the four surviving species in the Order Sirenia.

- They are the **only herbivorous mammals found in India's marine ecosystems**.
 - It is the only existing species of herbivorous mammal that lives exclusively in the sea, including in India.
- They depend on seagrass meadows for food and habitat, consuming large quantities daily to meet nutritional needs.
- **IUCN Red List status :** They are listed as being '**vulnerable**' on the IUCN Red List for Threatened Species.

Statement 2 is not correct: Dugongs resemble a cross between a whale and a seal and are found in shallow Indo-Pacific waters, especially in India's **Gulf of Mannar, Palk Bay, Gulf of Kutch, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands**.

27. (a)

About Stingless Bees

- A stingless bee is a bee that **appears very similar to a honeybee**, but is incapable of stinging. Stingless bees do possess a stinger, but it is **vestigial and non-functional**, hence they cannot sting.
- Like honeybees, stingless bees are **eusocial**, meaning they live in **highly organized perennial colonies** with a queen, drones, and numerous worker bees.

- They are **generally smaller than typical honeybees**. Instead of stinging, they defend their nests by biting attackers.
- Their distribution spans India, Africa, Australia, and other tropical regions. In India, they are **widespread in the North East, South and Eastern parts**.
- Scientific domestication of stingless bees has been done in Nagaland and subsequently extended to Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh.
- Stingless bees play an **ecological and economic** role by enhancing crop pollination while producing high-value medicinal honey known for its therapeutic properties.

28. (c)

In News

- PKM1, a variety of **Moringa oleifera**, has created a global impact, especially in countries such as Senegal, Rwanda and Madagascar in the African continent.

About Moringa (Moringa oleifera)

- **Origin and Distribution:**
 - Native to India, especially the foothills of the **Himalayas**.
 - Now widely cultivated in **South Asia, Africa, and tropical regions of Central and South America**.
- **Agricultural Requirements:**
 - Prefers deep sandy loam soil with pH between 6.5–8.0.
 - Thrives in semi-arid and tropical climates. Optimal temperature: 25–30°C.
 - Drought-resistant and fast-growing — can be harvested multiple times a year.
- **Medicinal & Health Uses:**
 - Used in Ayurveda to treat over 300 conditions.
 - Known for **anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and anti-diabetic properties**.
 - Seeds are used to purify water due to their coagulating ability.

29. (b)

In News

- Visakhapatnam's Indira Gandhi Zoological Park is celebrating **World Dhole Day**.

Dholes

- They are also known as the **Asiatic wild dog (Cuon alpinus)**.
- They are a canid native to southeast Asia.
- They typically live 10-13 years in the wild, but can live up to 16 years in captivity.
- **Distribution:** Their global population is estimated to be between 949 and 2,215 adults, mainly located in India and Thailand.
- **Factors Contributing to Decline :** Habitat loss, declining prey, persecution, disease, and competition with other species have fragmented dhole populations.
- **Conservation Status:** It is included in CITES – Appendix II
 - Dholes are classified as **endangered** on the IUCN Red List.

30. (c)

Paris Agreement is a **legally binding international treaty** on climate change, adopted in **2015**, at the **COP21** to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

- It aims to **limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius** above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to **limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius**.

- The 1.5°C limit is a goal, not a legal boundary. Hence, Statement 1 is not correct.
 - A permanent breach implies long-term warming over 20–30 years, not a single year. Hence, Statement 3 is not correct.
- The Paris Agreement emphasizes **nationally determined contributions (NDCs)** and encourages all countries to take climate action.
 - Countries must **review and update their NDCs every five years** to enhance their efforts and increase ambition over time. Hence, Statement 2 is correct.
 - **180 of the 195 UNFCCC** countries are yet to submit their next round of NDCs for 2031-35 before the **30th Conference of the Parties (COP30)**.

31. (d)

In News: Recently, Flamingos have arrived in large numbers at the Chhaya pond in Porbandar town of Gujarat.

All the statements are correct : Flamingos are highly social animals that often live in large colonies, occasionally assembling in groups that number in the thousands.

- They live in a wide variety of habitats such as lagoons, estuaries, coastal and inland lakes, and mudflats.
- **The flamingo species and their IUCN Red List status are**
 - The greater flamingo, - **Least Concern**
 - Chilean flamingo, - **Near Threatened**
 - American flamingo - **Least Concern**
 - Lesser flamingo - **Near Threatened**
 - Andean flamingo - **Vulnerable**
 - James's flamingo (puna flamingo) - **Near Threatened**
- **Greater flamingos** usually migrate to India from Israel, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The **greater flamingo** is the State bird of Gujarat.

32. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Biostimulants do not directly provide nutrients like traditional fertilisers. Instead, they enhance nutrient uptake, root development, and stress tolerance.

Statement 2 is correct: Seaweed extracts and humic acids are widely used biostimulants known for improving soil health and plant growth.

Statement 3 is correct: In 2021, biostimulants were officially incorporated under the Fertiliser Control Order (FCO) as a distinct category.

33. (c)

Context

- The recent release of the book **"How to Save the Amazon"**, completed posthumously in honor of British journalist Dom Phillips, brings renewed global attention to the significance and fragility of the Amazon Rainforest.

Amazon Rain Forests

- **Location:** The region belongs to **nine nations** of the **South American** continent.
 - It is bounded by the **Guiana Highlands** to the north, the **Andes Mountains** to the west, the **Brazilian central plateau** to the south, and the **Atlantic Ocean** to the east.

- **Area Covered:** The majority of the forest, 60%, is in **Brazil**, followed by **Peru** with 13%, **Colombia** with 10%, and with minor amounts in **Bolivia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname and Venezuela**.
- **Climate:** Hot and humid climate with temperatures of **26-30°C** throughout the year.
 - There are no periodic seasons. The precipitation ranges from 2,000 mm to 10,920 mm annually.
- **Tribes:** Yanomamo, Kayapo, Akuntsu, Matses, Tupi etc.

34. (d)

Statement 1 is correct: Experts have confirmed that the collapse of Birch Glacier is directly linked to rising global temperatures and thawing alpine permafrost, both consequences of climate change.

Statement 2 is correct: Switzerland, home to the largest number of glaciers in Europe, has lost around 40% of its glacial volume since 2000, which is among the highest losses recorded in Europe.

Statement 3 is correct: Alpine permafrost serves as a natural glue, holding rock and mountain slopes together. Its thawing destabilizes terrain, increasing the risk of landslides and glacier collapses.



MISCELLANEOUS

1. 'Agent Orange' is related to which of the following historical events?
 - (a) World War I
 - (b) World War II
 - (c) Gulf War
 - (d) Vietnam War
2. With reference to the International Workers' Day, consider the following statements:
 1. On May 1, 1886, workers across America launched a strike demanding an eight-hour workday, May 1 was chosen to commemorate the strike.
 2. In India, the first Labour Day celebration was held in Calcutta in 1923 by the Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan.

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. Chlorpyrifos, recently seen in the news, is a:
 - (a) Genetically modified crop
 - (b) Biodegradable plastic additive
 - (c) Chemical insecticide
 - (d) Naturally occurring antimicrobial agent
4. The term "Orange Economy", recently seen in the news, is primarily associated with which of the following?
 - (a) Promotion of solar energy through decentralized rural grids
 - (b) An economy focused on citrus fruit production and export.
 - (c) Cultural and creative industries like films, music, gaming, and design.
 - (d) A model emphasizing mining, construction, and heavy industry.
5. Which one of the following institutions released the report titled as 'Enhancing Competitiveness of MSMEs in India'?
 - (a) Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)
 - (b) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)
 - (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
 - (d) NITI Aayog

6. Operation Hawk, recently seen in the news, is related to:
- (a) A joint military exercise between India and the USA
 - (b) Crackdown on cybercrime networks involved in online child sexual exploitation
 - (c) Anti-narcotics operation launched by the Indian Navy
 - (d) A wildlife protection initiative to monitor endangered bird species
7. The Logistics Performance Index (LPI), recently seen in the news, is published by:
- (a) World Bank
 - (b) International Monetary Fund
 - (c) World Economic Forum
 - (d) World Trade Organization
8. The Repairability Index (RI) is most directly aimed at achieving which of the following objectives?
- (a) Enhancing the performance and longevity of electronic components.
 - (b) Reducing the initial manufacturing cost of electronic devices for consumers.
 - (c) Empowering consumers to make informed choices and promoting sustainability in consumption patterns.
 - (d) Establishing uniform global standards for electronic waste management and recycling processes.
9. Which of the following sports has been included for the first time as a medal sport in the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2025?
- (a) Sepaktakraw
 - (b) Mallakhamb
 - (c) Kalaripayattu
 - (d) Squash
10. With reference to the Human Development Report (2025), consider the following statements:
1. It categorizes countries into three development levels, namely low, medium and high human development.
 2. India is remaining in the medium human development category.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
11. Which Indian city recently received global recognition by joining the WHO's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC)?
- (a) Bengaluru
 - (b) Thiruvananthapuram
 - (c) Chandigarh
 - (d) Kozhikode

- 12.** World Red Cross Day commemorates the birth anniversary of which among the following individuals?
- Florence Nightingale
 - Henry Dunant
 - Nelson Mandela
 - Mother Teresa
- 13.** The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) is defined as:
- The number of maternal deaths per 1,000 live births.
 - The percentage of pregnancies resulting in maternal deaths.
 - The number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.
 - The ratio of maternal deaths to infant deaths.
- 14.** With reference to the Pulitzer Prize, which of the following statements is/are correct?
- It was established in 1917 in the memory of American industrialist Andrew Carnegie.
 - Gobind Behari Lal was the first Indian to win the Pulitzer Prize for journalism in 1937.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 15.** Consider the following statements about the World Press Freedom Index released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF):
- It ranks 180 countries and territories based on the level of freedom available to journalists and media.
 - A score of 100 indicates the worst level of press freedom.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- 16.** Consider the following statements regarding the National Technological Day:
- This day is celebrated to commemorate the discovery of the 'Raman Effect' made by the eminent physicist Sir CV Raman.
 - The theme for National Technological Day is 'Indigenous Technologies for Viksit Bharat'.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- Only 1
 - Only 2
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2

- 17.** Who is credited with pioneering the use of weather balloons in the late 19th century?
- (a) Gaspard-Gustave Coriolis
 - (b) Leon Teisserenc de Bort
 - (c) Alfred Wegener
 - (d) Carl-Gustaf Rossby
- 18.** Operation Keller, recently in the news, is associated with:
- (a) A humanitarian relief mission in flood-affected areas of Assam
 - (b) A counter-terrorism operation in Shopian, Jammu and Kashmir
 - (c) An international naval exercise in the Indian Ocean
 - (d) A cyber-security initiative launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs
- 19.** Which country has recently launched the world's first commercial-scale e-methanol plant in Kasso?
- (a) Germany
 - (b) Japan
 - (c) Sweden
 - (d) Denmark
- 20.** Who established The World Food Prize, often referred to as the "Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture"?
- (a) Dr. Verghese Kurien
 - (b) William Gaud
 - (c) Paul Ehrlich
 - (d) Dr. Norman E. Borlaug
- 21.** Declarations like Brasilia (2015) and Stockholm (2020) are primarily focusing on:
- (a) Artificial Intelligence
 - (b) Road Accidents
 - (c) Food Security
 - (d) Gender Inequality
- 22.** The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) was established as a result of a joint initiative by:
- (a) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and World Health Organization
 - (b) World Bank and the International Court of Arbitration for Sport
 - (c) The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and various governments
 - (d) United Nations and the World Bank
- 23.** Consider the following statements regarding the Jnanpith Award:
1. It is conferred by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
 2. The prize carries a cash award, a citation, and a bronze replica of Vagdevi (Saraswati), the goddess of learning.
- 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.** The 'Statute of Anne (1710)' and 'Berne Convention (1886)' are primarily related to:
- Curbing Greenhouse Gases
 - Eliminating Poverty & Hunger
 - Marine Pollution
 - Issues Related to Copyright
- 25.** With reference to the term "Doxxing", which one of the following statements is correct?
- Posting fake news on social media
 - Hacking into someone's bank account
 - Publishing someone's private or personal information online without consent
 - Spreading malware through emails
- 26.** What does jus sanguinis mean?
- Citizenship based on parental nationality, not place of birth
 - Citizenship based on the place of birth only
 - Citizenship by marriage
 - Citizenship granted by government decree
- 27.** Recently, the term 'Jarosite' was in the news, primarily because of which of the following?
- Coal Deposit
 - Geological Clock
 - Crater on Moon
 - Inflammable Parasite
- 28.** Consider the following statements regarding the International Booker Prize:
- It was originally launched in 2005.
 - The award is given annually for a single book translated into English and published anywhere globally.
 - Its primary objective is to promote the reading of quality fiction from non-English languages.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All three
 - None
- 29.** The Shetty Commission, recently seen in the news, is related to:
- Recommending reforms in police administration
 - Proposing environmental measures for sustainable infrastructure
 - Examining the pay and service conditions of judicial officers
 - Proposing electoral reforms for free and fair elections
- 30.** The Metre Convention, to which India is a signatory, primarily aims to:
- Promote free trade among member countries
 - Standardize physical measurements globally through a common metric system
 - Regulate the global standards of education in science and technology
 - Harmonize taxation policies across international borders

- 31.** Which Indian state recently became the first fully literate state under the ULLAS initiative?
- (a) Kerala
 - (b) Mizoram
 - (c) Himachal Pradesh
 - (d) Sikkim
- 32.** The Budapest Convention is primarily concerned with:
- (a) Environmental protection
 - (b) Intellectual property rights
 - (c) Cybercrime
 - (d) International trade regulations
- 33.** Consider the following statements with reference to Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).
1. It was launched by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
 2. It is a living heritage system inhabited by communities that maintain an intricate relationship with their territory.
- 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
- 34.** With reference to recently launched 'AI Matryoshka' consider the following statements:
1. It has been launched by Amazon as its layering AI models.
 2. Its entire ecosystem is mirroring the structure of Russian nesting dolls (matryoshkas) where each layer supports the next.
- 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.** The World Economic Outlook report, recently seen in the news, is released by:
- (a) World Bank
 - (b) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
 - (c) World Economic Forum (WEF)
 - (d) World Trade Organization (WTO)
- 36.** Who among the following is widely credited with developing and popularizing the theory of experiential learning?
- (a) Howard Gardner
 - (b) David A. Kolb
 - (c) Jean Piaget
 - (d) John Dewey

37. Consider the following statements about the National Florence Nightingale Awards:
1. The award is presented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to recognize excellence in nursing education only.
 2. The award includes a certificate of merit, a cash prize of ₹1,00,000, and a medal.
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

EXPLANATIONS

1. (d)

Agent Orange was a **powerful herbicide used by the United States military** during the Vietnam War as part of **Operation Ranch Hand (1961–1971)**.

- It became **one of the most controversial aspects** of the war due to its devastating health and environmental effects.
 - The manufacturing process of 2,4,5-T **created a dangerous dioxin contaminant called TCDD**, one of the most toxic chemicals.
- The U.S. military used Agent Orange to:
 - **Defoliate forests and jungles** to reduce enemy cover (especially for the Viet Cong).
 - Destroy crops used to feed North Vietnamese forces.
- **Over 20 million gallons of herbicides** were sprayed across South Vietnam, particularly in dense jungles and rural farmlands.
- **Aftermath:**
 - Agent Orange remains a symbol of the war's human and moral cost.
 - Programs by the Vietnamese Red Cross, USAID, and international NGOs are working to support victims and clean up the environment.
 - Many advocate for continued support, justice, and recognition of all those affected.

2. (a)

Statement 1 is correct: Also referred to as **May Day**, in some regions it is observed on the **first Monday of May**.

- The day serves to **acknowledge the social and economic contributions of workers** and to draw attention to the continuing fight for workers' rights and fair labour conditions globally.
- **The origins of International Labour Day** date back to the late **19th-century labour movement in the United States**.
 - On May 1, **1886**, workers across America launched a strike demanding an eight-hour workday, May 1 was chosen to commemorate the strike.

Statement 2 is not correct: In India, the **first Labour Day celebration** was held in **Chennai (then Madras)** in **1923** by the **Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan**.

- **Canada's first Labour Day celebration** took place in **1872**, nearly a decade before the United States officially recognised it.

3. (c)

In News

- At meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the **Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) conventions** in Switzerland, India has opposed the inclusion of the insecticide **Chlorpyrifos** under the **Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)**, citing concerns over food security due to the lack of alternatives.

About: Chlorpyrifos

- It is an insecticide which is a chemical linked to adverse effects on neurodevelopment, reduced birth size, lung and prostate cancer upon chronic exposure.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has classified chlorpyrifos as a moderately hazardous pesticide. The chemical inhibits an enzyme called acetyl cholinesterase, which results in adverse nervous system effects.

4. (c)

Context: At the inaugural WAVES Summit 2025 in Mumbai, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a forceful pitch for the Orange Economy.

What is the Orange Economy?

- Also called the Creative Economy, it's powered by three Cs: Content, Culture, and Creativity.
- It includes everything from films, music, fashion, and design...to digital content, animation, gaming, architecture, and cultural tourism.
- The term was coined by former Colombian President Iván Duque and Minister Felipe Buitrago.
- India's creative economy already contributes \$30 billion to GDP, employing 8% of our workforce. With exports crossing \$11 billion, even small-town YouTubers are going global.
- To boost this momentum, the government has announced a \$1 billion creative economy fund, and is setting up the Indian Institute of Creative Technology in Mumbai to skill the next generation.

5. (d)

In News: Recently, the **NITI Aayog**, in collaboration with the Institute for Competitiveness (IFC), has released a comprehensive report titled '**Enhancing Competitiveness of MSMEs in India**'.

- It provides a detailed blueprint for unlocking the potential of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through systemic reforms in financing, skilling, innovation, and market access.
- According to it, the share of micro and small enterprises accessing credit through scheduled banks increased from 14% to 20%, while medium enterprises saw a rise from 4% to 9% between 2020 and 2024.
- However, only 19% of MSME credit demand was met formally by FY21, leaving an estimated ₹80 lakh crore unmet.

6. (b)

Context

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) launched Operation Hawk to successfully dismantle the cybercrime networks involving online child sexual exploitation with international linkages.

About

- Earlier, the CBI had launched **Operation CARBON** in 2021 and **Operation Megh Chakra** in 2022 to trace accused of online child sexual exploitation cases with international linkages.

7. (a)

Context

- PM Modi said that Coastal States and port cities will become key growth centres for a developed India, during the commissioning of the Vizhinjam International Seaport in Kerala.

Status of port development in India

- As of 2024–25, India ranks among the top 20 countries in global shipbuilding.
- Two Indian ports, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and Mundra Port, are among the top 30 globally.
- As per the **World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI), 2023** India moved up to 22nd Rank in the Global Ranking in International Shipments category and the overall 38th Rank in Logistics Performance Index score.
- The Vizhinjam Seaport is India's first dedicated transshipment port, aimed at reducing dependence on foreign ports as 75% of India's transshipment occurs abroad currently.
- A shipbuilding and repair cluster is being developed in Kochi under the Sagarmala initiative.

8. (c)

The Repairability Index (RI) is a standardized, self-declared score by Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) that indicates how easily a product (like smartphones or tablets) can be disassembled, repaired, and maintained. It is based on 6 core parameters, such as ease of disassembly, availability of spare parts, access to repair documentation, product-specific technical challenges, software support, and spare part pricing.

The RI covers 11 key components commonly prone to damage or malfunction, including the battery, screen, camera, motherboard, and charging port. OEMs assign a score on a five-point numeric scale, where a higher score indicates better repairability and easier maintenance. The RI is intended to **empower consumers** to make informed purchase decisions and to encourage manufacturers to design products that are easier to repair.

9. (a)

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the **7th edition of the Khelo India Youth Games**.

Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2025

- It is a flagship event of the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** and is being held from May 4 to 15, with **Bihar playing host** across five cities - Patna, Rajgir, Gaya, Bhagalpur and Begusarai.
 - New Delhi** will stage shooting, gymnastics and track cycling events.
- The 7th edition has the mascot "**Gajsimha**"—symbolizing an elephant's power and a lion's heart—draws inspiration from **Pala dynasty carvings**.
- It will feature 27 sports and for the **first time, esports** has been included as a demonstration sport. Also, for the first time in the KIYG program, **sepaktakraw** has been included as a medal sport.

10. (b)

In News: Recently, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** released the **Human Development Report (HDR) for 2025**, highlighting India's progress in life expectancy, education, and income levels.

Statement 1 is not correct

- Human Development Report categorizes countries into **four development levels** based on their Human Development Index (HDI) values:
 - Low Human Development:** HDI value below 0.550
 - Medium Human Development:** HDI value between 0.550 and 0.699
 - High Human Development:** HDI value between 0.700 and 0.799
 - Very High Human Development:** HDI value 0.800 and above

Statement 2 is correct

- India** improved its HDI value from 0.676 in 2022 (133th) to **0.685 in 2023 (130th)**, remaining in the medium human development category.
- India's HDI value has increased by over 53% since 1990, growing faster than both the global and South Asian averages.

11. (d)**Context**

- Kozhikode city has received global recognition by becoming a member of the World Health Organization's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC).

What is an Age-Friendly City?

- An age-friendly city ensures that urban environments, infrastructure, and services are accessible and inclusive for older adults. It addresses challenges related to:
 - Accessible public spaces (parks, transportation, buildings),
 - Affordable and suitable housing, healthcare access and social support,
 - Age-friendly communication tools,
 - Participation in community activities.

12. (b)**Context**

- World Red Cross Day — also known as Red Crescent Day — is observed every year on **8 May**, a tradition that began in **1948**.

About

- The day marks the birth anniversary of **Henry Dunant** (1828–1910), the founder of the **International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement** and the first recipient of the **Nobel Peace Prize**.
- Dunant was profoundly influenced by the horrors he witnessed at the **Battle of Solferino** in 1859 between France and Austria, where he assisted **40,000** wounded alongside local residents.
- Founded in **1863**, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has grown into the **largest humanitarian network in the world** — present in **191 countries** and supported by more than **16 million volunteers**.
- The **theme** for this year is “Keeping Humanity Alive “ – a call to celebrate those who give their time, and sometimes their lives, to ease the suffering of others and protect their inherent human dignity.

13. (c)

The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) is defined as the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. It is a key indicator used to assess the safety of pregnancy and childbirth in a population. A

maternal death refers to the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management. The ratio uses 100,000 as the base instead of 1,000 because maternal deaths are relatively rare compared to live births, and this scaling allows for more precise and internationally comparable data.

14. (b)

Context

- Columbia University has announced the 2025 Pulitzer Prizes, awarded on the recommendation of the Pulitzer Prize Board.

Pulitzer Award

- The Pulitzer Award was established in **1917**, named in honour of newspaper publisher **Joseph Pulitzer**.
- **Significance:** It is considered the highest honor in American journalism and one of the most respected awards in literature and the arts.

First Recipients

- **Herbert Bayard Swope of the New York World** received the first Pulitzer Prize for Reporting for his series titled "Inside the German Empire," which provided an in-depth look into wartime Germany.
- **Gobind Behari Lal:** First from India to win the Pulitzer Prize for journalism in 1937. He was a member of the Ghadar Party in America.

15. (a)

Context

- **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** has released the **World Press Freedom Index**.

About

- The Index is based on a **score ranging from 0 to 100** that is assigned to each country or territory, with **100 being the best possible score** (the highest possible level of press freedom) and **0 the worst**.
- It is to compare the level of freedom **enjoyed by journalists and media in 180 countries and territories**.

Findings

- **India ranked 151st** with a total score of **32.96** in 2025, moving up 8 places from **159th last year**.
- **Top-ranked: Norway** retained the 1st position, followed by other Scandinavian and European nations, benefiting from strong legal protections and diverse media ecosystems.
- **Bottom-ranked: Eritrea** ranked 180th (last), followed by countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia.

16. (d)

Context: May 11 marked the **27th National Technological Day of India**.

Statement 1 is incorrect: National Technology Day is celebrated on May 11 to commemorate the successful **Pokhran nuclear tests** conducted in 1998, not the discovery of the Raman Effect. The Raman Effect is celebrated on February 28 as National Science Day.

Statement 2 is incorrect: The **theme for National Technology Day 2025** is "YANTRA – Yugantar for Advancing New Technology, Research & Acceleration", not Indigenous Technologies for Viksit Bharat.

17. (b)

Context

- In the wake of budget cuts by the USA, a Silicon Valley startup will soon start to replace the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) weather balloons with AI-powered alternatives.

Advent of weather balloons

- French meteorologist **Leon Teisserenc de Bort** pioneered the use of weather balloons in the late **19th century**.
- Initially, these balloons carried **meteorographs**, which recorded pressure, temperature, and humidity.
 - After bursting at high altitudes, the instruments gently descended to Earth, where data would be recovered.
- The **1930s** saw a revolution with the invention of **radiosondes** — small instruments that could transmit data in real time to ground stations.
 - Over time, these devices became lighter and more efficient, equipped with longer battery life and integrated with GPS for accurate location and wind tracking.

18. (b)

Context

- **Under Operation Keller**, the Indian Army successfully **neutralised three hardcore Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists** in the **Keller area of Shopian, Jammu and Kashmir**.

About

- This operation is part of India's intensified counter-terrorism campaign and comes amid the country's **ongoing and successful Operation Sindoor**, which targets terror infrastructure beyond its borders.

What is Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)?

- Lashkar-e-Taiba is a **Pakistan-based terror outfit** founded in the late 1980s by **Hafiz Saeed**, who is currently imprisoned in Pakistan for "terror financing."
- Originally focused on **destabilising Jammu and Kashmir**, LeT has since broadened its agenda to **spread terror across India**, advocating for **Islamic rule over the entire subcontinent**.
- Recognised as **one of South Asia's most dangerous terror outfits**, LeT has been officially designated as a **terrorist organisation** by: India, The United Nations, and several countries including the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada.

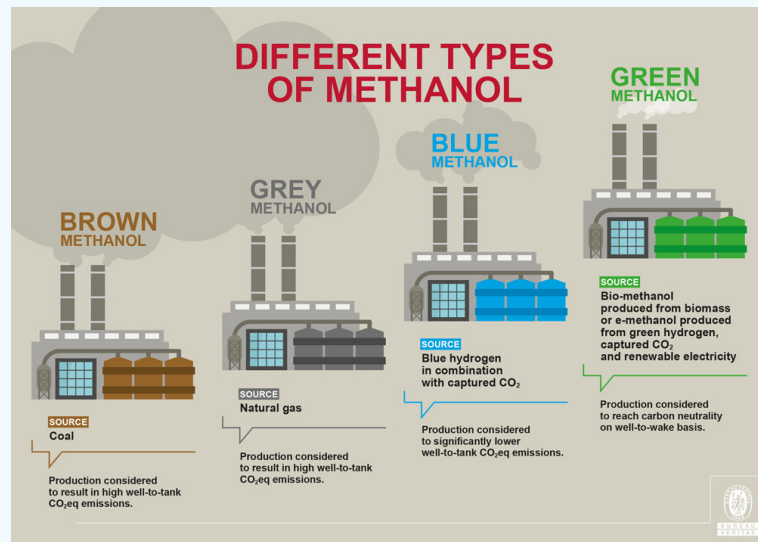
19. (d)

In News

- Denmark has launched the world's first commercial-scale e-methanol plant in Kasso.
 - Developed by European Energy (Denmark) and Mitsui (Japan), the plant will produce 42,000 metric tonnes of e-methanol annually.

What is Methanol?

- **About:** Methanol (CH_3OH) is a light, volatile, and flammable liquid alcohol. Conventionally produced from natural gas and coal, it is used in chemicals, fuels, and plastics.



- **Applications:** Used in shipping fuel, plastic production, manufacturing fuel cells etc.

20. (d)

Context

- Brazilian microbiologist **Mariangela Hungria**, has been named the 2025 World Food Prize Laureate.

World Food Prize

- The World Food Prize is the **foremost international award** recognizing the accomplishments of individuals who have **advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food** in the world.
- The award was **established in 1986** by Nobel Peace Prize laureate **Dr. Norman E. Borlaug**.
 - It is often referred to as the **Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture**.
- **The \$500,000 award** is formally presented at the **Laureate Award Ceremony** in mid-October, on or around World Food Day.

21. (b)

In News: India is at a crucial juncture in mobility transformation, where economic growth and urbanisation bring both opportunities and challenges to road safety.

- **Brasilia Declaration (2015):** It defined the urgent measures needed to achieve the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**'s ambitious target (**Target 3.6**) to halve road traffic deaths by the end of this decade.
- **United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety (2021–2030):** It aims to **halve deaths** related to road accidents by 2030.
 - It aligns with the **Stockholm Declaration (2020)**.

22. (c)

Context

- National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) India with support from the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, hosted the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Intelligence & Investigations (I&I) Workshop in New Delhi.

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)

- WADA is a **Swiss private law, not-for-profit Foundation**. WADA was established in **1999** as an international independent agency to lead a collaborative worldwide movement for doping-free sport.

- It was created as a result of a joint initiative by the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** and various governments.
- **Headquarters:** Montreal, Canada
- **Seat:** Lausanne, Switzerland

23. (b)

Context: The President of India, Droupadi Murmu conferred the 58th Jnanpith Award.

About Jnanpith Award (also spelled Gyanpeeth Award)

- It is **India's highest literary honor, instituted in 1961** by the **Bharatiya Jnanpith**.
 - **Bharatiya Jnanpith** is a literary and research organization founded by **Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain and Smt. Rama Jain**.
- It is awarded for the work in **22 languages** recognized by the Constitution of India and, from 2013, in the English language.
 - Once a language receives the award, it becomes **ineligible for the next 3 years**.
- It is **awarded annually** to an Indian author for their outstanding contribution to literature.
- **The prize carries** a cash award, a citation, and a bronze replica of Vagdevi (Saraswati), the goddess of learning.
- The first recipient of the award was the **Malayalam writer G. Sankara Kurup** who received the award in 1965 for his collection of poems, **Odakkuzhal (The Bamboo Flute)**.

24. (d)

In News: Generative AI does not merely reproduce copyrighted works but trains on them, raising concerns about unauthorized usage, unlike previous technologies.

- **Statute of Anne (1710):** It was the **world's first copyright law** enacted in **England**, that introduced the **concept of the author of a work** being the owner of its copyright, and laid out fixed terms of protection.
 - It established **fixed terms of protection** and required registration at Stationers' Hall.
 - It also led to the **Copyright Act of 1790 in the United States**.
- **Berne Convention (1886):** It created **international copyright standards**, ensuring mutual recognition of copyrights across nations, and eliminated the need for separate registrations in different countries.
 - It remains **in force to this day**, and continues to provide the basis for **international copyright law**.

25. (c)

Context

- Despite the growing prevalence of cyberbullying in India, existing laws remain inadequate in curbing the menace.

What is Cyberbullying?

- Cyberbullying involves the use of digital platforms to harass, threaten, humiliate, or target individuals. It can take many forms such as:
 - **Trolling:** Repeated online harassment, often by anonymous users.
 - **Online Stalking and Hate Speech:** Persistent surveillance and abusive speech targeted at individuals or communities.
 - **Doxxing** is a form of online harassment where an individual's personal or private information—such as phone number, address, workplace, or other identifying details—is published on the internet without their consent. The intent is usually to intimidate, threaten, or harm the individual.

26. (a)

Context

- The US Supreme Court heard arguments in a case concerning an executive order issued by the US President, denying birthright citizenship to children born in the US to parents who are in the country illegally or temporarily.

What is Birthright Citizenship?

- Birthright citizenship is the legal principle that a **person acquires citizenship automatically at birth**, based on the place of birth or the nationality of parents.
 - **Jus soli (right of the soil):** Citizenship is granted to anyone born within the territory of the country, regardless of parental citizenship. It is followed by the United States.
 - **Jus sanguinis (right of blood):** Citizenship is granted based on parental nationality, not place of birth. It is followed by India.

27. (b)

In News: A recent study by Indian researchers suggests that **jarosite** can record events up to 25,000 years old, offering a new method for understanding Martian history.

- **Jarosite** is a yellow-brown mineral **composed of potassium, iron, and sulfate**, that has emerged as a **potential geological clock for dating events on Mars**.

28. (b)

In News: Writer Banu Mushtaq's 'Heart Lamp' book, translated by Deepa Bhasi, became the first Kannada title to win the International Booker Prize in London.

Statement 1 is correct: The International Booker Prize was indeed launched in 2005 under the name Man Booker International Prize. It was renamed in 2019 after the Man Group withdrew sponsorship.

Statement 2 is not correct: It is an annual literary prize awarded for a single book that is translated into English and **published in the UK or Ireland not globally**.

Statement 3 is correct: This is the core mission of the prize: to encourage more reading and recognition of international fiction, especially from non-English literary cultures, by bringing them to English-speaking audiences through translation.

29. (c)

Context

- The Supreme Court restored the condition that a minimum of three years practice as an advocate is required for candidates applying to entry-level judicial service examinations.

Background

- The issue dates back to the **14th Law Commission Report, 1958**, which proposed **3–5 years of experience** as a requirement for lower subordinate judges in every State.
- For higher judiciary, an **All India Judicial Services (AIJS)**, a centralised recruitment system for judges, was proposed. The AIJS required no practical experience.
- **The Supreme Court's 1992 ruling** in All India Judges' Association vs Union of India supported allowing fresh graduates in the AIJS.
 - However, in a **1993** review, the SC reversed its stance.
- The **Shetty Commission, 1996**, later found that this rule deterred bright talent and in **2002**, the SC scrapped the 3-year rule, admitting that legal practice was not attracting the best minds to the judiciary.

30. (b)

In News

- The **Department of Consumer Affairs** marked **World Metrology Day 2025** commemorating 150 years since the signing of the **Metre Convention (1875)**.

About Metre Convention

Aspect	Details
Origin	Signed on May 20, 1875, amended in 1921
Purpose	To establish a globally unified and continually evolving metric system
Institution Created	International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM)
Role of BIPM	Oversees scientific accuracy, standardization, and global traceability in measurements
Significance	Ensures global uniformity in measurements—vital for science, trade, tech, and safety
Membership	64 Member States + 37 Associate States (India is a Member State)

31. (b)

Context: Mizoram has achieved a significant milestone, becoming the first fully literate state in India under the ULLAS initiative.

ULLAS - Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (New India Literacy Programme)

- It is a **centrally sponsored scheme** (2022–2027) aligned with **NEP 2020**, aimed at educating adults aged **15+ who missed formal schooling**.
- It has five components- Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Critical Life Skills, Basic Education, Vocational Skills and Continuing Education.
- It aims to **make Bharat - Jan Jan Saakshar** and is based on the spirit of Kartavya Bodh and is being implemented on volunteerism.

32. (c)

Context

- Recently, the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has launched the **Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)** as part of the **Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP)** to safeguard financial systems and telecom infrastructure.

Cyber Fraud in India

- It has become a growing concern in India, with **financial scams, identity theft, and digital crimes** increasing at an alarming rate. As digital transactions expand, so do the risks associated with cyber fraud.

Do you know?

- Budapest Convention on Cybercrime (Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime)** is the **first international treaty** specifically addressing crime committed via the internet and other computer networks.
- It includes Hacking, Phishing, Identity Theft, Cyber Espionage, and Cyberbullying etc.

33. (b)

In News: New sites from China, Brazil, China, Mexico and Spain recognized as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems.

Statement 1 is not correct: Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) was launched by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in **2002** to address **threats to traditional farming systems**, such as climate change and biodiversity loss.

Statement 2 is correct: Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) aims to **balance conservation**, sustainable adaptation, and socioeconomic development by supporting farmers, promoting traditional knowledge, and enhancing market opportunities. There are living heritage systems inhabited by communities that maintain an intricate relationship with their territory.

- These evolving and resilient systems are characterized by remarkable agrobiodiversity, traditional knowledge, invaluable cultures, and landscapes, sustainably managed by farmers, herders, fisherfolk, and forest people in ways that support their livelihoods and food security.

34. (b)

Statement 1 is not correct: Google's annual I/O developer conference in 2025 showcased **AI Matryoshka**.

- **AI Matryoshka** is **Google's strategic framework** for **layering AI models** and capabilities across its **entire ecosystem**.

Statement 2 is correct: Its **entire ecosystem** is mirroring the structure of **Russian nesting dolls (matryoshkas)** where **each layer supports the next**.

- AI Matryoshka represents **Google's strategic vision** to interlace AI throughout its **entire product and service lineup**.
- By nesting AI functionalities within each layer of its ecosystem, Google aims to **deliver seamless, intelligent experiences** that adapt to **users' needs across various platforms and devices**.

35. (b)

Context: India has overtaken Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy, and we are not done yet.

About

- In just 2.5 to 3 years, India is set to overtake Germany and become the third-largest economy in the world.
- Back in 2015, India's GDP was just \$2.1 trillion. Today? It's more than doubled in just a decade—outpacing all G7 countries, and every other G20 and BRICS nation.
- According to the **IMF's World Economic Outlook**, India remains the **world's fastest-growing major economy**—And the **only one** expected to grow over **6%** for the next two years.
- Meanwhile, Germany's growth is projected at 0% in 2025, and just 0.9% in 2026. It is expected to be the hardest-hit economy in Europe due to the ongoing global trade war.
- The US—the world's largest economy—is pegged at \$30.5 trillion for 2025, while China, the second largest, is around \$19.2 trillion.

36. (b)

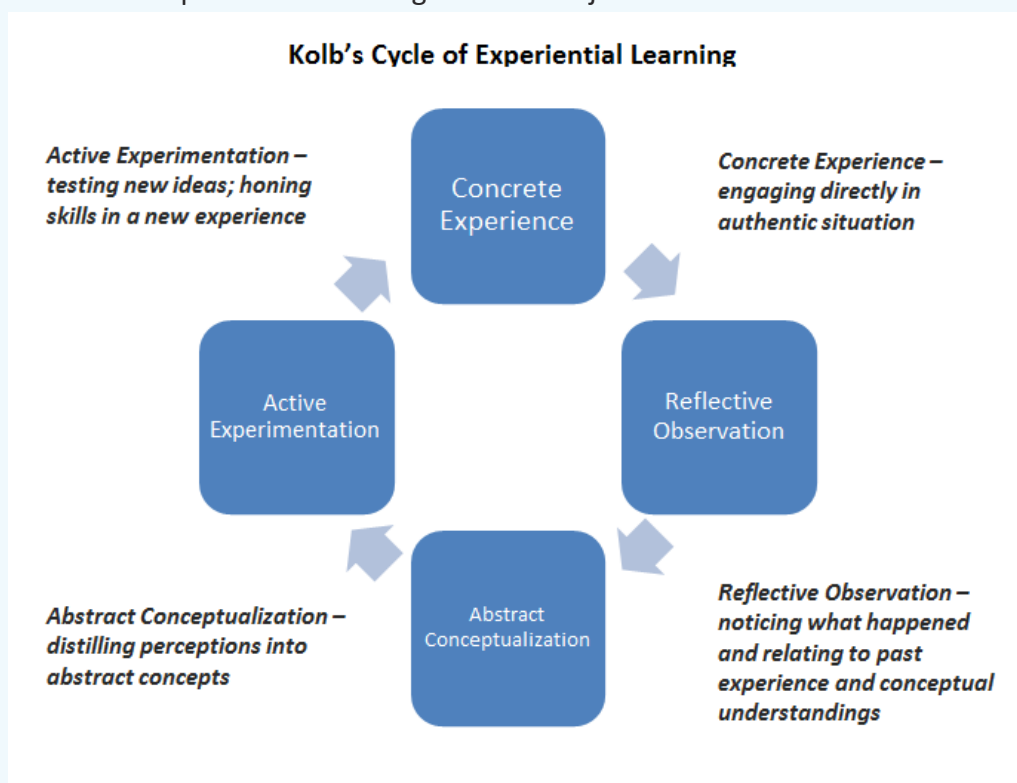
Context

- The **current education system** needs to **integrate experiential learning**.

What is Experiential Learning?

- **Experiential learning** is a method of **learning through direct experience, reflection, and application**.
- **David A. Kolb** is widely credited with developing and popularizing the **theory of experiential learning**.

- Instead of just reading about a concept or listening to a lecture, learners actively engage in activities that allow them to **“learn by doing.”**
- The focus is on the process of learning rather than just the outcome.



37. (b)

Context

- The President of India presented the **National Florence Nightingale Awards 2025** to nurses at a ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

About the Award

- Named after Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, it was instituted in **1973** by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**, Government of India.
- It recognizes **meritorious services of nurses and nursing professionals** who contribute significantly to society.
- A total of **15 awards** are given in the category of Registered Auxiliary Nurses & Midwife, Registered Nurses and Midwife and Registered Lady Visitor.
- **Eligible recipients** include nursing personnel working in Central/State Governments, Union Territories, and Voluntary Organizations, whether in hospitals, community settings, educational institutions, or administration.
- **Each award consists** of a Certificate of Merit, Cash Award of Rs.1,00,000/- and a medal.

■■■■