



Educrat IAS
ACADEMY



CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ

**MCQs on important
news of the day
from Hindu &
Indian Express.**

AUGUST 2021

1) Which of the following countries did not opt for 'Apology diplomacy'?

a) USA

b) New Zealand

c) France

d) Canada

Explanation: French President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday recognised his country's role in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, from backing a genocidal regime to ignoring warnings of the impending massacres.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern on Sunday formally apologised for police crackdowns in the 1970s that "unfairly targeted" the country's Pacific community.

The infamous "dawn raids" were carried out by officers and immigration officials, often accompanied by dogs, to arrest and deport individuals who had overstayed their work visas.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau offered an apology in the House of Commons or lower house of his country's Parliament on May 18 almost 102 years after the Komagata Maru shipping incident, when the then government in the North American country turned away more than 300 Indians desirous of a better life there.

USA has not offered any apology for the Nuclear attack on Japan.

2) Consider following statement about Ashwagandha.

1. In Covid 19 treatment, Ashwagandha used to target the main coronavirus's

enzyme, known as the Main protease or Mpro.

2. Ashwagandha also boosts brain function and lowers blood sugar, and helps fight symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Correct statement is/are

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) None of the above

Explanation: Ashwagandha also boosts brain function and lowers blood sugar, and helps fight symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Researchers from IIT-Delhi and AIST have used Ashwagandha and propolis based compounds to target the main coronavirus's enzyme, known as the Main protease or Mpro.

The Ministry of Ayush has collaborated with the U.K.'s London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) to conduct a study on 'Ashwagandha' for promoting recovery from COVID-19.

'Ashwagandha' (*Withania somnifera*), commonly known as 'Indian winter cherry', is a traditional Indian herb that boosts energy, reduces stress and makes the immune system stronger. It is an easily accessible, over-the-counter nutritional supplement in the U.K. and has a proven safety profile.

3) Wildlife organisation of Odisha's Forest and Environment Department has decided to do DNA profiling of the leopards in the state. In this context consider the following statements:

1. Leopard is a Schedule I animal under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
2. Karnataka has maximum population of leopards in India.
3. It is listed as critically endangered as per IUCN Red List.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The leopard (*Panthera pardus*) is one of the five extant species in the genus *Panthera*, a member of the cat family, *Felidae*.

It occurs in a wide range in sub-Saharan Africa, in some parts of Western and Central Asia, Southern Russia, and on the Indian subcontinent to Southeast and East Asia.

It is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List because leopard populations are threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation, and are declining in large parts of the global range.

The Indian leopard is distributed in India, Nepal, Bhutan and parts of Pakistan. It inhabits tropical rainforests, dry deciduous forests, temperate forests and northern coniferous forests but does not occur in the mangrove forests of the Sundarbans.

Madhya Pradesh has maximum population of leopard followed by Karnataka and Maharashtra.

It is a Schedule I animal under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

4) The Maguri Motapung Wetland is located in:

- a) Mizoram
- b) Nagaland
- c) Arunachal Pradesh

d) Assam

Explanation: Maguri Motapung Wetland is located near to Dibru-Saikhowa National Park and Motapung Village of Tinsukia district in Assam. Maguri Motapung Wetland or Beel serves as natural home to wildlife and provide a source of livelihood to the local communities.

The Maguri Motapung Beel is located in the south bank of the Dibru River and it connects Dibru River through a small channel and finally meets Brahmaputra River.

It is a natural habitat to many varieties of birds. The lake is an important habitat for over 110 resident and migratory bird species, including eight listed as threatened on the IUCN Red List, such as the Swamp grass babbler, the ferruginous duck, the white-winged wood duck and the falcated duck.

The fire incident in Baghjan oil field that happened in the year 2020 damaged the Maguri-Motapung Wetland and Dibru-Saikhowa Biosphere Reserve.

5) Consider the following pair of military exercises with India

Military exercise - Participating country

1. Indra - Russia

- 2. Shakti - Nepal
- 3. Ekuverin - Maldives

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The 12th Edition of Indo-Russia joint military Exercise INDRA will be held at Volgograd, Russia in August 2021.
Military exercise - Participating country

- Indra - Russia
- Shakti - France
- Ekuverin - Maldives
- Surya Kiran – Nepal

6) Consider the following statements regarding International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

- 1. It acts as an advisory body of the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.
- 2. It was established by UNESCO for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: ICOMOS is an Advisory Body of the World

Heritage Committee for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO. As such, it reviews the nominations of cultural world heritage and ensures the conservation status of properties.

Statement 2 is incorrect: ICOMOS works for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places. It is the only global non-government organisation of this kind, which is dedicated to promoting the application of theory, methodology, and scientific techniques to the conservation of the architectural and archaeological heritage.

7) Consider the following statements regarding International Seabed Authority (ISA)

- 1. It was established by the United Nations Convention on the 'Law of the Sea' (UNCLOS)
- 2. The main activity of ISA is to regulate the exploration of poly-metallic nodules.
- 3. India is not a member of ISA

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The ISA was established in 1982 by UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the 'Law of the Sea') and is an autonomous intergovernmental body with 167 members.

ISA is the institution through which Parties to UNCLOS design and control all the

mineral-related resources activities in the area.

The main activity of ISA is to regulate the exploration of poly-metallic nodules.

India actively participates in the work of the International Seabed Authority. India was re-elected as a member of ISA in 2020.

8) Consider the following statements regarding Biocentrism or Ecocentrism

1. The philosophy of this concept holds that the natural environment has its own set of rights apart from the rights of humans.

2. Indian Constitution explicitly provides Rights of Nature

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Biocentrism: The philosophy of biocentrism or ecocentrism holds that the natural environment has its own set of rights, which is independent of its ability to be exploited by or to be useful to humans.

The Constitution of India declares that it is applicable to the territory of India. While making such a declaration, it very obviously refers to humans within that territory and its predominant aim was to give them rights, impose obligations and regulate human affairs.

But, the Constitution is significantly silent on any explicitly stated, binding legal

obligations we owe to our fellow species and to the environment that sustains us.

9) Which two space agencies collaborated to launch the mission called "NISAR"?

a) ROSCOSMOS and NASA

b) NASA and CNSA

c) ISRO and ROSCOSMOS

d) ISRO and NASA

Explanation: NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) which is a joint mission of ISRO and NASA is proposed to be launched in 2023. It is focusing on making global measurement of land surface changes using advanced radar imaging. The information was given by Jitendra Singh, Earth Sciences Minister.

NISAR Satellite will be the first satellite to use dual frequencies. It will be used for remote sensing. It will be also used for global observations over all land masses including the Polar cryosphere and the Indian Ocean region i.e. it will help in understanding the natural processes of the Earth.

10) With reference to the e-RUPI, consider the following statements:

1. e-RUPI is a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payment.

2. It has been developed by National Payments Corporation of India on its UPI platform, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.

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

Explanation: PM Modi will launch e-RUPI, a person and purpose specific digital payment solution on 2nd August 2021.

e-RUPI is a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payment.

It is a QR code or SMS string-based e-Voucher, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries.

The users of this seamless one-time payment mechanism will be able to redeem the voucher without a card, digital payments app or internet banking access, at the service provider.

It has been developed by National Payments Corporation of India on its UPI platform, in collaboration with the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and National Health Authority.

e-RUPI connects the sponsors of the services with the beneficiaries and service providers in a digital manner without any physical interface.

Hence both statements are correct.

11) In the context of insolvency and bankruptcy resolution in India, which of the following statement best describes the concept of Waterfall mechanism?

a) It refers to the minimum threshold of capital for a corporate for initiating insolvency proceeding against it.

b) It refers to the order of priority for repayment to creditors in the event of a liquidation.

c) It refers to those cases of insolvencies where the creditors make a windfall gain from the insolvency proceeds.

d) It refers to the mechanism where the promoters of the corporates are barred from participating in the insolvency proceedings.

Explanation: The waterfall mechanism under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code outlines the order of priority for repayment to creditors in the event of a liquidation. Under this, secured creditors have to be paid fully before any payments can be made to unsecured financial creditors who in turn have priority over operational creditors.

If any money is recovered after the dissolution of the CD (Corporate Debtors), the same may be distributed as per waterfall in section 53 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

12) Consider following statements about Global Hunger Index.

1. There has been growth in India's ranking in the last 5 years showing India is rightly mitigating its hunger issues.

2. Global Hunger Index 2020 has been published by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Correct statement is/are

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) None of the above

Explanation: The Union Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ms. SadhviNiranjanJyoti in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha

today informed that the India's ranking in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 brought out by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe was 80, 97, 100, 103, 102 and 94 respectively.

13) With reference to the 'net zero' carbon targets, consider the following statements:

1. Net-zero, which is also referred to as carbon-neutrality, does not mean that a country would bring down its emissions to zero.
2. One way by which carbon can be absorbed is by creating carbon sinks.

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

Explanation: Independent charitable organisation Oxfam has said that 'net zero' carbon targets that many countries have announced may be a "dangerous distraction" from the priority of cutting carbon emissions.

"Land-hungry 'net zero' schemes could force an 80 per cent rise in global food prices and more hunger while allowing rich nations and corporates to continue "dirty business-as-usual," Oxfam has said in a new report titled "Tightening the Net".

The report says that if the challenge of change is tackled only by way of planting more trees, then about 1.6 billion hectares of new forests would be required

to remove the world's excess carbon emissions by the year 2050.

Net-zero, which is also referred to as carbon-neutrality, does not mean that a country would bring down its emissions to zero.

That would be gross-zero, which means reaching a state where there are no emissions at all, a scenario hard to comprehend.

Therefore, net-zero is a state in which a country's emissions are compensated by absorption and removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

One way by which carbon can be absorbed is by creating carbon sinks.

In 2019, the New Zealand government passed the Zero Carbon Act, which committed the country to zero carbon emissions by 2050 or sooner, as part of the country's attempts to meet its Paris climate accord commitments.

In the same year, the UK's parliament passed legislation requiring the government to reduce the UK's net emissions of greenhouse gases by 100 per cent relative to 1990 levels by the year 2050.

More recently, US president Joe Biden announced that the country will cut its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

Further, John Kerry, who is US's climate envoy and considered one of the chief architects of the Paris Climate agreement, launched a bipartisan organisation called World War Zero in 2019 to bring together unlikely allies on climate change and with the goal of reaching net-zero carbon emissions in the country by 2050.

The European Union too, has a similar plan, called "Fit for 55", the European Commission has asked all of its 27 member countries to cut emissions by 55 per cent below 1990 levels by 2030.

Last year, China also announced that it would become net-zero by the year 2060 and that it would not allow its emissions to peak beyond what they are in 2030.

Hence both statements are correct.

14) Which of the following are objectives of 'Sabki Yojna Sabka Vikas'?

1. Strengthening of elected representatives and Self Help Groups.
2. Evidence based assessment of progress made in 2020-21 and proposals for 2021-22 in all 29 subjects of XI Schedule.
3. Preparation of inclusive, participatory and evidence based Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) for 2021-22.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Government launched 'Sabki Yojna Sabka Vikas' campaign for inclusive and holistic preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).

Under Article 243 G of Constitution, Panchayats have been mandated for preparation and implementation of plans for economic development and social justice.

With this aim, People's Plan Campaign titled 'Sabki Yojna Sabka Vikas', for

inclusive and holistic preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) was launched from 2nd October, 2020 to 31st January, 2021 as was done during 2018 and 2019.

In this endeavor, convergence was sought with all Departments relating to 29 devolved subjects listed in XI Schedule of the Constitution.

The objectives of 'Sabki Yojna Sabka Vikas' broadly include

strengthening of elected representatives and Self Help Groups,

evidence based assessment of progress made in 2020-21 and proposals for 2021-22 in all 29 subjects of XI Schedule,

public disclosure on Schemes, finances etc. and

the preparation of inclusive, participatory and evidence based GPDP for 2021-22 through structured Gram Sabha involving front line workers/ supervisors of all 29 sectors of XI schedule.

Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.

15) With reference to the Governor's power to pardon, consider the following statements:

1. Section 433A of Code of Criminal Procedure mandates that a prisoner's sentence can be remitted only after 14 years of jail.

2. Section 433A of the Code of Criminal Procedure affects the constitutional power conferred on the President/Governor to grant pardon under Articles 72 or 161 of the Constitution.

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

Explanation: The Supreme Court held that the Governor of a State can pardon prisoners, including those on death row, even before they have served a minimum 14 years of prison sentence.

In fact, the Governor's power to pardon overrides a provision in the Code of Criminal Procedure — Section 433A — which mandates that a prisoner's sentence can be remitted only after 14 years of jail

Section 433A of the Code cannot and does not in any way affect the constitutional power conferred on the President/Governor to grant pardon under Articles 72 or 161 of the Constitution.

If the prisoner has not undergone 14 years or more of actual imprisonment, the Governor has a power to grant pardon. Such power is in exercise of the power of the sovereign, though the Governor is bound to act on the aid and advice of the State Government.

In fact, the court noted that the sovereign power of a Governor to pardon a prisoner under Article 161 is actually exercised by the State government and not the Governor on his own.

The advice of the appropriate government binds the Head of the State, Justice Gupta observed in the judgment which referred to the Supreme Court's Constitution

Bench judgment in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case on the power of remission.

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

16) With reference to the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021, consider the following statements:

1. According to the bill Search-cum-Selection Committee for tribunals other than State Administrative Tribunals to be headed by the Chief Justice of India or a Judge nominated by him
2. The Chairperson and Member of a Tribunal shall not be eligible for reappointment

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

Explanation: The Lok Sabha passed the Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2021. The Bill replaces a similar Ordinance promulgated in April 2021.

The Bill provides for:

Uniform terms and conditions of service for Chairperson and Members of various tribunals, including the following, namely:

Search-cum-Selection Committee for tribunals other than State Administrative Tribunals to be headed by the Chief Justice of India or a Judge nominated by him;

Search-cum-Selection Committee for the State Administrative Tribunal to be

headed by the Chief Justice of the High Court of the concerned State;

age of retirement to be seventy years for Chairperson and sixty-seven years for a Member;

the Chairperson and Member of a Tribunal shall be eligible for reappointment.

Abolition of tribunals or authorities under various Acts by amending

the Cinematograph Act, 1952,

the Copyrights Act, 1957,

the Customs Act, 1962,

the Patents Act, 1970,

the Airport Authority of India Act, 1994,

the Trade Marks Act, 1999,

the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999,

the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001,

the Control of National Highways (Land and Traffic) Act, 2002;

Transfer of all cases pending before such tribunals or authorities to the Commercial Court or the High Court, as the case may be, on the appointed date;

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

17) India recently assumed the Presidency of United Nations Security Council (UNSC). In this context consider the following statements:

1. India now can veto on resolution seeking admission of new member states to the United Nations.

2. UNSC is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN).

Under the United Nations Charter, the functions and powers of the Security Council are:

to maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;

to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction;

to recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;

to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments;

to determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;

to call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression;

to take military action against an aggressor;

to recommend the admission of new Members;

to exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in “strategic areas”;

to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.

The UNSC is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions on member states.

The Security Council consists of fifteen members, of which five are permanent: the People’s Republic of China, the French Republic, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

Only permanent members can veto any substantive resolution, including those on the admission of new member states to the United Nations or nominees for the office of Secretary-General.

Unlike permanent members of the council, the non-permanent members do not have veto power. However, they have “collective right of veto” — any resolution of the UNSC has to be passed by at least seven non-permanent members even if all the permanent members support it. Since India is a non-permanent member of UNSC for two years it cannot individually veto on resolutions.

The remaining ten members are elected on a regional basis to serve a term of two years. The body’s presidency rotates monthly among its members. At present, the non-permanent members are Estonia, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Niger, Norway, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam.

During India’s UNSC Presidency, it will:

Decide the UN body’s agenda for the month and coordinate important meetings on a range of issues.

Organise key events in three major areas of maritime security, peacekeeping and counter-terrorism.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the first Indian PM to preside over a meeting of the UNSC.

18) Which of the following statement is incorrect regarding Pangolins:

a) Chinese Pangolin is found in Assam and the eastern Himalayas.

b) Indian pangolin is listed as critically endangered as per IUCN Red List.

c) All pangolin species are listed in CITES Appendix I.

d) In India, both Indian and Chinese pangolins are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972.

Explanation: The pangolin, also called scaly anteater, is an elongated, armour-plated insectivore mammal.

Though many think of them as reptiles, pangolins are actually mammals. They are the only mammals wholly-covered in scales and they use those scales to protect themselves from predators in the wild.

Seven species of pangolin are found across the world, of which, two are found in India, namely Indian pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) and Chinese pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*).

The Indian Pangolin is found throughout the country south of the Himalayas, excluding the north-eastern region while

the Chinese Pangolin ranges through Assam and the eastern Himalayas.

As per International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the pangolin is part of the “red list”, while the Indian pangolin is listed as “endangered” and the Chinese pangolin had been listed as “critically endangered”.

All pangolin species are listed in Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Appendix I.

In India, pangolins, both Indian and Chinese, are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972.

19) Consider the following statements:

1. Ground level ozone pollution is formed mainly in urban and suburban areas but it is carried to the rural areas by prevailing winds.
2. Tropospheric Ozone protects the Earth’s surface from dangerous ultraviolet light.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Ozone is a molecule of three oxygen atoms bound together (O₃). It is unstable and highly reactive.

Ozone is found naturally in small concentrations in the stratosphere, a layer of Earth’s upper atmosphere.

Stratospheric ozone has been called “good” ozone because it protects the

Earth’s surface from dangerous ultraviolet light.

Ozone can also be found in the troposphere, the lowest layer of the atmosphere. Tropospheric ozone (often termed “bad” ozone) is man-made, a result of air pollution from internal combustion engines and power plants.

Automobile exhaust and industrial emissions release a family of nitrogen oxide gases (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC), by-products of burning gasoline and coal. NO_x and VOC combine chemically with oxygen to form ozone during sunny, high-temperature conditions.

Although ozone pollution is formed mainly in urban and suburban areas, it ends up in rural areas as well, carried by prevailing winds or resulting from cars and trucks that travel into rural areas.

Ozone exposure can aggravate existing respiratory conditions such as asthma; reduce lung function and capacity for exercise and cause chest pains and coughing.

20) Consider the following statements:

1. The eight-core sector industries are coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and Software.
2. These eight industries account for 40.27% of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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

Explanation: Eight Core Industries:

The eight-core sector industries are coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity. 1 is incorrect.

These eight industries account for 40.27% of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP). 2 is correct.

21) Umlingla Pass is located in

- a) UT of Jammu and Kashmir
- b) UT of Ladakh**
- c) Uttarakhand
- d) Arunachal Pradesh

Explanation: Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed and black-topped the highest motorable road in the world at 19,300 ft at Umlingla Pass in Eastern Ladakh, creating a record in high-altitude road construction.

It has constructed a 52-km long tarmac road through Umlingla Pass, bettering the previous record of a road in Bolivia connecting to its volcano Uturuncu at 18,953 ft.

The road now connects the important towns in Chumar sector of Eastern Ladakh. It will prove to be a boon to the local population as it offers an alternate direct route connecting Chisumle and Demchok from Leh.

It will enhance the socio-economic condition and promote tourism in Ladakh.

Infrastructure development in such harsh and tough terrain is extremely challenging. During the winter, the

temperature dips to -40 degrees and the oxygen level at this altitude is almost 50 percent less than at normal places.

The BRO has achieved the feat due to the grit and resilience of its personnel who work in treacherous terrain and extreme weather conditions.

The road has been constructed at an altitude higher than the Mt Everest Base Camps as the South Base Camp in Nepal is at an altitude of 17,598 ft, while North Base Camp in Tibet is at 16,900 ft.

The road has been constructed much above the altitude of Siachen Glacier which is at 17,700 ft. The Khardung La Pass in Leh is at an altitude of 17,582 ft.

22) Consider the following statements with respect to Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS)

- 1 . The scheme was formulated in 1993.
- 2 . It provides that each member of parliament of India has the choice to suggest to the Head of the District works to the tune of ₹2 crore per year, to be taken up in his/her constituency.

Which among the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) is a scheme formulated by Government of India on 23 December 1993 that provides that each member of parliament of India has the choice to

suggest to the Head of the District works to the tune of ₹5 crore per year, to be taken up in his/her constituency.

Initially, this scheme was administered by Ministry of Rural Development. Later, in October 1994, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) has been looking into its working.

Elected Members of Rajya Sabha representing the whole of the State as they do, may select works for implementation in one or more district(s) as they may choose.

Nominated Members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha may also select works for implementation in one or more districts, anywhere in the country.

The allocation per MP per year stands increased to ₹2 crore from the year 1998-1999 which has been further enhanced to ₹5 crore from the year 2011. It also allows MPs to spend up to ₹10 lakh in any other constituency in India.

23) Consider the following statements:

1. BCIM Economic Corridor does not pass-through Dhaka.
2. Akhaura-Agartala rail project supports India's "Act East policy".

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

Explanation: Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor: The 2800 km BCIM corridor proposes to link

Kunming in China's Yunnan province with Kolkata, passing through nodes such as Mandalay in Myanmar and Dhaka in Bangladesh before heading to Kolkata. 1 is incorrect.

Akhaura-Agartala rail project is a big boost to the development of Bangladesh and India's North East. It also supports "Act East policy". 2 is correct.

Dhaka-Tongi-Joydebpur Railway project will improve connectivity between the two countries and generate more revenue.

24) Zealandia is an almost entirely submerged mass of continental crust located in the:

- a) Indian Ocean
- b) Pacific Ocean**
- c) Atlantic Ocean
- d) Arctic Ocean

Explanation: GNS Science, a New Zealand research institute, has published two new maps covering Zealandia's tectonic profile and shape. Zealandia is an almost entirely submerged mass of continental crust located in the southern Pacific Ocean that subsided after breaking away from Gondwanaland 83–79 million years ago. It has variously been described as a continental fragment, a microcontinent, a submerged continent, and a continent. The land mass may have been completely submerged by about 23 million years ago, and most of it (93%) remains submerged beneath the Pacific Ocean. Political Divisions Under Zealandia Are: New Zealand, New Caledonia, Norfolk island, Lord howe island group and Elizabeth and Middleton reefs. Names: It is also known as Tasmantis due to its proximity to

Tasman sea. Te Riu-a-Māui is another name for Zealandia. The name and concept for Zealandia was proposed by Bruce Luyendyk in 1995. Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.

Value Addition:

Definition: Originally the term "continent" was applied to any area of land, of any size, not separated by water, including islands. However, today, continents are understood to be large, continuous, distinct masses of land, ideally (but not necessarily) separated by expanses of water.

Criteria: No required minimum size to qualify as "large" (or "very large") has been defined, nor the requisite degree of physical separation. Continents are therefore defined by convention rather than some strict criteria. The criteria used can be of geographical, historical, cultural, anthropological, political, or even of philosophical nature.

Numbers: Number of continents varies from 4 to 7 depending on the criteria.

25) With reference to the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS), consider the following statements:

1. Each MP is granted ₹15 crore every year under the scheme to undertake development projects in their respective constituencies.
2. Currently, funds released to district authorities under MPLADS is not lapsable, while funds not released by the government in a particular year are carried forward.

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

Explanation: Virtually half of the belated ₹2,200 crore allotted for completing the ongoing MPLADS projects in 2020-21 simply lapsed, as the Finance Ministry granted "barely a week" to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) to release the funds.

Spending under the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) had already halved before the government suspended the scheme for two years in April last year and diverted the funds for managing the COVID-19 pandemic.

From ₹5,012 crore spent during 2018-19, an expenditure of just ₹2,491.45 crore was taken up under the scheme in 2019-20.

Each MP is granted ₹5 crore under the scheme, adding up to ₹3,950 crore a year for 790 MPs, to undertake development projects in their respective constituencies.

After the scheme's suspension, several MPs and parliamentary committees, including the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF), had asked the government to release MPLADS funds due from previous years for projects already sanctioned.

The Finance Ministry also asked the Statistics Ministry to further tighten the scheme's guidelines by September this year, so that "if a work sanctioned by an MP is not used for five years, it will automatically lapse even if there is a

committed liability for the work to be completed”.

Currently, funds released to district authorities under MPLADS is not lapsable, while funds not released by the government in a particular year are carried forward.

Hence only statement 2 is correct.

26) With reference to the Limited Liability Partnership (Amendment) Bill, 2021, consider the following statements:

1. The Bill seeks to amend the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008.
2. It aims to introduce the concept of “small limited liability partnership” in line with the concept of “small company” under the Companies Act, 2013.

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

Explanation: The Limited Liability Partnership (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was passed by Rajya Sabha.

The Bill seeks to amend the Limited Liability Partnership Act, 2008 and provides for the following:

To introduce the concept of “small limited liability partnership” in line with the concept of “small company” under the Companies Act, 2013;

To amend certain sections of the Act so as to convert offences into civil defaults and to convert the nature of punishment

provided in the said sections from fines to monetary penalties;

To insert a new section 34A so as to empower the Central Government to prescribe the “Accounting Standards” or “Auditing Standards” for a class or classes of limited liability partnerships;

To amend section 39 of the Act relating to “compounding of offences” so as to authorise the Regional Director to compound any offence under this Act which is punishable with fine only;

To insert a new section 67A empowering the Central Government to establish or designate as many “Special Courts” as may be necessary for the purpose of providing speedy trial of offences under the Act;

To amend section 72 of the Act so as to provide more clarity in the provisions when any person aggrieved by an order of “Tribunal” prefers an appeal to the “Appellate Tribunal”;

To insert a new section 76A so as to provide that the Central Government may appoint as many officers as Adjudicating Officers as it thinks necessary for the purpose of adjudicating penalties under the Act.

Hence both statements are correct.

27) With reference to the Samagra Shiksha Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has recently approved continuation of the revised Samagra Shiksha Scheme for a period of five years.
2. The Scheme is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme through a

single State Implementation Society (SIS) at the State level.

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

Explanation: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved continuation of the revised Samagra Shiksha Scheme for a period of five years i.e., from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with a total financial outlay of Rs.2,94,283.04 crore which includes Central share of Rs.1,85,398.32 crore.

The Centre plans to pay students their Right to Education (RTE) entitlements in the form of cash transfers as part of a revamp.

The Samagra Shiksha scheme is an integrated scheme for school education covering the entire gamut from pre-school to class XII. The scheme covers 11.6 lakh government and aided schools with over 15 crore students and 57 lakh teachers.

It involves a 60:40 split in funding between the Centre and most States.

The major interventions proposed under the scheme are: (i) Universal Access including Infrastructure Development and Retention; (ii) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (iii) Digital initiatives; (iv) Vocational Education; (v) Sports and Physical Education; (vi) Strengthening of Teacher Education and Training etc.

The Scheme is implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme through a single State

Implementation Society (SIS) at the State level.

At the National level, there is a Governing Council/Body headed by the Minister of Education and a Project Approval Board (PAB) headed by Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy.

Hence both statements are correct.

28) Which one of the following is the best description of 'IAC Vikrant', that was in the news recently?

a) India's first indigenous aircraft carrier in construction

b) Nuclear-powered submarine

c) Stealth destroyer

d) Nuclear powered icebreaker

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the Indian Navy and Cochin Shipyard Limited for the maiden sea trial of India's first indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) Vikrant.

With a planned induction of Vikrant in less than a year, India is set to join a select group of countries having the capability to indigenously design and build an aircraft carrier.

Vikrant is named after the Majestic-class aircraft carrier which was operated by the Indian Navy from 1961 to 1997.

IAC-1 has been designed by the Indian Navy's Directorate of Naval Design (DND), and is being built at Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), a public sector shipyard under the Ministry of Shipping.

This is the first aircraft carrier designed and built in India. An aircraft carrier is one of the most potent marine assets for a nation, which enhances a Navy's

capability to travel far from its home shores to carry out air domination operations.

India's earlier aircraft carriers were either built by the British or the Russians.

The INS Vikramaditya, currently the Navy's only aircraft carrier that was commissioned in 2013, started out as the Soviet-Russian Admiral Gorshkov.

The country's two earlier carriers, INS Vikrant and INS Viraat, were originally the British-built HMS Hercules and HMS Hermes before being commissioned into the Navy in 1961 and 1987 respectively.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

29) Minervarya Pentali sometimes in news is a?

a) Frog species

b) Type of plant

c) Butterfly species

d) Tribal artform

Explanation: About Minervarya Pentali:

Minervarya Pentali is a new frog species from the genus Minervarya. It is also among the smallest known Minervarya frogs.

The species was discovered from the Western Ghats. The species is endemic to the southern Western Ghats.

The species has been named after former DU Vice-Chancellor and plant geneticist Deepak Pental.

About Minervarya:

Minervarya is a genus of frogs in the family Dicroglossidae. The identity and

taxonomic status of all known members of this genus are from Peninsular India.

30) Abraham Accords was sometimes seen in the news. Which of the following correctly explains it?

a) This is a peace process between the United States, Afghanistan government and Taliban

b) This is an informal agreement between European Nations to permit free movement of fully vaccinated individual

c) These are a joint statement made between Israel, the United States and the United Arab Emirates to normalize Israel UAE relations.

d) These are agreement between India and China to resolve bilateral disputes in peaceful manner

Explanation: Abraham Accords

These are a joint statement made between Israel, the United States and the United Arab Emirates on August 13, 2020. It also refers to the agreement reached between Israel, Bahrain and the UAE to normalise relations between the them. The accords are named after the patriarch Abraham regards as a prophet in both Judaism and Islam.

31) With reference to the natural gas, consider the following statements:

1. The share of natural gas in the primary energy mix in India is envisaged to increase to 15% by 2030 by boosting domestic production and procuring LNG.

2. LNG imports are under Open General Licensing (OGL) category and establishment of LNG infrastructure, including LNG terminals, is also under 75% FDI (automatic route).

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

Explanation: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways informed Lok Sabha that the share of natural gas in the primary energy mix in India is envisaged to increase to 15% by 2030 by boosting domestic production and procuring LNG.

LNG imports are under Open General Licensing (OGL) category and establishment of LNG infrastructure, including LNG terminals, is also under 100% FDI (automatic route).

The market of natural gas is being created by expansion of gas infrastructure, including City Gas Distribution, Gas Grid Network and establishment of LNG retail outlets.

This Ministry has notified mass emission standards for Liquefied Natural Gas-driven vehicles.

It has also notified mass emission norms for agricultural tractors, power tillers, construction equipment vehicles and combined harvesters driven by dual fuel diesel with Liquefied Natural Gas engines.

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

32) With reference to the retrospective tax law, consider the following statements:

1. The new Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill aims to nullify the relevant retrospective tax clauses that were introduced in 2012 to bring past indirect

transfer of Indian assets under the ambit of taxation.

2. As per the proposed changes, any tax demand made on transactions that took place before May 2012 shall be dropped, and any taxes already collected shall be repaid with interest.

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

Explanation: The Government of India took the first step towards doing away with the contentious retrospective tax law of 2012, which was used to raise large tax demands on foreign investors such as Vodafone and Cairn Energy, and blamed for vitiating India's investment climate.

Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister introduced the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha on Thursday to nullify the relevant retrospective tax clauses that were introduced in 2012 to bring past indirect transfer of Indian assets under the ambit of taxation.

As per the proposed changes, any tax demand made on transactions that took place before May 2012 shall be dropped, and any taxes already collected shall be repaid, albeit without interest.

To be eligible, the concerned taxpayers would have to drop all pending cases against the government and promise not to make any demands for damages or costs.

Former Finance Minister, the late Pranab Mukherjee, had introduced the retrospective taxation power after the Supreme Court held that Vodafone could not be taxed for a 2007 transaction involving its purchase of a 67% stake in Hutchison Whampoa for \$11 billion.

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

33) Consider the following statements with reference to the Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS):

1. It is a set of satellites to track, send and receive information from other Indian satellites.
2. The satellites would be launched on the PSLV launcher to low earth orbit.

Correct statements is/are:

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

Explanation: India plans to ring in its era of space-to-space tracking and communication of its space assets this year by putting up a new satellite series called the Indian Data Relay Satellite System.

The IDRSS is a set of satellites to track, send and receive information from other Indian satellites. It is planned to track and be constantly in touch with Indian satellites, in particular, those in low-earth orbits that have limited coverage of earth.

IDRSS satellites of the 2,000 kg class would be launched on the GSLV launcher to geostationary orbits around 36,000 km away. In such fixed orbits, they would be covering the same area on earth. A

satellite in GEO covers a third of the earth below and three of them can provide total coverage.

34) Consider following statements about defence service bill 2021.

1. The Bill was promulgated to prevent the employee unions of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) from going on strike against the corporatisation plan that was announced.
2. Only Parliament can make law regarding the article 35 of the constitution.

Correct statement is/are:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) None of the above

Explanation: The Essential Defence Services Bill, 2021, passed in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday does not come into effect unless it is invoked and is in place for only one year, a defence official said.

The Bill was promulgated to prevent the employee unions of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) from going on strike against the corporatisation plan that was announced.

“There is a sunset clause introduced in Clause 1 as an amendment. It is applicable only for one year, after which it will lapse,” the official said.

“It does not come into effect by default. Employees have the right to peaceful protest.” The Bill also did not violate the International Labour Organisation convention.

35) With reference to the recently approved 'Green Credit Scheme', consider the following statements:

1. It aims to allow private companies and village forest communities to identify land and grow plantations.
2. Under the scheme, forests can be traded as a commodity under compensatory afforestation.

Correct statement is/are:

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

Explanation: Currently, industries need to find appropriate non-forest land in place of and equal to the forest land that was razed.

The industry would also have to pay the State Forest Department the current economic equivalent of the forest land.

It is then the responsibility of the Forest Department to restore vegetation in that area, which would over time grow into forests.

The new scheme approved by the Forest Advisory Committee called the 'Green Credit Scheme' would allow agencies like private companies and village forest communities to identify land and grow plantations.

After three years, they would be eligible to be considered as compensatory forest land if they met the criteria set by the Forest Department.

An industry in need of forest land could then pay for these patches of forest land,

and this would then be transferred to the Forest Department.

Previously, in 2015, a 'Green Credit Scheme' for degraded forest land with public-private participation had been recommended but was shelved when it was not approved by the Union environment ministry.

36) Which of the following gases is/are considered for calculating Air Quality Index (AQI) data?

1. Ozone
2. Carbon Monoxide
3. Methane
4. Lead

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Explanation: The air quality index (AQI) is an index for reporting air quality on a daily basis. It is a measure of how air pollution affects one's health within a short time period. The purpose of the AQI is to help people know how the local air quality impacts their health.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) calculates the AQI for five major air pollutants, for which national air quality standards have been established to safeguard public health.

Ground-level ozone

Particle pollution/particulate matter (PM_{2.5}/pm 10)

Carbon Monoxide

Sulfur dioxide

Nitrogen dioxide

37) Consider the following statements regarding Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana:

1. Beneficiaries are identified through Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC)
2. It was launched by Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

Which of the statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: About Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

Launched in 2016 by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas.

Aim: To replace unclean cooking fuels used in the most underprivileged households with clean and more efficient LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas).

Objective of the scheme: a) Empower women and protect their health b) Reduce the serious health hazards associated with cooking based on fossil fuel c) Reduce the number of deaths in India due to unclean cooking fuel and d) To prevent young children from significant number of acute respiratory illnesses caused due to indoor air pollution.

Beneficiaries: Under the scheme, an adult woman member of a below poverty line family identified through the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) is given a

deposit-free LPG connection with financial assistance of Rs 1,600 per connection by the Centre.

38) Consider the following statements regarding Sabki Yojna Sabka Vikas Campaign:

1. It is aimed at helping youths from rural areas to develop industry-relevant technological skills.
2. Scheme has been launched by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Both statements are incorrect About Sabki Yojna Sabka Vikas Campaign:

Sabki Yojna Sabka Vikas campaign has been launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj from 2nd October 2020 to 31st January 2021. It was also launched during 2018 and 2019.

Aim: To help Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the preparation of a convergent and holistic Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) through the identification of sectoral infrastructural gaps in respective areas.

39) With reference to Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (NavIC), which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. It is designed to provide accurate position information service to users in India as well as the region extending up to 1500 km from its boundary.

2. ISRO has built a total of eight satellites in the IRNSS series; of which seven are currently in orbit, three of these satellites are in Geostationary Orbit (GEO) while the remaining in Geosynchronous Orbits (GSO).

Options:

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both

d) None

Explanation: Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (NavIC) is designed to provide accurate position information service to users in India as well as the region extending up to 1500 km from its boundary.

It was developed in India by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and its commercial wing ANTRIX.

ISRO has built a total of nine satellites in the IRNSS series; of which eight are currently in orbit, three of these satellites are in Geostationary Orbit (GEO) while the remaining in Geosynchronous Orbits (GSO).

40) Consider the following statements with respect to Anaimalai flying frog:

1. It is endemic to the southern part of the Western Ghats.

2. Its IUCN status is Endangered.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both

d) None

Explanation: The Anaimalai Flying Frog is found in the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala in the Western Ghats of India in the tropical evergreen forests. It is endemic to the southern part of the Western Ghats.

It is also called the false Malabar gliding frog.

As a semi-arboreal species of frog, the Anaimalai Flying Frog is found in the lower canopy and under story levels of the forests.

Its IUCN status is Critically Endangered.

41) With reference to the National Handloom Day, consider the following statements:

1. National Handloom Day is being organised on August 7 by the Ministry of Textiles.

2. Handloom, an Indian legacy is the theme of 2021's National Handloom Day celebrations.

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

Explanation: National Handloom Day is being organised on August 7 by the Ministry of Textiles. Handloom, an Indian legacy is the theme of 2021's National Handloom Day celebrations.

7th August was chosen as the National Handloom Day to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement which was launched on the same date in the year 1905.

The objective is to generate awareness about the Handloom Industry among the public and its contribution to socio-economic development.

India & handloom industry

One of the earliest industries to be established in India, it accounts for 14% of the total Industrial production, contributes to nearly 30% of the total exports, and is the second-largest employer in the country after agriculture, employing more than 43 lakh weavers and allied workers.

The Government has also implemented a number of schemes like the National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP), Handloom Weavers Comprehensive Welfare Scheme (HWCWS), Comprehensive Handloom Cluster Development Scheme (CHCDS) and Yarn Supply Scheme (YSS).

Further, in 2015, the 'India Handloom' brand was launched to represent high-quality handloom products and was adopted to promote the production of niche handloom products with high quality, authentic traditional designs with zero defect and zero effect on environment.

Hence both statements are correct.

42) With reference to Major Dhyan Chand, consider the following statements:

1. The Government of India awarded him Padma Bhushan in 1956.

2. His birthday, 29 August, is celebrated as National Sports Day in India every year.

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

Explanation: India's highest sporting honour Khel Ratna Award, which was named after former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, was rechristened in the honour of hockey wizard Dhyan Chand following the admirable performance of both men's and women's hockey teams in the Tokyo Olympics.

Major Dhyan Chand (29 August 1905 – 3 December 1979) was an Indian field hockey player widely regarded as one of the greatest in the history of the sport.

He was known for his extraordinary goal-scoring feats, in addition to earning three Olympic gold medals, in 1928, 1932 and 1936.

Popularly known as The Wizard or The Magician of hockey for his superb ball control, Chand played internationally from 1926 to 1949; he scored 570 goals in 185 matches according to his autobiography, Goal.

The Government of India awarded him Padma Bhushan in 1956.

His birthday, 29 August, is celebrated as National Sports Day in India every year.

Hence both statements are correct.

43) With reference to the Central Administrative Tribunal, consider the following statements:

1. It is not bound by the procedure laid down in the Civil Procedure Code.
2. Appeals against its orders cannot be made in the High Courts.
3. Its members are drawn from both the administrative and judicial streams.

Correct statement is/are

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

Explanation: The Central Administrative Tribunal in India was established by the Central Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985 for adjudication of disputes with respect to recruitment and conditions of service of persons appointed to public services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or other local authorities within the territory of India or under the control of Government of India and all such connected matters.

It is not bound by the procedure laid down in the Civil Procedure Code. It is guided by the principles of natural justice.

Originally, appeals against its orders could be made only in the Supreme Court but in the Chandra Kumar case, the Supreme Court held that appeals against the orders of the CAT shall lie before the division bench of the concerned high court.

It is a multi member body consisting of members drawn from both the judicial and administrative streams. They are appointed by the President.

44) The “Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG-2)” is related to:

- a) Health
- b) Food security**
- c) Gender equality
- d) Poverty

Explanation: Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2 or Global Goal 2) aims to achieve “zero hunger”.

It aims to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

SDG 2 highlights the complex inter-linkages between food security, nutrition, rural transformation and sustainable agriculture.

According to the United Nations, there are around 690 million people who are hungry, which accounts for 10 percent of the world population.

One in every nine people goes to bed hungry each night, including 20 million people currently at risk of famine in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria.

45) With reference to Samagra Shiksha scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is an integrated scheme for school education extending from pre-school to class XII.
2. It subsumes the three Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teacher Education.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Samagra Shiksha is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12.

The scheme has been prepared with the broader goal of improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.

It subsumes the three Schemes of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE) and was launched in 2018.

The major objectives of the Scheme are:

Provision of quality education and enhancing learning outcomes of students;

Bridging Social and Gender Gaps in School Education;

Ensuring equity and inclusion at all levels of school education;

Ensuring minimum standards in schooling provisions;

Promoting Vocationalisation of education;

Support States in implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009; and

Strengthening and up-gradation of SCERTs/State Institutes of Education and DIET as a nodal agencies for teacher training.

46) With reference to MPLAD Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Central Sector scheme.

2. It is implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.

3. The elected member of Rajya Sabha can recommend works under the scheme anywhere in the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 1 and 2 only

c) 3 only

d) 2 and 3 only

Explanation: The Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) is a Central Sector Scheme which was launched in 1993-94.

The Scheme enables the Members of Parliament to recommend works for creation of durable community assets based on locally felt needs to be taken up in their constituencies in the area of national priorities namely drinking water, education, public health, sanitation, roads etc.

Under this scheme, every MP is entitled to spend Rs 5 crore annually.

The Ministry of Rural Development initially administered the scheme. Since October 1994 it has been transferred to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Under this scheme each elected member of Lok Sabha suggests developmental works in his constituency. The elected member of Rajya Sabha can recommend works in any district of his State. A nominated member can suggest work in only one State of his choice.

47) The term 'carrying capacity' is sometimes used in Ecology. It refers to

- a) the population of all the species living in a particular habitat
- b) the maximum number of heterotrophs that an area's autotrophs can sustain indefinitely
- c) the minimum number of individuals/species that can be sustained indefinitely by a habitat's resources
- d) the maximum number of individuals/species that can be sustained indefinitely by a habitat's resources**

Explanation: No population of any species in nature has at its disposal unlimited resources to permit exponential growth. This leads to competition between individuals for limited resources. Eventually, the 'fittest' individual will survive and reproduce. In nature, a given habitat has enough resources to support a maximum possible number, beyond which no further growth is possible. This limit is called nature's carrying capacity (K) for that species in that habitat.

48) Bhuria committee sometimes seen in news is related to?

- a) Extending 73rd and 74th amendments to scheduled areas.**
- b) Working of the capital market infrastructure institutions.
- c) Assessment of methodology of poverty line measurement.
- d) created to formulate policy on disinvestment.

Explanation: Government set up Dileep Singh Bhuria Committee for extending the

provisions of 73rd and 74th amendments to scheduled areas.

49) Consider the following statements:

- 1. Right to Strike is a fundamental right.
- 2. Essential Defence Services Bill curtails right to strike under certain circumstances for services like army, police etc.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: Right to strike is not a Fundamental Right
Statement 2 is correct.

50) Consider the following statements regarding Indigenous Aircraft Carrier(IAC) 'Vikrant'

- 1. It is the first aircraft carrier designed and built in India.
- 2. All the material and equipment of Vikrant is completely indigenous.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The much-awaited sea trials of India's maiden indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC-1) 'Vikrant' have begun recently. About Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC) 'Vikrant':

IAC-1 Vikrant has been designed by the Indian Navy's Directorate of Naval Design (DND). It is being built at Cochin Shipyard Limited(CSL), a Public Sector Shipyard under the Ministry of Shipping.

Key Features of IAC-01 Vikrant:

Vikrant is the first aircraft carrier designed and built in India. It has over 76 percent of the material and equipment which is indigenous.

Vikrant is named after the Majestic-class aircraft carrier, which was operated by the Indian Navy from 1961 to 1997.

The ship is 262 m long, It has over 2,300 compartments designed for a crew of around 1700 people including specialised cabins to accommodate women officers.

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

1. It is the Atlantic branch of the ocean conveyor belt or Thermohaline circulation (THC), and distributes heat and nutrients throughout the world's ocean basins.
2. It carries warm surface waters from the tropics towards the Northern Hemisphere, where it cools and sinks.
3. Gulf Stream is a part of the AMOC.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Explanation: A study published in Nature Climate Change notes that the Atlantic

Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), is losing its stability. According to the IPCC's Report (AR6) released on August 9, it is very likely that AMOC will decline over the 21st century.

The AMOC is a large system of ocean currents. It is the Atlantic branch of the ocean conveyor belt or Thermohaline circulation (THC), and distributes heat and nutrients throughout the world's ocean basins.

AMOC carries warm surface waters from the tropics towards the Northern Hemisphere, where it cools and sinks. It then returns to the tropics and then to the South Atlantic as a bottom current. From there it is distributed to all ocean basins via the Antarctic circumpolar current.

The findings support the assessment that the AMOC decline is not just a fluctuation or a linear response to increasing temperatures but likely means the approaching of a critical threshold beyond which the circulation system could collapse.

Gulf Stream, a part of the AMOC, is a warm current responsible for mild climate at the Eastern coast of North America as well as Europe. Without a proper AMOC and Gulf Stream, Europe will be very cold.

Modelling studies have shown that an AMOC shutdown would cool the northern hemisphere and decrease rainfall over Europe. It can also have an effect on the El Nino.

Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.

52) With reference to the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021, consider the following statements:

1. The Bill adds the Abor tribe to the list of identified STs in Arunachal Pradesh.

2. The Constitution empowers the President to specify the Scheduled Tribes (STs) in various states and 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

Explanation: Parliament has passed the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021 with the Lok Sabha clearing it. The Rajya Sabha has already approved it.

The Bill amends the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950. The Constitution empowers the President to specify the Scheduled Tribes (STs) in various states and union territories. Further, it permits Parliament to modify this list of notified STs.

The Bill removes the Abor tribe from the list of identified STs in Arunachal Pradesh.

Further, it replaces certain STs with other tribes in the list

Khampti is replaced with Tai Khamti,

Mishmi, Idu, and Taroan are replaced with Mishmi-Kaman (Miju Mishmi), Idu (Mishmi), and Taroan (Digaru Mishmi),

Momba is replaced with Monpa, Memba, Sartang, and Sajolang (Miji)

Any Naga Tribes is replaced with Nocte, Tangsa, Tutsa, and Wancho.

Hence only statement 2 is correct.

53) With reference to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report, "Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis", consider the following statements:

1. The warming of the ocean would lead to a rise in sea levels, leading to frequent and severe coastal flooding in low-level areas.

2. The planet is irrevocably headed towards warming by 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial times in the next two decades.

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

Explanation: The Indian Ocean is warming at a higher rate than other oceans, said the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released.

The authors of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report, "Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis", said the warming of the ocean would lead to a rise in sea levels, leading to frequent and severe coastal flooding in low-level areas.

The planet was irrevocably headed towards warming by 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial times in the next two decades.

The report recommended that countries strive to achieve net zero emissions — no

additional greenhouse gases are emitted — by 2050.

The Fifth Assessment Report was released in 2014.

Indian scenario

India will witness increased heatwaves and flooding, which will be the irreversible effects of climate change. The current overall global warming trends are likely to lead to an increase in annual mean precipitation over India, with more severe rain expected over southern India in the coming decades.

With a 7,517-km coastline, India would face significant threats from the rising seas.

The 3,000-plus-page report said warming is already accelerating sea level rise and worsening extremes such as heatwaves, droughts, floods and storms.

Hence both statements are correct.

54) 'Climate Change and Land', 'The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate' and 'Global Warming of 1.5°C' are all reports released by:

- a) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- b) United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- c) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
- d) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Explanation: Climate Change and Land is an IPCC Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food

security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems.

Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate: This Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC) was prepared following an IPCC Panel decision in 2016 to prepare three Special Reports during the Sixth Assessment Cycle. The SROCC follows the other two Special Reports on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5) and on Climate Change and Land (SRCLL)

Global Warming of 1.5 °C is an IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty.

55) Consider the following statements with reference to the reservation of seats under the PESA Act:

1. The reservation for the Scheduled Tribes in every Panchayat cannot be less than half of the total number of seats.
2. All seats of Chairpersons of Panchayats at all levels have to be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes.

Correct statement is/are

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

Explanation: Under the PESA Act, the reservation of seats in the Scheduled

Areas in every Panchayat shall be in proportion to the population of the communities for whom reservation is sought to be given under Part IX of the Constitution. However, the reservation for the Scheduled Tribes shall not be less than one-half of the total number of seats.

Further, all seats of Chairpersons of Panchayats at all levels shall be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes.

56) Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island, seen recently in news, is an island of:

- a) Andaman Islands
- b) Aminidivi Islands
- c) Laccadive Islands
- d) Nicobar Islands

Explanation: Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island, formerly known as Ross Island, is an island of the Andaman Islands. It belongs to the South Andaman administrative district, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Spotted Deer and peacocks are mostly found in the island and the island is full of palm and coconut trees.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island is an island where no civilian settlement is allowed by the authorities.

57) Island of Evia recently seen in news is part of which country?

- a) Italy
- b) Greece
- c) Turkey
- d) France

Explanation: Evia is an island in Greece.



58) B.N Srikrishna committee seen in news is related to

- a) To regulate digital lending platform in India
- b) To see Feasibility of Variable Capital Companies in International Financial Services Centres
- c) To review institutionalization of arbitration mechanism in India
- d) To formulate policy on disinvestment

Explanation: Statement c is correct
Recommendation of committee a) Disputemanagement: - 1) Creation of IMC (inter-ministerial committee) with official from Min of finance, external affairs and law. 2) Hiring of external lawyers with expertise in BITs, Designated fund to fight BITs 3) Creating post of "International law advisor" to the govt of India as a single authority to deal with all BITs b) Dispute resolution- 1) Establishment of BIT appellate mechanism and multilateral investment court. 2) Focus on ISDS (investor state dispute resolution) mechanism as given in India's model BIT as an appellate mechanism to settle BIT disputes.

59) Which country hosted the 8th Justice Ministers meet 2021 of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation?

- a) India
- b) Tajikistan
- c) China

d) Russia

Explanation: The 8th Justice Ministers meet 2021 of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting was hosted by Tajikistan (2021 SCO Presidency). Union Minister for Law & Justice, Kiren Rijiju participated in the 8th Justice Ministers Meeting 2021 of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) held at Tajikistan virtually. The meeting was chaired by M.K.Ashuriyon, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan. SCO is celebrating its 20th Anniversary under the slogan '20 years of SCO: Cooperation for Stability and Prosperity'. The next meeting will be held in Pakistan in 2022.

60) Navies of which two countries have conducted exercise Zayed Talwar 2021?

- a) India and Russia
- b) India and United States
- c) India and Australia

d) India and UAE

Explanation: On 7th August, 2021 navies of India and UAE conducted exercise 'Zayed Talwar 2021' off the coast of Abu Dhabi. INS Kochi, with two integral Sea King MK 42B helicopters, deployed in the Persian Gulf, participated in the exercise. UAE participated with UAES AL – Dhafra, a Baynunah class guided missile corvette and one AS – 565B Panther helicopter. As part of the exercise, the ships undertook tactical manoeuvres, Over the Horizon Targeting, Search and Rescue and Electronic Warfare exercises to enhance interoperability and synergy between the two navies. Helicopters were extensively used all through the exercise ranging from Search and Rescue serial to passing of

targeting data to ships for simulated missile engagement drills.

61) With reference to the draft Indian Ports Bill, 2021, consider the following statements:

1. It proposes to leave the management and administration of the major ports to the Board of Major Port Authority for each port, constituted by the Major Ports Authorities Act, 2021 and to State Maritime Boards for the management and administration of all non-major ports in each State/UT.
2. It require every coastal State and Union Territory to constitute a State Maritime Board.

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

Explanation: The present draft Indian Ports Bill, 2021 was circulated on 10th June, 2021 for stakeholders' comments, prior to the 18th meeting of Maritime States Development Council (MSDC) scheduled on 24th June 2021.

The draft Indian Ports Bill, 2021 proposes to leave the management and administration of the major ports to the Board of Major Port Authority for each port, constituted by the Major Ports Authorities Act, 2021 and to State Maritime Boards for the management and administration of all non-major ports in each State/UT.

It require every coastal State and Union Territory to constitute a State Maritime Board, if it does not already exist through State statutes and, which empower the said State Maritime Boards with uniform powers and functions including planning, development, supervisory, administrative and adjudicatory powers and functions.

Hence both statements are correct.

62) With reference to the 127th Constitution Amendment Bill, 2021, consider the following statements:

1. The Bill seeks to restore the power of State governments to identify OBCs that are socially and educationally backward.
2. The Supreme Court in its order on Maratha reservation, upheld the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Act and empowered only the Centre to identify OBCs that are socially and educationally backward.

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

Explanation: The Lok Sabha passed the 127th Constitution Amendment Bill, 2021, which seeks to restore the states' power to make their own OBC lists.

The Bill seeks to restore the power of State governments to identify OBCs that are socially and educationally backward after a Supreme Court order in May 2021 empowered only the Centre to do so.

The amendment was thought necessary because the SC, in its order on Maratha

reservation, upheld the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Act.

It inserted Articles 338B and 342 A (with two clauses) after Article 342, which said the President of India, in consultation with the Governors, would specify socially and educationally backward classes, taking away the powers of State governments to do so.

The bill should be considered as the 105th Constitution Amendment bill after being renumbered.

Hence both statements are correct.

63) Recently seen in news, Pusa Decomposer Technology is developed by:

- a) ICAR - Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI)**
- b) CSIR
- c) Greenpeace
- d) None of the above

Explanation: Multiple efforts have been made to demonstrate the new low cost capsule i.e. Pusa Decomposer Technology developed by ICAR - Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi for crop residue management across the country as given below:

IARI has licensed this technology to 12 companies for mass multiplication and marketing of the Pusa Decomposer. In addition, ICAR – IARI, New Delhi has produced about 20000 packets of Pusa decomposer at its own facility for use by the farmers.

A weekly You Tube channel of IARI named Pusa Samachar also regularly ran the programme on “Pusa Decomposer Technology” for the benefit of farmers.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

64) Which among the following are the pull factors for migration from rural areas to urban areas?

1. Better opportunities for education
2. Lack of basic infrastructure in rural areas
3. Availability of regular work

Correct factors are:

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

Explanation: These reasons for migration can be put into two broad categories : (i) push factors, these cause people to leave their place of residence or origin; and (ii) pull factors, which attract the people from different places.

In India people migrate from rural to urban areas mainly due to poverty, high population pressure on the land, lack of basic infrastructural facilities like health care, education, etc. Apart from these factors, natural disasters such as, flood, drought, cyclonic storms, earthquake, tsunami, wars and local conflicts also give extra push to migrate.

On the other hand, there are pull factors which attract people from rural areas to cities. The most important pull factor for majority of the rural migrants to urban areas is the better- opportunities, availability of regular work and relatively higher wages. Better opportunities for education, better health facilities and sources of entertainment, etc. are also quite important pull factors.

65) With reference to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), consider the following statements:

1. It is a body of the United Nations for assessing the science related to climate change.
2. It does not conduct its own research.
3. It allocates funds out of the Green Climate Fund to the member countries of the United Nations to fight climate change.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. 1 is correct.

Created in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the objective of the IPCC is to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies. IPCC reports are also a key input into international climate change negotiations.

Through its assessments, the IPCC identifies the strength of scientific agreement in different areas and indicates where further research is needed. The IPCC does not conduct its own research. 2 is correct.

3 is incorrect. IPCC has no role in the allocation of funds.

66) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), a statutory organisation for pollution control in India, was constituted under

a) The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974

b) Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

c) The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

d) The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

Explanation: The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), statutory organisation, was constituted in September, 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.

Further, CPCB was entrusted with the powers and functions under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

It is a technical arm of the Central Government for environmental research, monitoring, regulation and enforcement in the country.

It serves as a field formation and also provides technical services to the Ministry of Environment and Forests of the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Principal Functions of the CPCB:

To promote cleanliness of streams and wells in different areas of the States by prevention, control and abatement of water pollution

To improve the quality of air and to prevent, control or abate air pollution in the country.

67) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the National Action Plan on Climate change (NAPCC)?

1. It has been launched by the Indian government to fulfill its Nationally Determined Contributions made under the Paris Agreement.

2. There are 8 missions under it.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: The National Action Plan on Climate change was formally launched on June 30th, 2008. The NAPCC identifies measures that promote development objectives while also yielding co-benefits for addressing climate change effectively. The Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015 and came into force in 2016. 1 is incorrect.

There are eight “National Missions” which form the core of the National action plan. They focus on promoting understanding of climate change, adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation. 2 is correct.

The eight missions are:

1. National Solar Mission

2. National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency

3. National Mission on Sustainable Habitat

4. National Water Mission

5. National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem

6. National Mission for a Green India

7. National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture

8. National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change

68) Consider the following statements regarding Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC):

1. It is a large system of ocean currents that carry warm water from the tropics southwards into the South Atlantic.

2. The collapse of AMOC would lead to sudden warming of the Northern Hemisphere.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: The Atlantic meridional overturning circulation (AMOC) is the zonally integrated component of surface and deep currents in the Atlantic Ocean.

It is characterized by a northward flow of warm, salty water in the upper layers of the Atlantic, and a southward flow of colder, deep waters that are part of the thermohaline circulation.

These “limbs” are linked by regions of overturning in the Nordic and Labrador Seas and the Southern Ocean.

The AMOC is an important component of the Earth’s climate system, and is a result

of both atmospheric and thermohaline drivers.

The net northward heat transport in the Atlantic is unique among global oceans, and is responsible for the relative warmth of the Northern Hemisphere.

AMOC carries up to 25% of the northward global atmosphere-ocean heat transport in the northern hemisphere.

If the AMOC collapsed, it would increase cooling of the Northern Hemisphere, sea level rise in the Atlantic, an overall fall in precipitation over Europe and North America and a shift in monsoons in South America and Africa.

69) PM-DAKSH scheme, seen recently in news, is being implemented by:

a) Ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship

b) Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises

c) Ministry of Education

d) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Explanation: The Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana is being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment from the year 2020-21.

Under this Yojana, eligible target group are being provided skill development training programmes on:

Up-skilling/Re-skilling

Short Term Training Programme

Long Term Training Programme

Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP)

These training programs are being implemented through Government Training Institutes, Sector Skill Councils constituted by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and other credible institutions.

Recently, 'PM-DAKSH' Portal and 'PM-DAKSH' Mobile App is developed by the Ministry to make the skill development schemes accessible to the target groups.

Some of the features of this portal are as follows:

Availability of all information related to skill development at one place for Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes and Safai Karamcharis.

Facility to register for the training institute and program of their interest.

Facility to upload desired documents related to personal information.

Facility to register the attendance of the trainees through face and eye scanning during the training period.

Monitoring facility through photo and video clip during training etc.

70) The aim of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana is:

a) To promote efficient lighting, enhance awareness on using efficient equipment which reduce electricity bills and help preserve environment.

b) To provide free cooking gas connections to poor families.

c) To provide support and assistance to women affected by violence, both in private and public spaces.

d) To provide skills that give employability to women.

Explanation: Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) was launched in 2016.

It aims to provide free cooking gas connections to poor families increasing India' LPG coverage.

It is implemented by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas through its Oil Marketing Companies i.e., IOC, BPCL and HPCL through their network of distributors across the country.

PMUY has been recognised by World Health Organisation as one of the decisive intervention by the Government to address the Indoor Air Pollution which accounts for nearly 10 lakh deaths in a year in the country.

PMUY aims at providing clean-cooking fuel to the poor households, which are otherwise vulnerable to various health hazards associated with indoor air pollution and bringing in qualitative changes in the living standards.

PMUY is under implementation in the all the States/UTs. Beneficiaries are identified through Socio-Economic Caste Census List-2011 and in such cases where names are not covered under SECC list, beneficiaries are identified from seven categories which includes SC/ST households, beneficiaries of PMAY(Gramin), Antyodaya Anna Yojana, Most Backward Classes, Forest Dwellers, Resident of Islands/River Islands and Tea Garden & Ex-tea Garden Tribes.

71) Which of the following statements are INCORRECT about the recently launched 'Quality of Life for Elderly Index'?

a) It has been created by the Institute for Competitiveness at the request of

Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM).

b) The Index framework includes four pillars Financial Well-being, Social Well-being, Health System and Income Security.

c) Rajasthan tops the index in the aged states category, and Himachal Pradesh tops in the relatively aged category respectively.

d) Indian States have performed particularly better in the Income Security pillar because over half of the States have a score greater the national average.

Explanation: Quality of Life for Elderly Index has been created by the Institute for Competitiveness at the request of Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) and it sheds light on an issue often not mentioned- problems faced by the elderly. THUS STATEMENT 1 is CORRECT

It widens the policy thinking and debate about the needs of this age group.

The index highlights that the best way to improve the lives of the current and future generations of older people is by investing in health, education and employment for young people today.

Features of the Report:

It identifies the regional patterns of ageing across Indian States and assesses the overall ageing situation in India.

It presents a deeper insight into how well India is doing to support the well-being of its ageing population.

The Index framework includes:

Four pillars: Financial Well-being, Social Well-being, Health System and Income Security, THUS STATEMENT 2 is CORRECT

Eight sub-pillars: Economic Empowerment, Educational Attainment & Employment, Social Status, Physical Security, Basic Health, Psychological Wellbeing, Social Security and Enabling Environment.

Key Highlights from the Report:

Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh are top-scoring regions in Aged and Relatively Aged States, respectively. Chandigarh and Mizoram are top-scoring regions in Union Territory and North-East States category. The Aged States refer to States with an elderly population of more than 5 million, whereas Relatively Aged States refer to States with an Elderly population of less than 5 million. THUS STATEMENT 3 is CORRECT

The Health System pillar observes the highest national average, 66.97 at an all-India level, followed by 62.34 in Social Well-being. Financial Well-being observes a score of 44.7, which is lowered by the low performance of 21 States across the Education Attainment & Employment pillar, which showcases scope for improvement

States have performed particularly worse in the Income Security pillar because over half of the States have a score below the national average, i.e., 33.03 in Income Security, which is the lowest across all pillars. These pillar-wise analyses help States assess the state of the elderly population and identify existing gaps that obstruct their growth. THUS STATEMENT 4 is INCORRECT

72) Consider the following statements about sex ratio in India.

1. Right before Independence, India's sex ratio was above 1000, but was declining.
2. The current sex ratio in India is greater than 920.
3. The sex ratio according to 2011 census data was better than the 2001 data.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only**
- d) All of the above

Explanation: Even before independence, India's gender balance had been worsening. The sex ratio—females per 1,000 male population—had declined from 972 in 1901 to 945 in 1941. Statement 1 is incorrect.

In the Population Census of 2011 it was revealed that the population ratio in India 2011 is 940 females per 1000 of males. The Sex Ratio 2011 shows an upward trend from the census 2001 data. Census 2001 revealed that there were 933 females to that of 1000 males. Thus statement 2 and 3 are correct.

73) Consider the following statements regarding United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS):

1. It is the only international convention which stipulates a framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces.
2. United States and India have signed the Convention but have not ratified it.

3. International Seabed Authority is an organization established by UNCLOS.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS):

It is an international agreement that establishes a legal framework for all marine and maritime activities.

It lays down a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world's oceans and seas establishing rules governing all uses of the oceans and their resources.

It embodies in one instrument traditional rules for the uses of the oceans and at the same time introduces new legal concepts and regimes and addresses new concerns.

The Convention also provides the framework for further development of specific areas of the law of the sea.

The Convention has become the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.

The Convention has created three new institutions:

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.

The International Seabed Authority.

The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

India has signed as well as ratified the convention in 1995. Although the United States helped shape the Convention and its subsequent revisions, and though it signed the 1994 Agreement on Implementation, it has not signed the Convention as it objected to Part XI of the Convention.

Recently, The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) has been accepted by the UN Security Council as the legal framework applicable to activities in the oceans, including countering illicit activities at sea.

74) Consider the following statements regarding “collegium” for appointment of Judges

1. The President must assent to or return for reconsideration of the advice regarding appointment of Judges within three months.

2. Initiation of the proposal for appointment in case of the High Court must be made by the Chief Justice of the concerned High 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

Explanation: On the Supreme Court collegium clearing the recommendees, the Union Law Ministry has to put up within three weeks the recommendations to the Prime Minister who would advise the President on the appointment. However, no time limit has been

prescribed for action by the Prime Minister and the President. 1 is incorrect

Initiation of the proposal for appointment in case of the High Court must invariably be made by the Chief Justice of that High Court. 2 is correct

75) Which of the following organisations is/are the product of the Bretton Woods system ?

1. World Bank

2. International Monetary Fund

3. World Trade organisation

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: The Bretton Woods System: The Bretton Woods Conference held in 1944 set up the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank and re-established a system of fixed exchange rates. 1 and 2 are correct

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is an intergovernmental organization that is concerned with the regulation of international trade between nations. The WTO officially commenced on 1 January 1995 under the Marrakesh Agreement, signed by 123 nations on 15 April 1994, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which commenced in 1948. It is the largest international economic organization in the world. 3 is incorrect

76) Consider the following pairs regarding Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Working group - Concerned Climate research

1. Working Group-I - Deals with the likely impacts, vulnerabilities, and adaptation issues
2. Working Group-II - Deals with the scientific basis for climate change
3. Working Group-III - Deals with actions that can be taken to combat climate change.

Which of the following pairs is/are matched correctly?

Select the answer from the codes given below

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

Explanation: The IPCC reports are created by three working groups of scientists.

Working Group Concerned climate research

Working Group-I Deals with the scientific basis for climate change

Working Group-II Deals with the likely impacts, vulnerabilities, and adaptation issues

Working Group-III Deals with actions that can be taken to combat climate change.

77) Consider the following statement regarding e-Rupi

1. It is a cashless and contactless method for Digital Payment
2. e-Rupi doesn't require any internet connection
3. It has been developed by National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI)

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: All the statements are correct About e-Rupi

This pre-paid voucher is provided directly to beneficiaries via a QR code or SMS.

It doesn't require an internet connection, a smartphone, or an app, and, most importantly, is person and purpose dependent.

The service provider gets paid in a timely manner but only after providing the service such as medical care, medicines, nutritional support, books, subsidies, etc.

It is done by redeeming the e-voucher that's been paid for by the sponsor, such as the government, a philanthropic foundation, or a private- sector Corporate Social Responsibility initiative.

78) Which of the following statement is true about PM-KISAN Yojna

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

2. Amount of 6000 per year is directly transferred into bank account of all landholding farmers

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Both statements are correct
PM Kisan Yojna: It is a Central Sector scheme launched by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare in 2019.

Its objective is to augment the income of the farmers by providing income support to all landholding farmers' families across the country and to enable them to take care of expenses related to agriculture and allied activities as well as domestic needs.

The Scheme initially provided income support to all small and Marginal Farmers' families across the country, holding cultivable land up to 2 hectares. Its ambit was later expanded to cover all farmer families in the country irrespective of the size of their land holdings

79) Consider the following statements regarding Seekho aur kamao scheme:

1. It is being implemented by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

2. One of its provisions is to improve the employability of existing workers.

3. It ensures placements of trainees in both organized and unorganized sector.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: It is being implemented by Ministry of Minority Affairs

Statement 2 is correct

Statement 3 is incorrect: It ensures a placement of 75% of trainees (minimum) and out of that at least 50% are placed in organized sector.

About Seekho aur Kamao Scheme:

Seekho aur Kamao (Learn & Earn) is a scheme implemented by the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

Purpose: It is a Skill development scheme for the youth of the 14 – 35 years age group. It aims at providing employment and employment opportunities, improving the employability of existing workers, school dropouts etc.

Implementation: The scheme is implemented through selected expert Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs).

The scheme ensures placements of a minimum of 75% trainees, out of which at least 50% placement is in the organized sector.

Moreover, Post-placement support of Rs. 2000/- per month is provided to placed trainees under the scheme for two months as placement assistance.

80) Consider the following statements regarding Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC):

1. It carries warm surface waters from the tropics towards the Equator.
2. Melting of glaciers weakens this circulation.
3. It is distributed to all ocean basins via the Antarctic circumpolar current.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: AMOC carries warm surface waters from the tropics towards the Northern Hemisphere, where it cools and sinks. It then returns to the tropics and then to the South Atlantic as a bottom current. From there it is distributed to all ocean basins via the Antarctic circumpolar current.

Statement 2 is correct: Researchers have found that a part of the Arctic's ice called the "Last Ice Area" has also melted. The freshwater from the melting ice reduces the salinity and density of the water. Now, the water is unable to sink as it used to and weakens the AMOC flow.

Statement 3 is correct

81) With reference to Digital Signature Certificates, consider the following statements:

1. It is issued only by the National Payments Corporation of India.
2. Once it is issued by the authorities it remains valid for only 6 months.
3. It is legally admissible in a court of law.

Correct statement is/are:

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

Explanation: Digital Signature Certificates (DSC) are the digital equivalent (that is electronic format) of physical or paper certificates. Digital certificates can be presented electronically to prove one's identity, to access information or services on the Internet or to sign certain documents digitally.

A licensed Certifying Authority (CA) issues the digital signature. Certifying Authority (CA) means a person who has been granted a license to issue a digital signature certificate under Section 24 of the Indian IT-Act 2000.

Digital Signatures are legally admissible in a Court of Law, as provided under the provisions of IT Act, 2000.

The Certifying Authorities are authorized to issue a Digital Signature Certificate with a validity of one or two years.

82) With reference to Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms, 2019, which of the following statements are correct?

1. They prohibit temporary tourism facilities such as toilet blocks and change rooms in Beaches.
2. They have stipulated a No Development Zone of 20 meters for Islands close to the mainland coast including Backwater Islands.
3. Sundarbans region of West Bengal and Gulf of Khambat have been recognized as Critically Vulnerable Coastal Areas.

Correct statement is/are given below:

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on January 18, 2019 notified the 2019 Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms, replacing the existing CRZ norms of 2011. The new CRZ norms are issued under Section 3 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

Salient Features of the norms include:

Two separate categories for CRZ-III (Rural) areas:

✓ CRZ-III A: The A category of CRZ-III areas are densely populated rural areas with a population density of 2161 per square kilometre as per 2011 Census. Such areas have a No Development Zone (NDZ) of 50 meters from the High Tide Line (HTL) as against 200 meters from the High Tide Line stipulated in the CRZ Notification, 2011.

✓ CRZ-III B - The B category of CRZ-III rural areas have population density of below 2161 per square kilometre as per 2011 Census. Such areas have a No Development Zone of 200 meters from the HTL. The new norms permit temporary tourism facilities such as shacks, toilet blocks, change rooms, drinking water facilities, etc. in Beaches. Such temporary tourism facilities are also now permissible in the "No Development Zone" (NDZ) of the CRZ-III areas as per the Notification.

However, a minimum distance of 10 m from HTL should be maintained for setting up of such facilities.

For islands close to the main land coast and for all Backwater Islands in the main land, No Development Zone of 20 meters has been stipulated in wake of space limitations and unique geography of such regions.

Sundarban region of West Bengal and other ecologically sensitive areas identified as under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 such as Gulf of Khambat and Gulf of Kutchh in Gujarat, Malvan, Achra-Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, Karwar and Coondapur in Karnataka, Vembanad in Kerala, Gulf of Mannar in Tamil Nadu, Bhitarkanika in Odisha, Coringa, East Godavari and Krishna in Andhra Pradesh shall be treated as Critical Vulnerable Coastal Areas (CVCA) and managed with the involvement of coastal communities including fisherfolk who depend on coastal resources for their sustainable livelihood.

83) Consider the following statements in context of OBC reservation in India:

1. Article 338B deals with the structure, duties and powers of the National Commission of Backward Class.
2. Only the central government can prepare a list of socially and educationally backward classes.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) was established under the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993.

The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Amendment) Bill, 2021 was passed by the Parliament. The Bill amends the Constitution to allow states and union territories to prepare their own list of socially and educationally backward classes. 2 is incorrect.

The Constitution (One Hundred and Second Amendment) Act, 2018 gave constitutional status to the NCBC, and empowered the President to notify the list of socially and educationally backward classes for any state or union territory for all purposes.

The 2021 Bill amends this to provide that the President may notify the list of socially and educationally backward classes only for purposes of the central government.

This central list will be prepared and maintained by the central government.

Further, the Bill enables states and union territories to prepare their own list of socially and educationally backward classes. This list must be made by law, and may differ from the central list.

Article 338B deals with the structure, duties and powers of the National Commission of Backward Class. 1 is correct.

Article 342A (1): Empowers the President to notify, in consultation with the governor, for each state and Union Territory, the list of socially and educationally backward classes.

Article 342A (2): Vests in Parliament the authority to include groups in the Central list or exclude them from it.

84) Peace forest Initiative recently seen in the news is launched by

a) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

b) United Nation Environment Programme

c) United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification

d) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Explanation: The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Government of the Republic of Korea Forest Service (KFS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish the Peace Forest Initiative (PFI).

The Initiative will support land and forest rehabilitation in post conflict areas to reduce peace and security challenges stemming from natural resource degradation.

The PFI was initially launched on 10 September 2019 during the 14th Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD in New Delhi, India. In supporting needs assessments, the Initiative will engender collaboration, provide guidance, support transparency and support local parties to conflict to resolve their disputes and grievances.

The PFI also aims to contribute to land degradation neutrality (LDN) implementation through partnerships that build peace and security.

The PFI launch precedes the commencement of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030.

85) Which of the following conventions/protocols originated from the Earth Summit, 1992?

1. Convention to Combat Desertification
2. Convention on Biological Diversity
3. Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Explanation: The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit, the Rio Summit, the Rio Conference, and the Earth Summit, was a major United Nations conference held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June in 1992.

The Earth Summit resulted in the following documents:

Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

Agenda 21

Forest Principles

Moreover, important legally binding agreements (Rio Convention) were opened for signature:

Convention on Biological Diversity

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

86) Consider the following statements regarding Census of India:

1. It is conducted by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
2. Till now the decennial Census of India has been conducted 14 times.
3. The individual data collected in Census under the Census Act, 1948, are not made public as per the provisions contained in the Act.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: In Census (decennial census), data is collected on demographic and various socio-economic parameters like education, SC/ST, religion, language, marriage, fertility, disability, occupation and migration of the individuals.

While it has been undertaken every 10 years, beginning in 1872 under British Viceroy Lord Mayo, the first complete census was taken in 1881.

Post 1949, it has been conducted by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The decennial Census of India has been conducted 15 times, as of 2011.

As per the official Gazette, the individual data collected in Census under the Census

Act, 1948, are not made public as per the provisions contained in the Act.

Only the aggregated Census data at various administrative levels are released.

87) The Gadaba, Paroja and Omanatya tribes belong to:

a) Gujarat

b) Odisha

c) Bihar

d) Jharkhand

Explanation: Omanatya tribes belong to the state of Odisha.

Gadabas belong to the Munda group of tribes found largely in Lamataput, Similiguda and Pottangi block of the district. The name Gadaba seems to have been derived from the word "Gada" which is a name of the river in the region and the final syllable "ba" means belonging to. They speak Gutab and Desia dialect of the Austro-Asiatic language family.

Omanatya are a tribal group who possibly derive their name from the word 'Amatya' which means Minister of State Affairs in the ancient Indian princely provinces. This group of tribes mostly depends on agriculture for their livelihoods. While the men folks are clad in simple clothes while the women folks are adorned with traditional jewelry and distinctly adorn a black bead of necklace worn around the neck.

Parojas are one of the largely populated tribes of Koratpur region of Odisha. The word Paroja is derived from a local Odia term 'Praja' which literally refers to the common citizens of the kingdom. Their artistic talents find expression in Dhemsa, Dungdung dances and in laga songs. The

Paraja have many socio cultural features in common with the neighbouring major tribes namely the Gond, the Kondh and the Gadaba.

88) Which of the following is the objective of "Ujjwala", a scheme of government

a) To provide electricity to every household in the country by 2022

b) To provide LPG connections to women from Below Poverty Line

c) To provide financial assistance to start-up entrepreneurs in field of Renewable energy

d) For the construction of smart cities across the country

Explanation: About Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY): Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana was launched by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in 2018. Aim: To replace the unclean cooking fuels mostly used in rural India with the clean and more efficient LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas). Under the scheme, an adult woman member of a below poverty line family identified through the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) was given a deposit-free LPG connection with the financial assistance of Rs 1,600 per connection by the Centre. Target: Initially the target was the installation of 5 crores LPG connections by 2019. But the target was revised to 8 crores which was achieved in August 2019.

89) Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary is located in which of the following states?

a) Uttar Pradesh

b) Haryana

c) Gujarat

d) Rajasthan

Explanation: About Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary:

Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the Jhajjar district of Haryana. In 2009, it was declared as a bird sanctuary by the Indian Government.

The sanctuary is an important part of the ecological corridor along the route of Sahibi River which traverses from Aravalli hills in Rajasthan to the Yamuna. The sanctuary is located just 1.5 km from Khaparwas Wildlife Sanctuary.

The sanctuary is an important wetland that provides a safe habitat to numerous animals and plants.

A total of 265 species of birds have been reported from the site. More than 30,000 migratory birds belonging to over 250 species visit Bhindawas throughout the year.

90) Consider the following statements regarding MGNREGA

1. It is a guaranteed wage employment scheme applicable in both rural and urban areas
2. It provides provision for 1/3 reservation for women
3. Gram Sabha has the power for issuing of job cards

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: MGNREGA guarantees 100 days of work a year to every rural household with an aim to enhance the livelihood security of people. Statement 2 is correct Statement 3 is correct

91) With reference to the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), consider the following statements:

1. ONDC is globally first-of-its-kind initiative that aims to democratise Digital Commerce, moving it from a platform-centric model to an open-network.
2. It will enable, buyers and sellers to be digitally visible and transact through an open network.

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

Explanation: The Union Minister of Commerce & Industry chaired a meeting for the review of the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) initiative of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

ONDC is globally first-of-its-kind initiative that aims to democratise Digital Commerce, moving it from a platform-centric model to an open-network.

As UPI is to the digital payment domain, ONDC is to e-commerce in India.

ONDC will enable, buyers and sellers to be digitally visible and transact through an

open network. no matter what platform/application they use.

ONDC will empower merchants and consumers by breaking silos to form a single network to drive innovation and scale, transforming all businesses from retail goods, food to mobility

ONDC will be compliant with the Information Technology Act, 2000 and designed for compliance with the emerging Personal Data Protection Bill.

Hence both statements are correct.

92) With reference to the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, consider the following statements:

1. It prohibits identified single use plastic items which have low utility and high littering potential by 2022.
2. Polystyrene and expanded polystyrene are exempt from prohibition.

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

Explanation: Union Ministry of Environment has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, which prohibits identified single use plastic items which have low utility and high littering potential by 2022.

In the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly held in 2019, India had piloted a resolution on addressing single-use plastic products pollution, recognizing the urgent

need for the global community to focus on this very important issue.

The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of following single-use plastic, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene, commodities shall be prohibited with effect from the 1st July, 2022:

ear buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, polystyrene [Thermocol] for decoration;

plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping or packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, stirrers.

In order to stop littering due to light weight plastic carry bags, with effect from 30th September, 2021, the thickness of plastic carry bags has been increased from fifty microns to seventy five microns and to one hundred and twenty microns with effect from the 31st December, 2022.

The plastic packaging waste, which is not covered under the phase out of identified single use plastic items, shall be collected and managed in an environmentally sustainable way through the Extended Producer Responsibility of the Producer, importer and Brand owner (PIBO), as per Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

For effective implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility the Guidelines for Extended Producer Responsibility being brought out have been given legal force through Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

93) With reference to the vehicle scrappage policy, consider the following statements:

1. The scrappage policy will come into effect after the expiry of this 10 or 15 year period.
2. As per the motor vehicle law, renewal of fitness certificate annually is mandatory for a commercial vehicle once it is older than eight 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

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the vehicle scrappage policy with an aim to phase out old and unfit vehicles in an environment-friendly manner. The goal for 21st century India to be Clean, Congestion Free & Convenient Mobility, is the need of the hour," Modi said.

As per law, a registration certificate for a passenger vehicle is valid for 15 years from date of issue. For a commercial vehicle, it is valid for a period of 10 years.

The scrappage policy will come into effect after the expiry of this 10 or 15 year period. The vehicle will then have to undergo a mandatory fitness test.

As per the motor vehicle law, renewal of fitness certificate annually is mandatory for a commercial vehicle once it is older than eight years. For the first eight years, such vehicles will need to undergo the test after every two years.

If a vehicle passes the fitness test then it will have to repeat the same after every 5 years to keep a check. A valid fitness certificate will be necessary for renewal of registration certificates after 15 years. The renewed certificate will be issued for a period of 5 years in case of private vehicles.

Incentives for scrapping old vehicles

Firstly, owners of such vehicles will get a scrap value which will be equivalent to 4 per cent to 6 per cent of the ex-showroom price of the new vehicle that they would be purchasing.

Secondly, there will be zero registration fees for new vehicle purchased if the owner shows a certificate of deposit.

Thirdly, state governments have been asked to offer concessions on motor vehicle tax. The concessions include up to 25 per cent for non-transport vehicles and up to 15 per cent for transport vehicles.

Fourthly, vehicle manufacturers have been advised to provide 5 per cent discount on purchase of new vehicle against certificate of deposit.

Hence both statements are correct.

94) Which of the following has released a handbook to guide state governments and local bodies in India to frame policies and norms towards setting up charging networks for electric vehicles?

- a) NITI Aayog**
- b) CSIR
- c) Association for Democratic Reforms
- d) None of the above

Explanation: NITI Aayog has released a handbook to guide state governments and

local bodies to frame policies and norms towards setting up charging networks for electric vehicles.

“The Handbook for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Implementation” has been jointly developed by NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Department of Science and Technology, Bureau of Energy Efficiency, and World Resources Institute India.

The Handbook provides a systematic and a holistic approach for adoptions by implementing authorities and other stakeholders involved in planning, authorisation and execution of electric vehicles charging infrastructure.

The objective is to enhance charging infrastructure and facilitate a rapid transition to electric mobility in the country.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

95) Plastic pollution is the accumulation of plastic objects and particles in the Earth's environment that adversely affects wildlife, wildlife habitat, and humans. The burning of plastics release which of the following toxins into the atmosphere?

1. Dioxins
2. Barium
3. Mercury
4. Lead
5. Furans

Which of the toxins given above are released during the burning of plastics?

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

c) 1, 3 and 5 only

d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Explanation: Incineration of plastic waste in an open field is a major source of air pollution. Most of the times, the municipal solid waste containing about 12% of plastics is burnt, releasing toxic gases like Dioxins, Furans, Mercury and Polychlorinated Biphenyls into the atmosphere.

Dioxin is a general term that describes a group of hundreds of chemicals that are highly persistent in the environment.

The most toxic compound is 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin or TCDD.

Furan is a heterocyclic organic compound, it is a colorless, flammable, highly volatile liquid with a boiling point close to room temperature.

96) Consider following statements about GM crop.

1. Bt cotton is the only Genetically Modified (GM) crop that is allowed in India.
2. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is the apex body that allows for commercial release of GM crops.

Correct statement is/are:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2**
- d) None of the above

Explanation: Genetic modification aims to transcend the genus barrier by introducing an alien gene in the seeds to get the desired effects.

The alien gene could be from a plant, an animal or even a soil bacterium.

Bt cotton is the only Genetically Modified (GM) crop that is allowed in India.

It has alien genes from the soil bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) that allows the crop to develop a protein toxic to the common pest pink bollworm.

In India, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is the apex body that allows for commercial release of GM crops.

97) Consider the following Central Acts:

1. Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
2. Forest Conservation Act, 1980
3. Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

From which of the acts given above, the Central Pollution Control Board derives its powers and functions?

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

Explanation: The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), statutory organisation, was constituted in September, 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. Further, CPCB was entrusted with the powers and functions under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

It serves as a field formation and also provides technical services to the Ministry of Environment and Forests of the provisions of the Environment

(Protection) Act, 1986. Principal Functions of the CPCB, as spelt out in the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, (i) to promote cleanliness of streams and wells in different areas of the States by prevention, control and abatement of water pollution, and (ii) to improve the quality of air and to prevent, control or abate air pollution in the country.

Hence, from the given acts, CPCB derives its powers and functions from only the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

98) Consider the following statements regarding E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016

1. Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) has been exempted from the purview of these rules to enhance its manufacturing capacity
2. The Micro and Small industry sector as defined in Micro Small and Medium Developmental Act, 2006 has been brought under the purview of these rules.
3. Collection has now exclusively becomes Producer's responsibility, which can set up collection centre or point or even can arrange buy back mechanism for such collection.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Explanation: Salient Features of the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016

Applicability- Extended to components, consumables, spares and parts of EEE in addition to equipment as listed in Schedule I. Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) and other mercury containing lamps brought under the purview of rules. 1 is incorrect

Exemption- Exemption continues for micro enterprises; however small enterprises, which have been referred as one of the major source of generation of e-waste, have been included in the rules for responsibility as manufacturer, without burdening them with EPR responsibility as applicable to Producers. 2 is incorrect

Collection Mechanism- Collection is now exclusively Producer's responsibility, which can set up a collection centre or point or even arrange buy back mechanism for such collection.3 is correct

99) Which of the following protected area is a UNESCO world heritage site and hosts the largest population of great one-horned rhinoceroses in the world?

- a) Kaziranga
- b) Manas
- c) Orang
- d) Khangchendzonga

Explanation: Kaziranga National Park is located in Karbi Anglong and Nagaon districts of the state of Assam.

It is home to more than 2200 Indian one-horned rhinoceros, approximately 2/3rd of their total world population.

Formed in 1908 on the recommendation of Mary Curzon, the park is located in the edge of the Eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspots – Golaghat and Nagaon district.

In the year 1985, the park was declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Along with the iconic Greater one-horned rhinoceros, the park is the breeding ground of elephants, wild water buffalo, and swamp deer.

Over the time, the tiger population has also increased in Kaziranga, and that's the reason why Kaziranga was declared as Tiger Reserve in 2006.

Also, the park is recognized as an Important Bird Area by BirdLife International for the conservation of avifaunal species. Birds like lesser white-fronted goose, ferruginous duck, Baer's pochard duck and lesser adjutant, greater adjutant, black-necked stork, and Asian Openbill stork specially migrate from the Central Asia during the winter season.

100) Consider the following statements regarding Government-aided minority educational institutions in India:

1. Government cannot regulate the appointment of teachers in these institutions.
2. Right to Education Act does not apply to these institutions.

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

Explanation: The Supreme Court in a recent judgment has said that the Govt can regulate the appointment of teachers for ensuring excellence in minority institutes, it is not a violation of Article 30. An objection can certainly be raised if an unfavourable treatment is meted out to an educational institution established and administered by a minority. 1 is incorrect.

In the Pramati case, the bench of SC upheld the constitutional validity of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE) and exempted all minority institutions from the RTE. This is an expansion of the ambit of exemption which had limited it to unaided minority institutions. Minority institutions here refer to both religious and linguistic minorities, as referred to within the Constitution. 2 is correct.

101) With reference to the fortification of rice, consider the following statements:

1. According to the FSSAI norms, 1 kg fortified rice shall contain iron (28mg-42.5mg), folic acid (75-125 microgram) and Vitamin B-12 (0.75-1.25 microgram).
2. Rice cannot be fortified with micronutrients

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

Explanation: Emphasising that malnutrition is a “hurdle” in the development of women and children, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced fortification of rice distributed under

various government schemes including Public Distribution System (PDS) and Mid-Day-Meal scheme by 2024.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) defines the fortification as “deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients in a food so as to improve the nutritional quality of food and to provide public health benefit with minimal risk to health.”

According to the FSSAI norms, 1 kg fortified rice shall contain iron (28mg-42.5mg), folic acid (75-125 microgram) and Vitamin B-12 (0.75-1.25 microgram).

In addition, rice may also be fortified with micronutrients, singly or in combination, at the level– zinc(10mg-15mg), Vitamin A (500-750 microgram RE), Vitamin B1 (1mg-1.5mg), Vitamin B2 (1.25mg-1.75mg), Vitamin B3 (12.5mg-20mg) and Vitamin B6 (1.5mg-2.5mg) per Kg.

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution had launched a centrally sponsored pilot scheme on “Fortification of Rice and its Distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS)” for a period of three years beginning 2019-20 with a total budget outlay of Rs.174.64 crore. The pilot scheme focuses on 15 districts in 15 states.

Under the scheme, the blending of rice is done at the milling stage. According to the Ministry, Maharashtra and Gujarat have started distribution of fortified rice under PDS in the Pilot Scheme from February, 2020.

The Scheme is funded by the Government of India in the ratio of 90:10 in respect of North Eastern, hilly and island states and 75:25 in respect of the rest.

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

102) With reference to the 'PM Gati Shakti Master Plan', consider the following statements:

1. On India's 75th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of 'PM Gati Shakti Master Plan'.
2. It is a Rs. 100 lakh-crore project for developing 'holistic infrastructure'.

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

Explanation: On India's 75th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Centre will launch 'PM Gati Shakti Master Plan', a Rs. 100 lakh-crore project for developing 'holistic infrastructure'.

In his speech, PM Modi pegged the project as a source of employment opportunities for the youth in future.

The Gati Shakti plan will help raise the global profile of local manufacturers and help them compete with their counterparts worldwide. It also raises possibilities of new future economic zones.

More details and the launch date of the project are awaited. Other significant announcements include the launch of the National Hydrogen Mission and the opening up Sainik Schools for girls.

Hence both statements are correct.

103) With reference to the Ramsar Convention, consider the following statements:

1. Sultanpur National Park in Gurgaon and Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary in Jhajjar are not part of Ramsar convention.
2. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar.

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

Explanation: India added another feather in its cap when four more sites - two each from Haryana and Gujarat - were recognised as wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

Sultanpur National Park in Gurgaon and Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary in Jhajjar (both in Haryana) have been added to the list this year.

Apart from that, Thol and Wadhvana from Gujarat too have now become a part of the convention.

Haryana's Bhindawas Wildlife Sanctuary is a human-made freshwater wetland. It is also the largest in Haryana.

The Sultanpur National Park supports more than 220 species of resident, winter migratory and local migratory waterbirds at critical stages of their life cycles.

The Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat lies on the Central Asian Flyway and more than 320 bird species can be found here.

Meanwhile, the Wadhvana Wetland in Gujarat is internationally important for its birdlife as it provides wintering ground to migratory waterbirds, including over 80 species that migrate on the Central Asian Flyway.

The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea.

It came into force for India on February 1, 1982. Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites.

Last year, Ramsar declared 10 more wetland sites from India as sites of international importance.

Hence only statement 2 is correct.

104) With reference to the 'incel' movement, consider the following statements:

1. Incels are a largely online community of men who describe themselves as "involuntary celibates.
2. An extreme section of Incels even advocate violence against women.

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

Explanation: The 'incel' movement, a dangerous online subculture comprising men who identify as 'involuntary celibates' and regularly express deeply misogynistic views about women, is slowly becoming a threat to law and order, experts have warned.

Incels are a largely online community of men who describe themselves as "involuntary celibates. Men who are part of this movement harbour a deep resentment towards both women and other men who are sexually active.

The blame women for their own lack of sexual and social status. While views tend to vary, some believe that sex is their right — something that is owed to them by virtue of them being males.

An extreme section of Incels even advocate violence against women.

What are the 'red pill' and 'black pill' mentalities promoted by incels?

The 'black pill' theory, often associated with incels, promotes the defeatist idea that your fate is sealed at birth and no matter what changes you try to make, your sexual capital cannot be altered

'Red pillers', on the other hand, believe the world is biased toward women, and see feminism as female supremacy. They believe there is a systemic bias in favour of women.

Hence both statements are correct.

105) With reference to the Vande Bharat, consider the following statements:

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that 75 'Vande Bharat' trains will connect different parts of the country

in 75 weeks to mark the ongoing 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

2. It is the indigenous semi-high speed train.

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

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that 75 'Vande Bharat' trains will connect different parts of the country in 75 weeks to mark the ongoing 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'.

Vande Bharat — the indigenous semi-high speed train set — is being given a boost, with the Railways gearing to roll out at least 10 of them, linking around 40 cities, by August 2022 to commemorate 75 years of Independence.

Hyderabad-based engineering firm, Medha, which in February secured the contract to supply the electrical systems for 44 Vande Bharat trains, has now been told to advance its production plan, so that at least two prototypes can be rolled out by next March following all trials.

Hence both statements are correct.

106) Consider the following statements:

1. Use of the unapproved genetically modified crop can attract a jail term of 5 years under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

2. FSSAI is the authorised body to regulate the imported crops in India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) is the apex body that allows for commercial release of GM crops.

In India, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and the products thereof are regulated under the "Rules for the manufacture, use, import, export & storage of hazardous microorganisms, genetically engineered organisms or cells, 1989" (referred to as Rules, 1989) notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Use of the unapproved genetically modified (GM) variant can attract a jail term of 5 years and fine of Rs. 1 lakh under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is a statutory body established under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

FSSAI is responsible for protecting and promoting public health through the regulation and supervision of food safety. FSSAI is also authorised to regulate the imported crops in India.

107) Consider the following statements regarding Wadhavana Wetland:

1. It is located in Haryana.

2. It is an internationally important wetland famous for endangered Pallas's fish-Eagle.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Wadhvana Wetland from Gujarat is internationally important for its birdlife as it provides wintering ground to migratory waterbirds, including over 80 species that migrate on the Central Asian Flyway.

They include some threatened or near-threatened species such as the endangered Pallas's fish-Eagle, the vulnerable Common Pochard, and the near-threatened Dalmatian Pelican, Grey-headed Fish-eagle and Ferruginous Duck.

This site has recently received recognition as Ramsar site.

108) The Ramsar site of 'Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary' is located in:

- a) Gujarat**
- b) Haryana
- c) Punjab
- d) Rajasthan

Explanation: The Thol Lake Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Gujarat.

It lies on the Central Asian Flyway and more than 320 bird species can be found here.

The wetland supports more 30 threatened waterbird species, such as the critically

endangered White-rumped Vulture and Sociable Lapwing, and the vulnerable Sarus Crane, Common Pochard and Lesser White-fronted Goose.

It is recently designated as the Ramsar Site.

109) Consider the following statements about UNCLOS

1. It is the only international convention which provides framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces.

2. India is not the member of UNCLOS

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct Statement 2 is incorrect: India became a signatory to the UNCLOS in 1982

110) Consider the following statements regarding Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC):

1. It carries warm surface waters from the tropics towards the Equator.

2. Melting of glaciers weakens this circulation.

3. It is distributed to all ocean basins via the Antarctic circumpolar current.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only**
- c) 3 only

d) 1 and 2 only

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: AMOC carries warm surface waters from the tropics towards the Northern Hemisphere, where it cools and sinks. It then returns to the tropics and then to the South Atlantic as a bottom current. From there it is distributed to all ocean basins via the Antarctic circumpolar current.

Statement 2 is correct: Researchers have found that a part of the Arctic's ice called the "Last Ice Area" has also melted. The freshwater from the melting ice reduces the salinity and density of the water. Now, the water is unable to sink as it used to and weakens the AMOC flow.

Statement 3 is correct

111) Which of the following pairs is/are correctly matched?

**Regions in news
Country**

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1.Badakhshan | Iraq |
| 2.Kunduz | Iran |
| 3.Balkh | Afghanistan |

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

a) 3 only

b) 1 and 2 only

c) 2 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Taliban forces have swept across Afghanistan, finally capturing the capital city of Kabul. As people are desperately trying to leave Afghanistan, many will likely seek refuge in neighbouring Tajikistan.

First, Tajikistan will have to consider the sentiments of Afghan-Tajiks, some who have been welcomed in the Taliban's ranks but the majority of whom passionately reject the group.

Second, Dushanbe will be cognisant of the rise in extremism caused by the dominance of the Taliban, and the impact it will have on radical factions within Tajikistan who aim to establish an Emirate of their own.

Thirdly, Tajikistan will have to find ways to police its porous border with Afghanistan in order to prevent illicit drugs and refugees from overflowing into the country.

History of relations

Tajikistan lies on Afghanistan's northeastern border, adjacent to the Afghan provinces of Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz and Balkh.

The 1200-km border is also home to the junction between the Hindu Kush and Karakoram Mountains, and is characterised by its rocky, inhospitable terrain.

For a long time, Tajikistan was considered to be under the influence of the Persians, and many ethnic Tajiks residing in Afghanistan retain similar cultural values. Today, Tajikistan, a small landlocked Central Asian nation, has a predominantly Muslim population and is largely considered to be undemocratic, volatile, and economically unstable.

Until 1991, Tajikistan was a part of the Soviet Union.

When Moscow invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Tajikistan, along with the other

Soviet Socialist Republics in Central Asia, supported the takeover.

Tajikistan's support for the Soviets made them a target of the Afghan Mujahadeen who launched attacks against the country in 1987. Due to the close cultural and kinship ties between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, many Tajiks secretly joined the Afghan jihad, fighting alongside the Mujahadeen.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

112) The area known as 'Bagram Airfield' recently appeared in the news is related to which of the following country?

- a) Iraq
- b) Iran
- c) Afghanistan**
- d) Egypt

Explanation: Bagram Airfield-BAF is also known as Bagram Air Base is an Afghan military base, and formerly the largest U.S. military base) in Afghanistan.

It is located next to the ancient city of Bagram, 11 kilometers (6.8 mi) southeast of Charikar in the Parwan Province of Afghanistan.

More about it:

An Afghan official says forces at Bagram airbase, home to a prison housing 5,000 inmates, have surrendered to the Taliban. The prison housed both Taliban and Islamic State group fighters.

113) With reference to Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme, consider the following statements

1. It is launched by the Ministry of Finance

2. The scheme is aimed to boost domestic defense & aerospace manufacturing.

3. The projects under the scheme will be provided with up to 75% govt funding in the form of 'Grants in Aids'

Which of the above statements given is/are correct?

- a) 1 & 2 only
- b) 2 & 3 only**
- c) All the above
- d) None of the above

Explanation: Statement 1 is INCORRECT. It was launched by the Ministry of Defence.

Statement 2 and Statement 3 are CORRECT:

to boost domestic defense & aerospace manufacturing Defence Testing Infrastructure scheme was launched with an outlay of Rs 400 crore for creating state-of-the-art testing infrastructure in partnership with the private industry.

The project under the scheme will be provided with up to 75% govt funding in the form of Grant-in-Aid.

The remaining 25% of the project cost will have to be borne by the SPV constituents of which will be the Indian private entities & state govts.

The scheme would run for the duration of five years & envisages the setting up of 6-8 Greenfield Defence Testing Infrastructure facilities that are required for defense & aerospace-related production.

114) Which among the following countries is not a member of the Forum

of the Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA)?

- a) Afghanistan
- b) Bhutan
- c) Myanmar**
- d) Pakistan

Explanation: FEMBoSA was established at the 3rd Conference of Heads of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of SAARC Countries held at New Delhi from April 30 to May 2, 2012 through a unanimously adopted resolution on 1st May, 2012 to establish the Forum.

The Conference also unanimously adopted the Charter of the Forum.

The annual FEMBoSA meeting is held by rotation among the members.

Besides Election Commission of India (ECI), the other 7 members are Election Management Bodies (EMBs) from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The FEMBoSA represents a very large part of the democratic world and is an active regional association of the election management bodies of South Asia.

The objectives of the Forum are to promote contact among the EMBs of the SAARC countries; share experiences with a view to learning from each other and cooperate with one another in enhancing the capabilities of the EMBs towards conducting free and fair elections.

115) With reference to the human development, consider the following statements:

1. The concept of human development was solely developed by Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.

2. Life expectancy at birth, education and access to public employment are the three components of the Human Development Index.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Explanation: The human development approach, developed by the economist Mahbub Ul Haq, is anchored in the Nobel laureate Amartya Sen's work on human capabilities, often framed in terms of whether people are able to "be" and "do" desirable things in life. 1 is incorrect.

Working with Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen and other gifted economists, in 1990 Dr. Haq published the first Human Development Report, which was commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme.

Measuring Human Development – The human development index (HDI) ranks the countries based on their performance in the key areas of health, education and access to resources. 2 is incorrect.

These rankings are based on a score between 0 to 1 that a country earns from its record in the key areas of human development.

116) Consider the following statements regarding IndiGau

1. It is India's first Cattle Genomic Chip for the conservation of all the cattle species

2. These chips are launched by the Ministry of Science & Technology

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Recently Union Minister of Science & Technology has launched 'IndiGau'.

IndiGau is India's first Cattle Genomic Chip for the conservation of pure varieties of indigenous cattle breeds like Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal, Ongole etc.

Developed by: National Institute of Animal Biotechnology (NAIB), Hyderabad, an autonomous institution under the aegis of the Department of Biotechnology.

117) SonChiraiya was recently seen in news. Which of the following correctly explains it?

a) It is a new form of handicraft art getting popular in Maharashtra

b) It is a brand and logo for the marketing of urban Self-Help Group (SHG) products.

c) It is a new scheme to popularize solar energy products in India

d) It is a traditional wood-crafting style popular in the Deccan

Explanation: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched 'SonChiraiya'. About SonChiraiya:

SonChiraiya is a brand and logo for the marketing of urban Self-Help Group (SHG) products.

This will help in improving visibility and global access for the products made by urban SHG women.

118) With reference to "Aseem Portal", which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is launched by the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

2. It is an artificial intelligence-based platform that aims to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: About Aseem Portal The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has launched 'Atma Nirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping' (ASEEM) portal. Facts:

ASEEM Portal: It is an artificial intelligence-based platform that aims to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities by providing employers a platform to assess the availability of skilled workforce and formulate their hiring plans.

Developed by: The portal has been developed by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in collaboration with Better Place.

119) 'Operation Meghdoot' was an:

a) Operation to seize control of the Siachen Glacier

b) Operation to end the rule of the Nizam of Hyderabad

c) Indian operation to push back the infiltrators from the Kargil Sector

d) Indian Army-led rescue and relief mission in quake-hit Nepal

Explanation: Operation Meghdoot was the codename for an Indian military operation to take control over the Siachen Glacier in Kashmir.

120) 'Khyber Pass' is a mountain pass between:

a) Pakistan & Afghanistan

b) Afghanistan & Uzbekistan

c) Afghanistan & Tajikistan

d) Afghanistan & Turkmenistan

Explanation: The Khyber Pass is a mountain pass in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan, on the border with Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province.

121) “Vriksharopan Abhiyan 2021” recently seen in news, is an initiative of:

- a) Union Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
- b) Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- c) Union Ministry of Rural Development

d) Union Ministry of Coal

Explanation: During this year, coal/lignite PSUs of the Ministry of Coal have set an ambitious target under the “Go Greening” drive to cover 2385 hectares of area under bio-reclamation/plantation.

The “Go Greening” drive is to be provided the right impetus through launch of the “Vriksharopan Abhiyan 2021” on 19th August 2021 by the Union Minister of Coal & Mines.

It is expected that more than 300 plantation sites in and around coalfields across the country will be connected during the Abhiyan on 19th through live Video Conferencing.

Benefits:

Vriksharopan Abhiyan 2021 will surely bring environment sustainability in mining operations and help coal sector obtain social and environmental licence to operate, which will be very crucial in coming days when more mines will be opened up involving new players.

Also, the Abhiyan is expected to sensitize and motivate the society and common people to take up more and more afforestation initiatives in their neighbouring areas.

Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.

122) With reference to the RoDTEP Scheme Guidelines and Rates (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products), consider the following statements:

1. The rebate under the Scheme shall not be available in respect of duties and taxes already exempted or remitted or credited.
2. Scheme is to be implemented by Customs through a simplified IT System.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Centre has notified RoDTEP Scheme Guidelines and Rates (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products).

The scheme for zero rating of exports will boost our exports & competitiveness in the global markets. The rates of RoDTEP will cover 8555 tariff lines.

Scheme’s objective is to refund, currently un-refunded:

Duties/ taxes/ levies, at the Central, State & local level, borne on the exported product, including prior stage cumulative indirect taxes on goods & services used in production of the exported product, and

Such indirect Duties/ taxes/ levies in respect of distribution of exported products.

It may be noted that rebate under the Scheme shall not be available in respect of

duties and taxes already exempted or remitted or credited.

Scheme is to be implemented by Customs through a simplified IT System. Rebate will be issued in the form of a transferable duty credit/ electronic scrip (e-scrip) which will be maintained in an electronic ledger by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC).

Hence both statements are correct.

123) With reference to the 'Student Entrepreneurship Program' (SEP 3.0), consider the following statements:

1. The theme of SEP 3.0 is based on the 'Made in 3D - Seed the Future Entrepreneurs Program'.
2. It is an initiative of Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

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

Explanation: Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) NITI Aayog in collaboration with La Fondation Dassault Systemes in India launched the third series of the 'Student Entrepreneurship Program' (SEP 3.0) for the young innovators of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL).

The theme of SEP 3.0 is based on the 'Made in 3D - Seed the Future Entrepreneurs Program', conceptualized and rolled out in France by La Main à la Pate Foundation and La Fondation Dassault Systèmes Europe in 2017.

As part of this program, a team from each school (6 students and a teacher) will be allocated seed funding towards creating their own start-up, design and prototype their innovation using 3D printing, prepare marketing campaign, define product pricing and create expansion strategy.

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

124) With reference to the FI-Index, consider the following statements:

1. It is published biennially.
2. It has been constructed without any 'base year'.

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

Explanation: The Reserve Bank of India has created a composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) to capture the extent of financial inclusion across the country.

The announcement regarding the creation of the Financial Inclusion Index was made in the first Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Statement for 2021-2022 on 17 April.

The annual FI-Index for the period ending March 2021 is 53.9 against 43.4 for the period ending March 2017. The FI-Index will be published annually in July every year.

The FI-Index has been conceptualised as a comprehensive index, incorporating details of banking, investments, insurance,

postal as well as the pension sector, in consultation with government and respective sectoral regulators.

It also captures information on the financial inclusion aspects in a single value ranging between 0-100, where 0 represents complete financial exclusion and 100 indicates full financial inclusion.

The FI-Index comprises three broad parameters -- Access (35%), Usage (45%), and Quality (20%), with each of these consisting of dimensions computed based on many indicators.

The Index is also responsive to the ease of access, availability and the usage of services, and the quality of services, comprising all 97 indicators.

A unique feature of the Index is the quality parameter, which captures the quality aspect of financial inclusion as reflected by the financial literacy, consumer protection, and inequalities and deficiencies in services.

The FI-Index has been constructed without any 'base year', and as such it reflects cumulative efforts of all stakeholders over the years towards financial inclusion.

Hence only statement 2 is correct.

125) India's first Composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) released by:

- a) NITI Aayog
- b) NPCI
- c) RBI**
- d) Ministry of Finance

Explanation: Recently RBI unveiled India's first composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) which seeks to capture the

extent of financial inclusion across the country.

More about it:

As per the central bank, the FI-Index has been conceptualized as a comprehensive index incorporating details of banking, investments, insurance, postal as well as the pension sector in consultation with government and sectoral regulators.

The FI-Index comprises three broad parameters — access (35 % weightage), usage (45%), and quality (20%) — with each of these consisting of various dimensions, which are computed based on several indicators.

The index is responsive to ease of access, availability, and usage of services, and quality of services, comprising, in all, 97 indicators.

The index has been constructed without any "base year", and reflects the cumulative efforts of all stakeholders.

It will be published annually in July.

A unique feature of the index is the parameter related to the quality of financial inclusion as reflected by financial literacy, consumer protection, and inequalities and deficiencies in service.

126) With reference to Mudumalai Tiger reserve which of the following statements are correct?

1. It is part of Agasthyamalai Biosphere reserve.
2. It is one of the tiger reserve in the region where elephants are not recorded in the census.
3. It has habitat of critically endangered Indian white rumped vulture.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

a) 3 only

b) 1 and 2 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1,2 and 3

Explanation: Statement 1 is INCORRECT. Mudumalai tiger reserve is part of Nilgiri biosphere reserve, in Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu. It is also part of Western Ghats cluster.

Statement 2 is INCORRECT. Mudumalai tiger reserve has one of the largest elephant populations in the region. Nilgiri reserve also houses 120 tigers.

Statement 3 is CORRECT. There is high diversity of fauna and flora in the park. Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, elephants are present. It also provides habitat for critically endangered species like Indian white rumped vulture and long billed vulture.

127) In the Independence Day speech, the Prime Minister of India has announced Gati Shakti master plan. In this context consider the following statements:

1. It is aimed towards development of high speed trains for faster mobility.

2. The plan will help raise the global profile of local manufacturers.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Gati Shakti will be a National Infrastructure Master Plan for our country which will lay the foundation of holistic Infrastructure.

100 lakh crores rupees will be dedicated to the plan.

The plan will help raise the global profile of local manufacturers and help them compete with their counterparts worldwide.

It also raises possibilities of new future economic zones.

128) The word "Karez" was seen recently in news; consider the following statements regarding this:

1. It is a type of water management and irrigation system.

2. In India Karez was introduced by the Mughals.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Karez is a type of water management and irrigation system.

This is a system of underground vertical shafts in a gently sloping tunnel that is built from an upland aquifer to ground level, is present in several countries.

Some historians and archaeologists have attributed people in the southeast Arabian Peninsula as the first developers.

Others, however, ascribe it to the ancient Persians.

The Qanat / Karez system, wherever it was developed, soon spread to many Persian, Arab and Turkic lands.

It even came to the Indian Subcontinent during the 800-year-old Islamic Period.

The system was brought in the Indian Subcontinent during the Bahamani Sultanate, founded by Alaudin Bahman Shah.

It later broke into five other Sultanates: Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmadnagar, Bidar and Berar.

The Bahamani Sultanate was Persianate in nature and encouraged many things Persian, among them, the Karez.

129) Recently, the QUAD included Taiwan Strait in talks for peace and stability. The Taiwan Strait connects:

- a) South China Sea to Java Sea
- b) Java Sea to Calabes Sea
- c) South China Sea to East China Sea**
- d) Philippine Sea to East China Sea

Explanation: The Taiwan Strait is a 180-kilometer wide strait separating the island of Taiwan and continental Asia. The strait is part of the South China Sea and connects to the East China Sea to the north.

Among the most heavily policed strips of water in the world, the strait has remained an active battlefield between People's Republic of China (mainland China) and republic of China (Taiwan).

It is also part of flashpoint between US-China over freedom-of-navigation in Indo-Pacific region.

130) In context of Arbitration and Conciliation (amendment) Act 2019 recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. For international commercial arbitration, appointments will be made by the institution designated by the High Court
2. The arbitral tribunals have to give award within a period of twelve months for international commercial arbitrations.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Explanation: Under the earlier act, parties were free to appoint arbitrators. In case of disagreement on an appointment, the parties could request the Supreme Court, or the concerned High Court, or any person or institution designated by such Court, to appoint an arbitrator.

However now under the new Arbitration and Conciliation (amendment) Act 2019, the Supreme Court and High Courts may now designate arbitral institutions, which parties can approach for the appointment of arbitrators. 1 is incorrect.

Under the Act, arbitral tribunals are required to make their award within a period of 12 months for all arbitration proceedings. The Bill seeks to remove this

time restriction for international commercial arbitrations. It adds that tribunals must endeavour to dispose off international arbitration matters within 12 months. 2 is incorrect.

131) With reference to the MoU on International Trade and Investment Law, consider the following statements:

1. The Union Cabinet has recently approved the signing of a MoU between Permanent Mission of India to the WTO (PMI), Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, and Centre for Trade and Economic Integration (CTEI) within The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.
2. The MoU will remain in force for three 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

Explanation: The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a MoU between Permanent Mission of India to the WTO (PMI), Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, and Centre for Trade and Economic Integration (CTEI) within The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.

The MoU with CTEI of The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva will provide valuable academic and research opportunities to the employees of CTIL

and the Department of Commerce in the field of international trade and investment law.

The collaboration between academicians, practitioners, jurists, policy makers, and students from India, Switzerland and other countries would help create a technical and nuanced understanding of emerging and new areas of international trade and investment law and related disciplines.

The MoU will remain in force for three years.

Hence both statements are correct.

132) With reference to the Nuclear fusion, consider the following statements:

1. It is defined as the combining of several small nuclei into one large nucleus with the subsequent release of huge amounts of energy.
2. Nuclear fusion powers our sun and harnessing this fusion energy could provide an unlimited amount of renewable energy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California announced that an experiment carried out in its National Ignition Facility has made a breakthrough in nuclear fusion research.

In the experiment, lasers were used to heat a small target or fuel pellets. These pellets containing deuterium and tritium fused and produced more energy. The team noted that they were able to achieve a yield of more than 1.3 megajoules.

The megajoule of energy released in the experiment is indeed impressive in fusion terms, but in practice, this is equivalent to the energy required to boil a kettle.”

Nuclear fusion is defined as the combining of several small nuclei into one large nucleus with the subsequent release of huge amounts of energy.

Nuclear fusion powers our sun and harnessing this fusion energy could provide an unlimited amount of renewable energy.

Nuclear fusion energy is a good choice as the baseload energy in the future with many advantages, such as inexhaustibility of resources, inherent safety, no long-lived radioactive wastes, and almost no CO₂ emissions.

Hence both statements are correct.

133) With reference to the National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), consider the following statements:

1. It is a central sector scheme.
2. Under this scheme, it is proposed to cover an additional area of 6.5 lakh hectare (ha.) for oil palm till the year 2025-26 and thereby reaching the target of 10 lakh hectares ultimately.

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

Explanation: The Union Cabinet has given its approval to launch a new Mission on Oil palm to be known as the National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) as a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme with a special focus on the North east region and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

A financial outlay of Rs.11,040 crore has been made for the scheme, out of which Rs.8,844 crore is the Government of India share and Rs.2,196 crore is State share and this includes the viability gap funding also.

Under this scheme, it is proposed to cover an additional area of 6.5 lakh hectare (ha.) for oil palm till the year 2025-26 and thereby reaching the target of 10 lakh hectares ultimately.

The production of Crude Palm Oil (CPO) is expected to go upto 11.20 lakh tonnes by 2025-26 and upto 28 lakh tonnes by 2029-30.

There are two major focus areas of the Scheme. For the first time, the Government of India will give a price assurance to the oil palm farmers for the Fresh Fruit Bunches (FFBs). This will be known as the Viability Price (VP).

The second major focus of the scheme is to substantially increase the assistance of inputs/interventions. A substantial increase has been made for planting material for oil palm and this has increased from Rs 12,000 per ha to Rs.29000 per ha.

Hence only statement 2 is correct.

134) With reference to the Kigali Amendment, consider the following statements:

1. Under the Kigali Amendment; Parties to the Montreal Protocol will phase down production and consumption of Hydrofluorocarbons, commonly known as HFCs.
2. Hydrofluorocarbons were introduced as non-ozone depleting alternative to Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

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

Explanation: The Union Cabinet has approved ratification of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer for phase down of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) by India, adopted by the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on October, 2016 at 28th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol held at Kigali, Rwanda.

National strategy for phase down of Hydrofluorocarbons as per the applicable phase down schedule for India will be developed after required consultation with all the industry stakeholders by 2023.

Amendments to the existing legislation framework, the Ozone Depleting Substances (Regulation and Control) Rules to allow appropriate control of the production and consumption of Hydrofluorocarbons to ensure compliance

with the Kigali Amendment will be done by mid-2024.

India will complete its phase down of HFCs in 4 steps from 2032 onwards with cumulative reduction of 10% in 2032, 20% in 2037, 30% in 2042 and 80% in 2047.

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, is an international environmental treaty for protection of the Ozone Layer by phasing out the production and consumption of man-made chemicals referred to as ozone depleting substances (ODS).

Under the Kigali Amendment; Parties to the Montreal Protocol will phase down production and consumption of Hydrofluorocarbons, commonly known as HFCs.

Hydrofluorocarbons were introduced as non-ozone depleting alternative to Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). While HFCs do not deplete the stratospheric ozone layer, they have high global warming potential ranging from 12 to 14,000, which have adverse impact on climate.

Recognizing the growth in use of HFCs, especially in Refrigeration and Air-conditioning sector the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, reached agreement at their 28th Meeting of the Parties (MOP) held in October 2016 in Kigali, Rwanda to add HFCs to the list of controlled substances and approved a timeline for their gradual reduction by 80-85 per cent by the late 2040s.

Hence both statements are correct.

135) With reference to the collegium system, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Appointment of Supreme Court and High Court judges is done by the President in consultation with a collegium of CJI and 4 senior most judges of Supreme Court.

2. Transfer of judges of High Court is done by the President in consultation with a collegium of 4 senior most judges of Supreme Court and the Chief Justices of the 2 high courts.

3. The present collegium system has its genesis in Three Judges case.

4. The recommendation made by the Chief Justice of India for appointment of judges without consulting with collegium, is binding on the government.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

a) 1 and 3 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 2 and 4 only

d) None of the above

Explanation: Statement 1 is INCORRECT. The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the Chief Justice of India and comprises four other senior most judges of the court. A High Court collegium is led by its Chief Justice and four other senior most judges of that court.

Statement 2 is CORRECT: Transfer of judges of High Court is done by the President in consultation with a collegium of 4 senior most judges of Supreme Court and the Chief Justices of the 2 high courts.

The Collegium of judges is the Supreme Court's invention. It does not figure in the Constitution, which says judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts are appointed by the President and speaks of

a process of consultation. It was introduced in Second Judges Case and evolved in Third Judges Case.

Statement 3 is CORRECT: The 'First Judges Case' (1981) ruled that the "consultation" with the CJI in the matter of appointments must be full and effective.

The Second Judges Case (1993) introduced the Collegium system, holding that "consultation" really meant "concurrence". It added that it was not the CJI's individual opinion, but an institutional opinion formed in consultation with the two senior-most judges in the Supreme Court. More about it:

The Supreme Court, in the Third Judges Case (1998) expanded the Collegium to a five-member body, comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.

Statement 4 is INCORRECT:

The recommendation made by the Chief Justice of India for appointment of judges without consulting with collegium, is NOT binding on the government

However, The collegium sends its recommendation to the Government for approval. The government can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the government, then it is bound by that recommendation.

136) With reference to Astrosat, Consider following statements:

1. Astrosat is India's first multi wavelength space telescope.

2. It was launched by GSLV M –II.

3. Its objective is to estimate magnetic fields of neutron stars.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 and 3 only

b) 2 only

c) 1,2 and 3

d) 2 and 3

Explanation: Statement 1 is CORRECT.

Astrosat is the first dedicated Indian astronomy mission aimed at studying celestial sources in X-ray, optical and UV spectral bands simultaneously.

Statement 2 is INCORRECT. Astrosat with a lift off mass of 1515 kg was launched on 2015 September by PSLV-C30 with an expected mission life of 5 years.

Statement 3 is CORRECT. Its objective is to estimate magnetic fields of neutron stars, understanding energy processes in binary star systems and star birth regions.

137) With reference to advancement in nanotechnology, consider the following statements.

1. Magnetically guided microbot can perform precision eye surgery.
2. Nanotech based breathalyzer can detect diabetics through analyzing breath.
3. Nanotech enabled edible battery that can be made for powering of medical devices.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) None of the above.

Explanation: Statement 1 is CORRECT. Recently Zürich, based scientists have developed a tiny magnetically guided microbot known as the Octomag designed to be embedded in the eye to perform precision surgery or to deploy precise amounts of drugs. It helps in guiding needle injected device into the eye, eliminating the need to slice the eye open.

Statement 2 is CORRECT. New England University, have developed a nanotech powered breathalyzer prototype that can detect acetone levels in the breath. If technology commercialized properly, could do away with the need for finger prick based testing of blood sugar.

Statement 3 is CORRECT. Researchers found biodegradable battery substances powering for medical devices that could be digested. They found that cuttlefish ink provides the right chemistry and nanostructure to power tiny, edible electronic devices.

138) Consider the following statements regarding HCFCs :

1. They have high Global Warming Potential.
2. The Kigali Amendment aims for the phase-down of hydrochloro-fluorocarbons (HCFCs) by cutting their production and consumption.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct.

HCFCs also contribute to Global Warming (through “the Greenhouse Effect”). They have a powerful warming effect (a very high “Global Warming Potential”).

Statement 2 is incorrect. The Kigali Amendment aims for the phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), not HCFCs, by cutting their production and consumption.

More about it:

India has successfully achieved the complete phase out of hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC)- 141 b. It is a chemical used by foam manufacturers.

Nearly, 50% of the consumption of ozone depleting chemicals in the country was attributable to HCFC-141 b in the foam sector.

The phase out of HCFC-141b from the country has twin environmental benefits, viz, assisting the healing of the stratospheric ozone layer, and towards climate change mitigation due to transitioning of foam manufacturing enterprises at this scale under HPMP to low global warming potential alternative technologies.

The complete phase out of HCFC 141 b from the country in the foam sector is among the first at this scale in Article 5 parties (developing countries) under the Montreal Protocol.

139) Which of the following schemes promote financial inclusion in India?

1. Jeevan Suraksha Bandhan Yojana
2. Stand Up India scheme
3. Jan Dhan Yojna

Select the correct code:

a) 1 and 2

b) 2 and 3

c) 1 and 3

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Financial inclusion

Financial inclusion is a method of offering banking and financial services to individuals.

It aims to include everybody in society by giving them basic financial services regardless of their income or savings. It focuses on providing financial solutions to the economically underprivileged.

Objectives of financial inclusion: The objectives of financial inclusion are to provide the following:

A basic no-frills banking account for making and receiving payments

Saving products (including investment and pension)

Simple credit products and overdrafts linked with no-frills accounts

Remittance, or money transfer facilities

Micro insurance (life) and non-micro insurance (life and non-life)

Micro pension

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), launched on 09.05.2015, aims to provide a very affordable insurance scheme for poor and underprivileged people in the age group between 18 to 70 years with a bank account at a premium of Rs 12 per annum.

Stand-Up India Scheme facilitates bank loans between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 1 Crore to at least one Scheduled Caste (SC) or

Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a greenfield enterprise. This enterprise may be in manufacturing, services or the trading sector. In case of non-individual enterprises at least 51% of the shareholding and controlling stake should be held by either an SC/ST or woman entrepreneur.

The Indian Government launched the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) in order to provide financial services and products to individuals who do not have access to a bank account.

No minimum balance to be maintained

As per bank's saving's account interest rate

Transfer of money is simple

Overdraft facility available

Hence all the above mentioned schemes provide financial inclusion.

140) Which State/UT has launched Dalit Bandhu scheme?

- a) Telangana
- b) Madhya Pradesh
- c) Tamil Nadu
- d) Chhattisgarh

Explanation: Telangana has launched the Dalit Bandhu scheme at Salapalli village in Huzurnagar Assembly Constituency.

CM K Chandrashekhara Rao has launched this scheme on a pilot basis by handing over certificates to the select beneficiaries sanctioning financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh each to take up their choice of income generation activity.

Also, a separate Protection Fund will be created.

Dalit Bandhu Samitis would be established at different levels – from village level to State level – and these would be entrusted with the responsibility of managing the dalit protection fund.

141) Recently discovered new species Adi Cascade is related to

- a) Snake
- b) Butterfly
- c) Frog
- d) Spider

Explanation: The new frog species has been named Adi Cascade Frog (*Amolops Adicola*) which is Discovered on the Adi hills in Arunachal Pradesh.

The hills are home to the Adi tribe. The literal meaning of Adi is "hill" or "mountain top."

142) Consider the following statements with reference to Montreal protocol:

1. It has been ratified by all the members of the United Nations.
2. It aims to phase out Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) by 2030.
3. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has a special Ozone Cell for its implementation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: Montreal Protocol seeks to cut the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) to protect the earth's fragile ozone layer. It came into force in 1989 and has been ratified by 197 parties making it a universally ratified protocol in UN history.

Statement 2 is correct: It also aims to phase out HCFCs by 2030. It is also a highly successful international arrangement, as it has phased out more than 95% of the ozone-depleting substances so far as per its main mandate in less than 30 years of its existence.

Statement 3 is correct: India became its signatory member on 19th June 1992. India is an Article 5 country and is entitled to assistance from the Multilateral Fund in its efforts to phase out ODSs and switch over to non-ODS technologies. In India, the implementation of the Montreal Protocol comes within the ambit of the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change. The Ministry has established an Ozone Cell to implement the Protocol.

143) With reference to the Pantanal wetland, consider the following statements.

1. The Pantanal wetland is located in Nigeria.
2. The Pantanal is the world's largest tropical wetland.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) 1 and 2 only

d) None of the above.

Explanation: Statement 1 is INCORRECT & Statement 2 is CORRECT:

The Pantanal, the world's largest tropical wetland, located in south-central Brazil, has been affected by the worst drought in the past 50 years.

However, according to a study by Brazilian researchers published in May this year, the drought was natural as climate change is a long, continuous process.

The study said the drought was caused because of a phenomenon known as 'atmospheric blocking'. Usually, rain in the Pantanal is caused by warm humid air traveling over the North Atlantic Ocean and the Amazon rainforest meets cold air blowing from the South Atlantic.

144) With reference to Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index), consider the following statements:

1. It is developed by the Reserve Bank of India.
2. Base year for FI-Index is 2015-16.
3. It comprises three broad parameters- access, usage and quality.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Financial Inclusion Index:

India's first composite Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) unveiled by the Reserve Bank of India.

It seeks to capture extent of financial inclusion across the country.

The index has been conceptualised as a comprehensive index incorporating details of banking, investments, insurance, postal as well as the pension sector in consultation with the government and respective sectoral regulators.

It has been constructed without any 'base year' and as such it reflects cumulative efforts of all stakeholders over the years towards financial inclusion.

It captures information on various aspects of financial inclusion in a single value ranging between 0 and 100, where 0 represents complete financial exclusion and 100 indicates full financial inclusion.

It comprises three broad parameters (weights indicated in brackets) viz., Access (35%), Usage (45%), and Quality (20%) with each of these consisting of various dimensions, which are computed based on a number of indicators.

The index is responsive to ease of access, availability and usage of services, and quality of services for all 97 indicators.

145) With reference to Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Finance.
2. The scheme aims to ensure zero rating of exports.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) Scheme:

It is a scheme of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The scheme aims to reimburse the taxes and duties incurred by exporters such as local taxes, coal cess, mandi tax etc. which are not getting exempted or refunded under any other existing scheme. Thus it ensures zero rating of exports i.e. taxes and duties should not be exported.

RoDTEP scheme replaces the earlier Merchandise Export from India Scheme (MEIS) as MEIS violated the provisions of WTO by giving export subsidies for a wide range of goods.

Scheme is to be implemented by Customs through a simplified IT System. Rebate will be issued in the form of a transferable duty credit/ electronic scrip (e-scrip) which will be maintained in an electronic ledger by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC).

146) Cattle Island, seen recently in news, is located on:

a) Nagarjuna Sagar dam

b) Govind Ballabh Pant Sagar Dam

c) Sardar Sarovar Dam

d) Hirakud dam

Explanation: Cattle Island is located in one of the extreme points of Hirakud Reservoir.

Completely inhabited by wild animals, it is without any trace of humans.

The island is a submerged hill, and before the construction of Hirakud Dam it was a developed village.

During the resettlement period, villagers left some of their cattle behind; when the dam construction was over, the cattle settled on the hilltop.

With the passage of time the nearby area filled up with the reservoir water, turning the hilltop into an island.

Being away from mankind, the cattle are now wild, very swift and not easily caught.

Living on a hilltop with dense forest, they are larger than tame cattle, and almost all are white in color.

Though descended from tame cattle, these animals provide a contrasting picture of this breed of animal returning to life in the wild.

147) With reference to Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS), consider the following statements:

1. It aims to promote indigenous defence production, with special focus on participation of MSMEs and Start Ups.
2. It envisages setting up of test facilities in partnership with private industry.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme (DTIS):

The scheme was launched in 2020 and would run for the duration of five years.

It envisages setting up of 6-8 Greenfield Defence Testing Infrastructure facilities that are required for defence and aerospace related production.

The objective of the scheme is to promote indigenous defence production, with special focus on participation of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Start Ups by bridging gaps in defence testing infrastructure in the country.

The scheme has an outlay of Rs 400 crore for creating state-of-the-art testing infrastructure in partnership with the private industry.

The projects under the scheme will be provided with up to 75 per cent Government funding in the form of 'Grant-in-Aid'. The remaining 25 per cent of the project cost will have to be borne by the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) constituents of which will be the Indian private entities and state governments.

148) With reference to fertilizers subsidy, consider the following statements-

1. Currently, Government of India doesn't control prices of fertilizers.
2. Fertilizer's subsidy was given to increase the production of crops to achieve food sufficiency.
3. India does not import any Urea as it has achieved self-sufficiency in production.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 2 only

d) 3 only

Explanation: Statement 1 and 3 are incorrect.

Farmers buy fertilisers at MRPs (maximum retail price) below their normal supply-and-demand-based market rates or what it costs to produce/import them.

The MRPs of non-urea fertilisers are decontrolled or fixed by the companies. The Centre, however, pays a flat per-tonne subsidy on these nutrients to ensure they are priced at “reasonable levels”.

How is the subsidy paid and who gets it?

The subsidy goes to fertilizer companies, although its ultimate beneficiary is the farmer who pays MRPs less than the market-determined rates. Companies, until recently, were paid after their bagged material had been dispatched and received at a district’s railhead point or approved go down.

India is the world’s largest importer of fertilizers. It imports nearly 10 million tonnes of urea annually from global suppliers. That represents one-third of its domestic consumption. Since the main ingredient in urea is natural gas, which India lacks, there is large and persistent import dependence.

Fertilizer subsidy was given to increase the production of crops in 1970’s.

149) Consider the following statements regarding the ‘No First Use’ doctrine:

1. It is one of the three treaties, along with NPT and CTBT, developed under the ambit of the United Nations to control the behaviour of nuclear-weapon states.

2. India and China are the states with nuclear weapons who follow this policy of no first use of nuclear weapons.

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

Explanation: No first use (NFU) refers to a pledge or a policy by a nuclear power not to use nuclear weapons as a means of warfare unless first attacked by an adversary using nuclear weapons.

It is neither a treaty nor has it been developed under the ambit of the UN. It is a policy followed by some nuclear-weapon states. India is one of the countries which follow the policy of ‘no first use’. 1 is incorrect.

After the successful completion of the nuclear tests in 1998, India adopted a “no first use” policy. As of today, China and India are the only nuclear weapon states that have maintained an unconditional NFU pledge. 2 is correct.

150) With reference to Environment Governance in India, consider the following statements-

1. Any area whether in sanctuary or not can be constituted as National Park by notification of Central Government only.

2. Some human Activity is allowed in National Park barring few exceptions.

Which of the above statements are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Statement 1 is not correct

National Park

An area, whether within a sanctuary or not, can be notified by the state government to be constituted as a National Park, by reason of its ecological, faunal, floral, or zoological association or importance, needed to for the purpose of protecting & propagating or developing wildlife therein or its environment.

No human activity is permitted inside the national park except for the ones permitted by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the state under the conditions given in WPA (Wildlife Protection Act) 1972.

Some human activities can be allowed inside a wildlife sanctuary, but no human activity is allowed in a national park.

151) With reference to the China's three-child policy, consider the following statements:

1. China's one-child policy, which had been enforced by former leader Deng Xiaoping in 1980, had remained in place until 2016.

2. By 2025, the country is set to lose its 'most populous' tag to India, which in 2020 had an estimated 138 crore people, 1.5 per cent behind 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

Explanation: In a major policy shift aimed at increasing the country's declining birth rate, China relaxed its previous two-child norm and endorsed a three-child policy mooted by the ruling Communist Party.

The resolution was passed along with several others during a meeting of the National People's Congress (NPC).

Earlier this year, after China's census data showed population growth slipping to its slowest rate since the 1950s, the country announced that it would allow three children per married couple — five years after it first relaxed its controversial one-child policy to two.

China's one-child policy, which had been enforced by former leader Deng Xiaoping in 1980, had remained in place until 2016, when fears of a rapidly ageing population undermining economic growth forced the ruling Communist Party to allow two children per married couple.

While the relaxation did result in some improvement in the proportion of young people in the country, the policy change was deemed insufficient in averting an impending demographic crisis.

Even as a three-child policy has now been announced, many remain skeptical, wondering how it would be able to address challenges that the 2016 change could not, due to factors such as higher cost of living and long working hours.

The United Nations expects China's population to begin declining after 2030,

but some experts say this could happen as early as in the next one or two years. By 2025, the country is set to lose its 'most populous' tag to India, which in 2020 had an estimated 138 crore people, 1.5 per cent behind China

Hence both statements are correct.

152) Recently seen in news Abraham Accords deal is related to

a) Israel-Arab peace deal

b) Afghanistan Peace process

c) Tigray crisis

d) Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes

Explanation: The Abraham Accord between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain is mediated by the USA. It is the first Arab-Israeli peace deal in 26 years

153) Recently seen in news Tigray region is located in

a) Peru

b) Congo

c) Somalia

d) Ethiopia

Explanation: Tigray Region is the northernmost regional state in Ethiopia. Tigray Region is the homeland of the Tigrayan, Irob, and Kunama peoples.

A conflict between the government of Ethiopia and forces in its northern Tigray region has thrown the country into turmoil.

Fighting has been going on since November 2020, destabilizing the populous country in the Horn of Africa, leaving thousands of people dead with 350,000 others living in famine conditions.

Eritrean soldiers are also fighting in Tigray for the Ethiopian government. All sides have been accused of atrocities.

A power struggle, an election, and a push for political reform are among several factors that led to the crisis.

Recently, The US international development agency has blamed the Ethiopian government for a shortage of humanitarian aid in the country's conflict-torn Tigray region.

154) Consider the following statements with respect to Mawblei or God's Rock

1. It is situated in the East Khasi Hills of Mizoram State.

2. the rock is composed of the reddish-purple Mahadek sandstone.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1& 2

d) None of the above

Explanation: Statement 1 is Incorrect: Mawblei or God's Rock is situated Sited near Syntung village in East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya State.

Statement 2 is correct: It is a huge balancing rock slanting at an angle of about 45 degrees in the south-southeast direction on a hill slope at 1,303 meters above mean sea level overlooking the Wahrashi River valley.

The rock is composed of the reddish-purple Mahadek sandstone belonging to the Khasi group of cretaceous age. Thin

partings of shale are also observed in the boulder.

Mawblei in the Khasi language means God's Rock and is a sacred place for the local populace. The rock is about 63 km from Shillong.

155) With reference to the Shariah law, consider the following statements:

1. Shariah lists some specific crimes, such as theft and adultery, and punishments if accusations meet a standard of proof.
2. It does not forbid women to leave home without a male escort or bar them from working in most jobs.

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

Explanation: The Taliban have pledged that women in Afghanistan will have rights "within the bounds of Islamic law," or Shariah, under their newly established rule. But it is not clear what that will mean.

Shariah is based on the Quran, stories of the Prophet Muhammad's life and the rulings of religious scholars, forming the moral and legal framework of Islam. The Quran details a path to a moral life, but not a specific set of laws.

One interpretation of Shariah could afford women extensive rights, while another could leave women with few. Critics have said that some of the Taliban restrictions on women under the guise of Islamic law

actually went beyond the bounds of Shariah.

The interpretations of Shariah are a matter of debate across the Muslim world, and all groups and governments that base their legal systems on Shariah have done so differently.

What does Shariah prescribe?

Shariah lists some specific crimes, such as theft and adultery, and punishments if accusations meet a standard of proof. It also offers moral and spiritual guidance, such as when and how to pray, or how to marry and divorce.

It does not forbid women to leave home without a male escort or bar them from working in most jobs.

Hence both statements are correct.

156)" This species is native to East Palearctic. It is closely related to North American Wood Duck. They are shy and prefer to seek cover under trees such as overhanging willows and form smaller flocks. This bird enjoys the status of World's most beautiful duck, and it was recently spotted in Tinsukia District of Assam. Which of the following options matches the description?

- a) Lion-Tailed Duck
- b) Mandarin Duck**
- c) Smew Duck
- d) Harlequin Duck

Explanation: A rare Mandarin duck was observed floating in the Maguri-Motapung beel (or wetland) in Assam's Tinsukia district for over a week is spectacular.

Mandarin duck

IUCN status: Least Concerned

Considered the most beautiful duck in the world, the Mandarin duck, or the (*Aix galericulata*) was first identified by Swedish botanist, physician and zoologist Carl Linnaeus in 1758.

The eBird website, a platform that documents birds world over, describes it as a “small-exotic looking bird” native to East Asia.

It’s very beautiful, with majestic colours and can be spotted from a distance.

Its habitat and breeding

The migratory duck breeds in Russia, Korea, Japan and northeastern parts of China. It now has established populations in Western Europe and America too.

In 2018, when a Mandarin duck was spotted in a pond in New York City’s Central Park, it created a flutter among local residents.

It was recorded in 1902 in Dibru River in the Rongagora area in Tinsukia.

157) Consider the following statements about STARS Project?

1. It is a world bank-aided project.
2. It is a centrally sponsored scheme.
3. It envisions improving the overall monitoring and measurement activities in the Indian School Education System through interventions.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only**

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Statement 2 is not correct.

STRENGTHENING TEACHING-LEARNING AND RESULTS FOR STATES (STARS) PROJECT

It is a World Bank aided project, to be implemented as a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Project is aligned with objectives of National Education Policy 2020.

It covers 6 States: Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.

States will get support in developing, implementing, evaluating and improving interventions with direct linkages to improved education outcomes and school to work transition strategies for improved labour market outcomes.

It envisions improving the overall monitoring and measurement activities in the Indian School Education System through interventions

158) Which of the following countries does not share a border with Afghanistan?

- a) Tajikistan
- b) Kazakhstan**
- c) Iran
- d) Turkmenistan

Explanation: Afghanistan, officially the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a mountainous landlocked country in southern Central Asia. It borders Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan to the north, Iran to the west, Pakistan to the east and south. It has a small border

section with China and India (disputed because it's in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) to the northeast.

159) The UNITE AWARE platform is launched by India in collaboration with:

- a) World Health Organization
- b) G-20

c) United Nations

- d) Arctic Council

Explanation: India, in collaboration with the UN launched a technology platform to ensure the safety and security of peacekeepers who are operating in an increasingly complex and risky environments across the world.

The launch of the UNITE AWARE platform came as India assumed the Presidency of the 15-nation UN Security Council for the month of August.

India has contributed USD 1.64 million for this project.

UNITE Aware is a situational awareness software programme that will utilise modern surveillance technology for real time threat assessments to peacekeepers and help them enhance their security. This will access live video and satellite imagery, and in very volatile circumstances can also deliver early warnings to peacekeepers. It can also record data on critical incidents and events and follow daily operational activities.

Using the platform, the entire peacekeeping operation can be visualised, coordinated, and monitored on a real time basis.

India has developed the technology platform in partnership with the UN

Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Operational Support.

160) With reference to 'Bondas tribe', consider the following statement:

1. It is a part of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) found in Odisha.
2. It is a member of the Austroasiatic tribal group.

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

Explanation: Bondas tribes are one of the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) found in Odisha. There are a total of 75 PVTGs in India. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

Bondas are members of a group of Austroasiatic tribes, they are believed to be part of the first wave of migration out of Africa about 60,000 years ago. They are the first forest settlers in India. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

161) With reference to the National Monetisation Pipeline, consider the following statements:

1. It comprises a four-year pipeline of the Central Government's brownfield infrastructure assets.
2. It will serve as a medium-term roadmap for the Asset Monetisation initiative of the 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

Explanation: Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, will launch the National Monetisation Pipeline.

The National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) comprises a four-year pipeline of the Central Government's brownfield infrastructure assets.

Besides providing visibility to investors, NMP will also serve as a medium-term roadmap for the Asset Monetisation initiative of the Government.

The Union Budget 2021-22 laid a lot of emphasis on Asset Monetisation as a means to raise innovative and alternative financing for infrastructure, and included a number of key announcements.

The National Monetisation Pipeline book will be released in the presence of Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog, Dr Rajiv Kumar, CEO, Shri Amitabh Kant, and Secretaries of relevant line ministries whose assets constitute the monetisation pipeline.

Hence both statements are correct.

162) With reference to the MALABAR exercise, consider the following statements:

1. MALABAR series of maritime exercises commenced in 2010.

2. Currently it is a bilateral exercise between India and USA.

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

Explanation: Indian Naval Ships Shivalik and Kadmatt arrived at Guam, an Island Territory of the USA on August 21, 2021 as part of their on-going deployment to nations in South East Asia and the Pacific Ocean.

The two ships are scheduled to participate in the annual Exercise MALABAR-21, between navies of Australia, India, Japan and the USA.

MALABAR series of maritime exercises commenced in 1992 as a bilateral IN-USN exercise and has grown in stature over the years to include four prominent navies in the Pacific and Indian Ocean Region.

Exercise MALABAR-21 will be conducted with USN, JMSDF and RAN at sea from 26-29 Aug 21.

Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.

163) With reference to refugees, consider the following statements:

1. India does not have a separate statute for refugees.

2. India is a signatory to the 1951 Convention on Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.

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

Explanation: The Taliban's takeover of Kabul on August 15 prompted hundreds of Afghans to rush to the Hamid Karzai International Airport in a bid to flee the Islamic militant organisation's impending rule.

A refugee is defined as a person who has been forced "to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries," as per UNHCR.

Overall, at the end of 2020, 82.4 million people were displaced worldwide because of persecution, conflict, violence and human rights violations. In terms of intake, Turkey hosts the most number of refugees (mostly from Syria) at over 4 million.

A total of 68 percent of people displaced across borders belong to five countries — Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar.

Afghanistan

As of 2020, there are about 2.8 million Afghan refugees abroad. The highest number of refugees living abroad belong to Syria, at 6.8 million, according to UNHCR.

On August 2, 2021, the US Department of State announced the Priority 2 (P-2) designation which grants US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) access to certain Afghan nationals and their eligible family members.

India

India does not have a separate statute for refugees, and until now has been dealing with refugees on a case-by-case basis.

India is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention on Refugees or the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. In 2011, the Union government circulated to all states and Union Territories a Standard Operating Procedure to deal with foreign nationals who claimed to be refugees.

Considering the present situation in Afghanistan, India has introduced a new category of e-visa for Afghan nationals to fast-track their applications for entry into the country. These visas will be valid for six months only and it is not clear what will happen after this period elapses.

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

164) With reference to the renewable energy, consider the following statements:

1. India is targeting 450 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by 2030 up from about 100 GW currently.
2. India's top natural gas company, GAIL, is aiming at reaching 1 GW of renewable capacity within 3-4 years from the present 130 MW.

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

Explanation: Global moves to reduce carbon emissions to slow down climate change have led to oil and gas companies

around the world investing in renewable energy to reduce their carbon footprint and diversify offerings.

India is targeting 450 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by 2030 up from about 100 GW currently.

India's largest upstream oil and gas company, ONGC, is targeting 10 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2040, up from 178MW of renewable energy capacity at the end of FY20.

India's top natural gas company, GAIL, is aiming at reaching 1 GW of renewable capacity within 3-4 years from the present 130 MW.

Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, India's largest refiner, had a total installed renewable energy capacity of about 233 MW at the end of FY21. It has also set up 257 electric charging and battery swapping stations at 29 retail fuel outlets. IOC is also setting up the first green hydrogen plant in India in Mathura.

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd has tied up with Tata Power to set up electric vehicle charging at various retail points around the country.

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd had installed renewable energy capacity of 43 MW at the end of FY20.

Hence both statements are correct.

165) Which of the following is a natural waterway that separates Europe and Asia?

- a) Bosphorus Strait
- b) Bering Strait
- c) Strait of Hormuz
- d) Malacca Strait

Explanation: The Kanal Istanbul, an under-construction shipping route running parallel to the strategically critical Bosphorus Strait, is fast gaining prominence as a major divisive issue in Turkey.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan wants to dig up a new route through Istanbul connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara.

The planned canal will run parallel to the Bosphorus Strait, a natural waterway that separates Europe and Asia, which for centuries has served as a key outlet for Russian ships entering the Mediterranean Sea.

Since 1936, passage through the Strait has been governed by the Montreux Convention, a multilateral treaty that allows ships to go across almost free of cost during peacetime, and which tightly restricts the movement of naval vessels.

Turkish leaders say that the new canal, which will run on the European side of Bosphorus, will be safer and faster to navigate compared to the Bosphorus, making it a more attractive option for commercial ships, who will pay to pass through.

Analysts also believe that Erdogan would use the canal to circumvent Montreux Convention, by marketing the mega project to NATO allies as a legally kosher way of sending their warships into the Black Sea to counter Russia, their major geopolitical rival, all while attracting Chinese investment.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

166) Sunil Sethi committee, recently seen in news, is related to:

a) doubling the production and quadrupling the exports of handlooms in a span of three years.

b) to decide the appropriate level of reserves that the RBI should hold

c) improvement in the Customer Service at Primary (Urban) Cooperative Banks

d) None of the above

Explanation: Union government has constituted a committee for doubling the production and quadrupling the exports of handlooms in a span of three years.

It will be headed by Chairman of Fashion Design Council of India Sunil Sethi.

The committee will submit the final report within 45 days from the day of constitution.

It will suggest the strategy and policy framework for doubling the production and for improving the quality of handloom products with the aim of enhancing income of the weavers.

It will also suggest ways for partnering and collaboration of handloom weavers agencies with the designers, buying houses and institutions, organizations and exporters.

Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

167) Recently seen in the news Shahtoot Dam is related to

a) Bangladesh

b) Myanmar

c) Afghanistan

d) Pakistan

Explanation: The Shahtoot dam is to be constructed on the Kabul river basin, one

of the five river basins of Afghanistan. Along with the Shahtoot dam, India has pledged to commit \$80 million for various projects in the country.

168) Consider the following statements with respect to Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary

1. It has become the 4th Tiger reserve in West Bengal.

2. At present India has 52 Tiger reserves.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1& 2

d) None of the above

Explanation: Statement 1 is Incorrect & Statement 2 is correct:

India added another feather to its cap in tiger conservation efforts. The Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary in Rajasthan got the green signal from the NTCA or National Tiger Conservation Authority.

The Ramgarh wildlife sanctuary is the country's 52nd tiger reserve.

With the addition of this tiger reserve, Rajasthan gets its fourth one after Ranthambore, Sariska, and Mukundra tiger reserves.

More about it:

The Ramgarh Sanctuary is like a buffer for the Ranthambore National Park, one of the most famous wildlife sanctuaries in India.

Rich in biodiversity and wild animals, the Ramgarh sanctuary covers an area of around 252 square kilometers.

One can spot a variety of wild animals like the Indian wolf, leopard, striped hyena, sloth bear, golden jackal, chinkara, nilgai among other animals at the Ramgarh Wildlife Sanctuary.

169) Pampa Sagar, seen recently in news, is located on which of the following Rivers?

- a) Ghataprabha
- b) Malprabha
- c) Tungbhadra**
- d) Bhima

Explanation: Pampa Sagar is constructed across the Tungabhadra River, a tributary of the Krishna River.

The dam is in Hosapete, Vijayanagara district of Karnataka. It is a multipurpose dam serving irrigation, electricity generation, flood control, etc.

This is a joint project of erstwhile Hyderabad state and erstwhile Madras Presidency when the construction was started later it became a joint project of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh after its completion in 1953.

It is the life-line of 6 chronically drought prone districts of Bellary, Koppal and Raichur in Karnataka (popularly known as the rice bowl of Karnataka) and Anantapur, Cuddapah and Kurnool in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

170) PM-KUSUM is a scheme of:

a) Ministry of New & Renewable Energy

b) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare

c) Ministry of Women & Child Development

d) Ministry of Education

Explanation: PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan) Scheme is aimed at ensuring energy security for farmers in India, along with honouring India's commitment to increase the share of installed capacity of electric power from non-fossil-fuel sources to 40% by 2030 as part of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs).

The PM-KUSUM scheme was launched by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in 2019.

The objective of the scheme is increasing farmers' income, provide reliable source for irrigation and de-dieselise the farm sector.

171) With reference to the 'smog tower', consider the following statements:

1. The tower uses a 'downdraft air cleaning system'.
2. The downdraft method is different from the system used in 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

Explanation: Ahead of its infamous smog season, Delhi got a 'smog tower', a

technological aid to help combat air pollution.

The structure is 24 m high, about as much as an 8-storey building — an 18-metre concrete tower, topped by a 6-metre-high canopy. At its base are 40 fans, 10 on each side.

Each fan can discharge 25 cubic metres per second of air, adding up to 1,000 cubic metres per second for the tower as a whole. Inside the tower in two layers are 5,000 filters. The filters and fans have been imported from the United States.

The tower uses a 'downdraft air cleaning system'

Polluted air is sucked in at a height of 24 m, and filtered air is released at the bottom of the tower, at a height of about 10 m from the ground.

When the fans at the bottom of the tower operate, the negative pressure created sucks in air from the top. The 'macro' layer in the filter traps particles of 10 microns and larger, while the 'micro' layer filters smaller particles of around 0.3 microns.

The downdraft method is different from the system used in China, where a 60-metre smog tower in Xian city uses an 'updraft' system — air is sucked in from near the ground, and is propelled upwards by heating and convection. Filtered air is released at the top of the tower.

Hence both statements are correct.

172) With reference to the 'Mission Karmayogi', consider the following statements:

1. It will be governed by the Human Resource Council chaired by Prime Minister.

2. It will provide post recruitment training to upgrade capacity building of the officers.

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

Explanation: Both statements are correct.

The National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building ('NPCSCB') – "Mission Karmayogi" has been launched with the objective of enhancing governance through Civil Service Capacity Building

NPCSCB will be governed by the Prime Minister's Human Resource Council, which will also include state Chief Ministers, Union Cabinet ministers and experts. This council will approve and review civil service capacity building programmes.

'Mission Karmayogi' is aimed at upgrading the post-recruitment training mechanism of officers. The programme will be delivered by setting up a digital platform called iGOTKarmayogi. The training of Civil Servants at various Academies will be restructured to include optimum use of the digital learning platform of iGOT. This will enable a comprehensive reform of the capacity building apparatus at the individual, institutional and process levels.

173) The term "Adjusted Gross Revenue" sometimes seen in news is related to-

a) Revenue-Fee sharing mechanism

b) Oil output pact by OPEC + countries

c) Genome Sequencing Model

d) None

Explanation: Adjusted Gross Revenue-AGR is a fee-sharing mechanism between the government and the telcos who shifted to the 'revenue-sharing fee' model in 1999, from the 'fixed license fee' model.

In this course, telcos are supposed to share a percentage of AGR with the government.

174) Which of the statements are correct about Adopt a Heritage Project?

1. It's main aim is to develop tourism amenities at heritage spread across the countries to make them tourist friendly.

2. All UNESCO World Heritages are selected for an initial period of 6 years.

3. Recently, Narayankoti Temple was selected under "Adopt a Heritage Product".

Select the correct answer using the code below-

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 2 and 3 only

Explanation: Adopt a Heritage Project:

About: Launched on 27th September, 2017 (World Tourism Day), it is a collaborative effort by the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), State/UTs Governments.

Aim:

To develop tourism amenities at heritage/ natural/ tourist sites spread across India to make them tourist friendly, in a planned and phased manner.

Implementation:

The sites/monuments are selected on the basis of tourist footfall and visibility and can be adopted by private and public sector companies and individuals — known as Monument Mitras — for an initial period of five years.

The Monument Mitras are selected by the 'oversight and vision committee,' co-chaired by the Tourism Secretary and the Culture Secretary, on the basis of the bidder's 'vision' for development of all amenities at the heritage site.

There is no financial bid involved.

The corporate sector is expected to use Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds for the upkeep of the site.

175) Which of the following initiatives are taken by government to promote solar energy?

1. Atal Jyoti Joyana

2. PM-KUSUM

3. Ujjwala Yojana

4. SuryaMitra Skill Development Programme

Select the correct answer using the code below-

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2,3 and 4 only

c) 1,2 and 4 only

d) 1,2,3 and 4

Explanation: Objective of Ujjwala Yojana:

Empowering women and protecting their health.

Reducing the number of deaths in India due to unclean cooking fuel.

Preventing young children from a significant number of acute respiratory illnesses caused due to indoor air pollution by burning fossil fuel.

Schemes for Promoting Solar Energy

Scheme for Development of Ultra Mega Renewable Energy Power Parks: It is a scheme to develop Ultra Mega Renewable Energy Power Parks (UMREPPs) under the existing Solar Park Scheme.

National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy 2018: The main objective of the Policy is to provide a framework for promotion of large grid connected wind-solar PV hybrid systems for optimal and efficient utilization of wind and solar resources, transmission infrastructure and land.

Atal Jyoti Yojana: The AJAY scheme was launched in September 2016 for the installation of solar street lighting (SSL) systems in states with less than 50% households covered with grid power (as per Census 2011).

International Solar Alliance (ISA): The ISA, is an Indian initiative that was launched by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France on 30th November 2015 in Paris, France on the side-lines of the Conference of the Parties (COP-21), with 121 solar resource rich countries lying fully or partially between the tropic of Cancer and tropic of Capricorn as prospective members.

One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG): It focuses on a framework for facilitating global cooperation, building a

global ecosystem of interconnected renewable energy resources (mainly solar energy) that can be seamlessly shared.

National Solar Mission: It is a part of the National Action Plan on Climate Change.

Suryamitra Skill Development Programme: To provide skill training to rural youth in handling solar installations.

176) The term “Karez System” sometimes seen in news is related to which of the following?

a) Water Harnessing Technology

b) Artillery System

c) Cyber-Security strategy

d) Cultivation of crops without water and soil

Explanation: The Karez System of Afghanistan is in threat whereas a similar system named Surangam in South India is thriving.

Surangams resemble the karez System both in structure and spread.

Karez System:

The karez system is a legacy of its Persian cultural moorings. It has suffered extensive damage in 43 years of war and stares at an uncertain future under the Taliban’s second regime.

Karez is a water harnessing technology in which groundwater is brought to the surface by a tunnel.

In this system, no mechanical pump or lift is used. Gravity alone brings the water from the underground source.

The technology originated in Persia/Iran and was widely used during the medieval period.

177) Sangetsar Tso popularly known as Madhuri Lake is located in:

- a) Mizoram
- b) Manipur
- c) Sikkim

d) Arunachal Pradesh

Explanation: The Sangestor Tso popularly known as the Madhuri Lake, is located on the way from Tawang to Bum La Pass in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, near Indo-China border above 15,200 ft above sea level.

The Sangesstar Tso was created by falling rocks, boulders and trees in an earthquake.

178) Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Bosphorus Strait?

- 1. It forms part of the continental boundary between Europe and Africa.
- 2. It connects the Black Sea with the Caspian Sea.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: The Bosphorus is a narrow, natural strait and an internationally significant waterway located in northwestern Turkey.

It forms part of the continental boundary between Europe and Asia, and divides Turkey by separating Anatolia from Thrace.

It is the world's narrowest strait used for international navigation.

The Bosphorus connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara, and, by extension via the Dardanelles, the Aegean and Mediterranean seas, and by the Kerch Strait, the sea of Azov.

Together with the Dardanelles, the Bosphorus forms the Turkish Straits.

179) Consider the following statements regarding misconduct of members of Rajya Sabha

- 1. The Rules of the House empower Parliament to inflict any punishment on its members
- 2. The power to suspend an MP is vested in the house, not the chairman.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only**
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 and 2

Explanation: There are speculations in the Rajya Sabha (RS) over the punishment to MP for the misconduct.

Chairman has the power to conduct smooth proceedings of the house.

If any rules are violated, the Chairman has the power to initiate disciplinary action.

However, the power to suspend an MP is vested in the house, not the chairman. The chairman only names the member, while the Parliamentary Affairs minister or any other minister moves the motion for suspending the member.

But the Rules of the House do not empower Parliament to inflict any punishment on its members other than suspension for creating disorder in the House.

180) Consider the following statements regarding United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification:

1. legally binding international agreement which links environment and development to sustainable land management
2. Desertification is a type of land degradation in which the biological productivity of land is lost due to natural processes only

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 and 2

Explanation: Statement 2 is incorrect

About UNCCD:

It was established in 1994

It is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management.

The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the dryland, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found

The Convention's 197 parties work together to improve the living conditions for people in drylands, to maintain and

restore land and soil productivity, and to mitigate the effects of drought.

The UNCCD is particularly committed to a bottom-up approach, encouraging the participation of local people in combating desertification and land degradation.

The UNCCD secretariat facilitates cooperation between developed and developing countries, particularly around knowledge and technology transfer for sustainable land management.

The UNCCD collaborates closely with the other two Rio Conventions– The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

India for the first time hosted the 14th session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in September 2019

191) With reference to the 'Global Manufacturing Risk Index, 2021', consider the following statements:

1. It is published by World bank.
2. India has surpassed the United States to become the world's second most desired manufacturing destination.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Explanation: India has emerged as a global manufacturing hub and effectively surpassed the United States to become

the world's second most desired manufacturing destination. India's ranking was reflected in Cushman & Wakefield's 2021 Global Manufacturing Risk Index. The index ranks 47 countries across Europe, the Americas, and the Asia Pacific.

Hence only statement 2 is correct.

192) With reference to GM soya cake, consider the following statement:

1. Government of India has recently relaxed the rules for import of crushed and de-oiled GM soya cake (Non-living organism only).
2. Soyabean meal is an essential raw material for the poultry industry.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Explanation: Government of India has relaxed the rules for import of crushed and de-oiled GM soya cake (Non-living organism only).

Application of provision as in Condition 6(b) of General Notes Regarding Import Policy Schedule — I (Imports) of the ITC (HS) 2017 has now been relaxed to allow imports of 12 Lakh Metric ton of crushed and de-oiled GM soya cake (only Non living organism) under ITC HS codes 23040020 and 23040030 from Nhava Sheva port and LCS Petrapole, till 31st October, 2021. The said relaxation comes after clarification and prior permission from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change that "Since soya de-

oiled and crushed (DOC) cake does not contain any living modified organism, this Ministry has no concerns and no objection for import of soya cakes from an environmental angle". This decision will positively impact farmers, poultry farmers, and fishermen

Hence both statements are correct.

193) With reference to Blue-Dot Network, consider the following statements-

1. It is a multi-stakeholder to bring together government, private sector to promote high quality infrastructure.
2. It would offer loans and finance for development of project.
3. Blue Dot Certificates are recognised as seal of approval for major infrastructure letting people know that project are not exploitative and sustainable.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

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

Explanation: Statement 2 is not correct.

Blue Dot Network:

The BDN was formally announced on 4th November 2019 at the Indo-Pacific Business Forum in Bangkok, Thailand. It is led by the USA along with Japan and Australia.

It is a multi-stakeholder initiative to bring together governments, the private sector and civil society to promote high-quality,

trusted standards for global infrastructure development.

It is expected to serve as a globally recognized evaluation and certification system for roads, ports and bridges with a focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

Infrastructure projects would be graded on debt, environmental standards, labour standards etc.

This system would apply to projects in any citizen-centric country where citizens would like to evaluate such projects.

It is planned as a direct counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

However, unlike the BRI, the BDN would not offer public funds or loans for the project.

Blue Dot certification: BDN will serve as a globally recognized seal of approval for major infrastructure projects, letting people know that projects are sustainable and not exploitative.

194) The recently launched scheme, SPARC aims to

a) address the development deficit in the minority areas

b) improve the research ecosystem in the educational institutions

c) address the woes of the thermal power sector

d) address the credit issues with start-ups

Explanation: The Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) aims at improving the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the

world from 28 selected nations to jointly solve problems of national and/or international relevance.

The scheme proposes to enable productive academic cooperation by supporting the following critical components that can catalyze impact making research, namely:

Visits and long-term stay of top international faculty / researchers in Indian institutions to pursue teaching and research

Visits by Indian students for training and experimentation in premier laboratories worldwide

Joint development of niche courses, world-class books and monographs, translatable patents, demonstrable technologies or action research outcomes and products

Consolidation of Bilateral cooperation through academic and research partnerships through Indo-X Workshops in India

Publication, Dissemination and Visibility through a high profile annual international Conference in India

195) Which of the following are India's commitment to achieve Paris Agreement?

1. To reduce its emissions by 30-32%
2. Create an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3.0 Billion tonnes through tree and forest cover.
3. Increase its cumulative electricity generation installed capacity from non-fossil energy resources to 40%.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

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

Explanation: India's Commitment

International Commitments: In order to achieve its Paris commitment, India needs to ensure that it has a few things in place by 2030.

Increasing its cumulative electricity generation installed capacity from non-fossil energy sources to 40%;

Lowering emissions intensity (not emissions per se) of its GDP by 33-35 per cent compared to 2005 levels.

Creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes through additional forest and tree cover.

Besides these international commitments, the government has also set ambitious domestic targets for renewable energy, air quality and others.

196) Which of the following best describes the term "Blue Carbon" in context of environment

- a) It is the total amount of carbon needed to sustain life on earth
- b) It is the carbon captured by the world's ocean and coastal ecosystems**
- c) It is the total amount of carbon trapped in Polar region of earth
- d) It is the amount of Carbon which falls on the surface of earth as acid rain

Explanation: Blue carbon is simply the term for carbon captured by the world's ocean and coastal ecosystems. Sea grasses, mangroves, and salt marshes along our coast "capture and hold" carbon, acting as something called a carbon sink. These coastal systems, though much smaller in size than the planet's forests, sequester this carbon at a much faster rate, and can continue to do so for millions of years. Most of the carbon taken up by these ecosystems is stored below ground where we can't see it, but it is still there. The carbon found in coastal soil is often thousands of years old!

197) "A carbon credit is a tradeable certificate or permit representing the right to emit one tonne of carbon or carbon dioxide equivalent" The concept of carbon credit came into existence from which one of the following?

- a) Kigali Agreement
- b) Montreal Protocol
- c) Kyoto Protocol**
- d) Earth Summit

Explanation: A carbon credit is a tradeable certificate or permit representing the right to emit one tonne of carbon or carbon dioxide equivalent. One carbon credit is equal to one ton of carbon

dioxide, or in some markets, carbon dioxide equivalent gases. The mechanism was formalized in the Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement between more than 170 countries, and the market mechanisms were agreed through the subsequent Marrakesh Accords.

198) Recently which of the following Ministries launched the TAPAS initiative

- a) Ministry of Finance
- b) Ministry of Education
- c) Ministry of Skill development

d) Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

Explanation: Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment launched an online portal TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services), developed by the National Institute of Social Defence.

The idea of TAPAS was conceptualized at a time when exploring the online medium for work and education had become imperative due to the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic.

It was fuelled by the Ministry's vision of ensuring maximum participation of stakeholders and volunteers working in the field of social defence for better training and capacity building.

TAPAS is the initiative of the National Institute of Social Defence (NISD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, to provide access to lectures by subject experts, study material, and more, but in a manner that it supplements the physical classroom without compromising on the quality of teaching.

The main objective of introducing the course modules is to impart training and enhance the knowledge and skills for the capacity building of the participants.

199) Consider the following statements regarding the scheme of Jan Shikshan Sansthan:

1. It aims to provide vocational skills to non-literate, neo-literates and school dropout

2. The scheme is implemented through NGOs with 100% grants from the Government of India

3. Ministry of Education is responsible for overall implementation of this scheme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Jan Shikshan Sansthan (formerly known as Shramik Vidyapeeth) aims to provide vocational skills to non-literate, neo-literates as well as school drop-outs by identifying skills that have a market in the region of their establishment.

The Scheme of Jan Shikshan Sansthan has been transferred from Ministry of Education (erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development) to Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in July, 2018.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) scheme is implemented through NGOs with 100% grants from the Government of India.

Jan Shikshan Sansthans are registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. The affairs of Jan Shikshan Sansthan are managed by respective Board of Management approved by the Government of India.

The mandate of the scheme is to provide vocational skills in non-formal mode to

non-literate, neo-literates, persons with rudimentary level of education upto 8th and school drop-outs upto 12th standard in the age group of 15-45 years. The priority groups are women, SC, ST, minorities and other backward sections of the society. JSSs are reaching to the unreached areas to cater the needs of the poorest of the poor. They work at the door step of the beneficiaries with a minimum infrastructure and resources.

At present, 233 JSSs in 25 States and 3 Union Territories are functional. The annual coverage of the beneficiaries is around 4 lakh, out of which 85% are women.

210) India's largest floating solar power plant has been commissioned in:

- a) Karnataka
- b) Gujarat
- c) Madhya Pradesh

d) Andhra Pradesh

Explanation: The National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has commissioned the largest floating solar photovoltaic (PV) project of 25 MW on the reservoir of its Simhadri thermal station in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh).

This project has the potential to generate electricity for around 7,000 households from more than 1 lakh solar PV modules.

This is also the first solar project to be set up under the Flexibilisation Scheme, notified by the Government of India which allows power generation companies to meet their supply obligations via renewable power instead of only thermal power.

211) With reference to the SAMRIDH scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It will create a conducive platform for Indian software product startups to enhance their products and secure investments for scaling their business.
2. The programme is being implemented by MeitY Start-up Hub (MSH).

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

Explanation: Minister of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched Startup Accelerators of MeitY for pProduct Innovation, Development and growth (SAMRIDH) programme.

SAMRIDH will create a conducive platform for Indian software product startups to enhance their products and secure investments for scaling their business.

The programme is being implemented by MeitY Start-up Hub (MSH).

Government will support startups and entrepreneurs in the most challenging phase which is the initial risk phase, Vaishnaw had said earlier.

The SAMRIDH programme will focus on accelerating 300 start-ups by providing customer connect, investor connect, and international expansion opportunities in the next three years.

Also, an investment of up to Rs 40 lakh to startups, based on their current valuation

and growth stage will be provided through selected accelerators. It will also facilitate equal matching investment by the accelerator or investor.

The programme aims to further the Indian startup growth which has seen the emergence of 63 unicorns (Startups with over \$1 billion valuation), making India the third largest unicorn hub globally with a total valuation of \$168 billion.

Hence both statements are correct.

212) Which of the following are the key activities that will be organised in the villages under SUJALAM campaign?

1. Organizing Community consultations, Khuli Baithaks and Gram Sabha meetings to analyze the current situation.
2. Pass resolution to maintain ODF sustainability and achieve needed number of soak pits to manage the grey water.
3. Construct requisite number of soak pits.

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

Explanation: The Ministry of Jal Shakti began 'SUJALAM', a '100 days campaign' to create more and more ODF Plus villages by undertaking waste water management at village level particularly through creation of 1 million Soak-pits and also other Grey water management activities.

The key activities that will be organised in the villages under this campaign include:

Organizing Community consultations, Khuli Baithaks and Gram Sabha meetings to analyze the current situation

Pass resolution to maintain ODF sustainability and achieve needed number of soak pits to manage the grey water

Develop a 100 days' plan to undertake sustainability and soak pit construction related activities

Construct requisite number of soak pits

Retrofit toilets where needed through IEC and community mobilization and

Ensure all newly emerging Households in the village have access to toilets.

Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.

213) With reference to the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane, consider the following statements:

1. It is approved by Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs.
2. The FRP has been determined on the basis of recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and after consultation with State Governments and other stake-holders.

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

Explanation: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane for sugar season 2021-22 (October -

September) at Rs. 290/- per quintal for a basic recovery rate of 10%.

The cost of production of sugarcane for the sugar season 2021-22 is Rs. 155 per quintal. This FRP of Rs. 290 per quintal at a recovery rate of 10% is higher by 87.1% over production cost, thereby giving the farmers a return of much more than 50% over their cost.

The FRP approved shall be applicable for purchase of sugarcane from the farmers in the sugar season 2021-22 (starting w.e.f. 1st October, 2021) by sugar mills.

The FRP has been determined on the basis of recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and after consultation with State Governments and other stake-holders.

Hence both statements are correct.

214) Which of the following Ministries will launch the e-SHRAM Portal?

- a) Ministry of Finance
- b) Ministry of Skill Development
- c) Ministry of Labour & Employment**
- d) Ministry of Power

Explanation: The Union Minister for Labour and Employment will launch the e-Shram portal, a database of unorganised sector workers.

The government aims to register 38 crore unorganised workers, such as construction labourers, migrant workforce, street vendors and domestic workers, among others. The workers will be issued an e-Shram card containing a 12 digit unique number, which, going ahead, will help in including them in social security schemes.

The registration of workers on the portal will be coordinated by the Labour Ministry, state governments, trade unions and CSCs.

Awareness campaigns would be planned across the country to enable the nationwide registration of workers.

215) Which of the following has launched the Global Economic Freedom Index?

- a) The Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU)
- *b) Fraser Institute**
- c) World Economic Forum
- d) Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP)

Explanation: The Global Economic Freedom Index (2020) by Canada's Fraser Institute and New Delhi based think tank Centre for Civil Society ranks India at 105.

The index measures economic freedom vis-a-vis

the size of the government,
the legal system and property rights,
sound money,
freedom to trade internationally and regulation.

216) Consider the following statements:

1. Saroop is a physical copy of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
2. Guru Granth Sahib is a compendium of hymns written by ten Sikh gurus.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only**
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Saroop is a physical copy of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, also called Bir in Punjabi. Every Bir has 1,430 pages, which are referred to as Ang. The verses on every page remain the same. 1 is correct.

The Sikhs consider the saroop of Guru Granth Sahib a living guru and treat it with utmost respect.

Guru Granth Sahib

It is a compendium of hymns written by six Sikh gurus, 15 saints, including Bhagat Kabir, Bhagat Ravidas, Sheikh Farid and Bhagat Namdev, 11 Bhatts (balladeers) and four Sikhs. 2 is incorrect.

The verses are composed in 31 ragas.

217) 'Yuktdhara' portal has been launched by

- a) Ministry of Finance
- b) Ministry of Defence
- c) Ministry of Science and Technology

d) Ministry of Rural development

Explanation: Recently, the Ministry of Rural development has launched a new geospatial planning portal, 'Yuktdhara' that will help in facilitating new MGNREGA assets using remote sensing and geographic information system-based data.

Key points:

Made by: ISRO and Ministry of Rural development towards realising a G2G service for rural planning in support of decentralized decision making.

Objectives: It will facilitate planning of new MGNREGA assets using Remote Sensing and GIS based information.

218) With reference to cooperative societies, consider the following statements-

1. The banks are owned and controlled by customers and the profits earned is also distributed among them.
2. Cooperative Banks operating under two or more states are registered under Cooperative Societies Act.
3. They play a significant role in financial inclusion.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

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

Explanation: Statement 2 is not correct.

Co-operative Banks

About:

Co-operative Banks, which are distinct from commercial banks, were born out of the concept of co-operative credit societies where members from a community group together to extend loans to each other, at favourable terms.

Co-operative Banks are broadly classified into Urban and Rural co-operative banks based on their region of operation.

They are registered under the Co-operative Societies Act of the State concerned or under the Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002 (if cooperative bank is operating in different states).

The Co-operative banks are governed by the

Banking Regulations Act, 1949.

Banking Laws (Co-operative Societies) Act, 1955.

Features of Co-operative Banks:

Customer Owned Entities: Co-operative bank members are both customer and owner of the bank.

Democratic Member Control: These banks are owned and controlled by the members, who democratically elect a board of directors. Members usually have equal voting rights, according to the cooperative principle of "one person, one vote".

Profit Allocation: A significant part of the yearly profit, benefits or surplus is usually allocated to constitute reserves and a part of this profit can also be distributed to the co-operative members, with legal and statutory limitations.

Financial Inclusion: They have played a significant role in the financial inclusion of unbanked rural masses. They provide cheap credit to masses in rural areas.

229) Recently, "Jan Shikshan Sansthan" was in news, which of the statements are correct?

1. Jan Shiksha Sansthan impart vocational training at doorstep.
2. Women, SC/ST's and OBC are prioritized in this program.
3. Jan Shikshan Sansthan are registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 only

c) 2 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: All statements are correct.

Recently, the Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) has brought high-speed internet to some of the remotest tribal hamlets deep inside the Nilambur jungle in Kerala.

About:

The Scheme of JSS formerly known as Shramik Vidyapeeth was a unique creation of the Government of India and has been implemented through Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the country since 1967.

The scheme was renamed as JSS in 2000.

The JSSs are imparting vocational skill training programmes at the doorstep of the beneficiaries with a minimum cost and infrastructure.

JSSs are unique in the sense that they do not provide only vocational skills but also include an element of life skills which can help the beneficiary in day to day life.

At present, 233 JSSs in 25 States and 3 Union Territories are functional.

The annual coverage of the beneficiaries is around 4 lakh, out of which 85% are women.

Mandate:

To provide vocational skills in non-formal mode to non-literate, neo-literates, persons with rudimentary level of education upto 8th and school drop-outs upto 12th standard in the age group of 15-45 years.

The priority groups are women, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, minorities and other backward sections of the society.

230) With reference to “Global Remittances Report” released by World Bank, consider the following statements-

1. India maintained its 1st position receiving the most remittances from the world.
2. Remittance outflow was maximum from China.
3. U.S received most remittances after Mexico and India.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

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

d) 1 only

Explanation: Statement 2 and 3 are not correct.

According to the latest edition of the World Bank’s Migration and Development Brief, despite Covid-19, remittance flows remained resilient in 2020, registering a smaller decline than previously projected.

Remittance Inflow of India:

India being at top, received over USD 83 billion in remittances in 2020, a drop of just 0.2 per cent from the previous year, despite a pandemic that devastated the world economy.

India’s remittances fell by just 0.2% in 2020, with much of the decline due to a 17% drop in remittances from the United Arab Emirates, which offset resilient flows

from the United States and other host countries.

In 2019, India had received USD 83.3 billion in remittances.

Global Remittances

China is second in terms of global remittances in 2020.

China received USD 59.5 billion in remittances in 2020.

India and China are followed by Mexico, the Philippines, Egypt, Pakistan, France and Bangladesh.

Remittance outflow:

Remittance outflow was the maximum from the United States.

231) With reference to the Drone Rules 2021, consider the following statements:

1. Quantum of fee reduced to nominal levels and delinked with size of drone.
2. No permission required for operating drones in green zones.
3. No remote pilot licence required for micro drones (for non-commercial use) and nano drones.

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

Explanation: In March 2021, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) published the Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Rules, 2021. Based on the feedback, the Government has decided to repeal the

UAS Rules, 2021 and replace the same with the liberalised Drone Rules, 2021.

Key features of Drone Rules 2021

Several approvals abolished: unique authorisation number, unique prototype identification number, certificate of manufacturing and airworthiness, certificate of conformance, certificate of maintenance, import clearance, acceptance of existing drones, operator permit, authorisation of R&D organisation, student remote pilot licence, remote pilot instructor authorisation, drone port authorisation etc.

Number of forms reduced from 25 to 5.
Types of fee reduced from 72 to 4.

Quantum of fee reduced to nominal levels and delinked with size of drone.

Digital sky platform shall be developed as a user-friendly single-window system.

No permission required for operating drones in green zones. Yellow zone reduced from 45 km to 12 km from the airport perimeter.

No remote pilot licence required for micro drones (for non-commercial use) and nano drones.

Drone promotion council to be set up by Government with participation from academia, startups and other stakeholders to facilitate a growth-oriented regulatory regime.

Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.

232) With reference to 'the 'SEBI (Share Based Employee Benefits and Sweat Equity) Regulations, 2021', consider the following statements:

1. Companies will now be allowed to provide share-based employee benefits to employees, who are exclusively working for such a company.

2. It also permit companies to transfer excess shares held by a trust upon its winding up, to other share-based employee benefit schemes, subject to approval of the shareholders for such transfer.

3. These new rules will be applicable to listed as well as unlisted companies.

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

Explanation: The Securities and Exchange Board of India has approved the merger of the SEBI (Share Based Employee Benefits) Regulations, 2014 (SBEB Regulations) and the SEBI (Issue of Sweat Equity) Regulations, 2002 (Sweat Equity Regulations) into the SEBI (Share Based Employee Benefits and Sweat Equity) Regulations, 2021.

The new regulations have widened the scope of employees who can be offered stock options, and brought in other key changes that will benefit the employees and listed companies issuing these options.

Companies will now be allowed to provide share-based employee benefits to employees, who are exclusively working for such a company or any of its group companies including a subsidiary or an associate.

To provide immediate relief to an employee or his/her family in instances of permanent incapacity or death, the regulations have dispensed with the requirement of a minimum vesting period and lock-in period (minimum 1 year) for all share benefit schemes.

The new regulations have extended the time period for appropriating the unappropriated inventory of shares held by the trust from the existing one year to two years, subject to the approval of the Compensation Committee/ Nomination and Remuneration Committee.

The regulations now also permit companies to transfer excess shares or monies held by a trust upon its winding up, to other share-based employee benefit schemes, subject to approval of the shareholders for such transfer.

These new Rules will be applicable only to listed companies as these have been framed by SEBI, which only regulates listed companies.

233) Recently seen in the news Makassar Strait joins which of the following seas?

a) Japan Sea & Okhotsk Sea

b) Adriatic Sea & Ionian Sea

c) The Java Sea & Celebes Sea

d) Sunda Sea & Andaman Sea

Explanation: Makassar Strait is a strait between the islands of Borneo and Sulawesi in Indonesia. To the north, it joins the Celebes Sea, while to the south it meets the Java Sea.

To the northeast, it forms the Sangkulirang Bay south of the Mangkalihat Peninsula. The strait is an

important regional shipping route in Southeast Asia

234) With reference to Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) consider the following:

1. It brings together public and private sectors with the shared goal of creating equal access to new and underused vaccines.

2. The GAVI Board oversees the operations of the Vaccine Alliance and monitors programme implementation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1& 2

d) None of the above

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: Created in 2000, Gavi is an international organisation – a global Vaccine Alliance, bringing together public and private sectors with the shared goal of creating equal access to new and underused vaccines for children living in the world's poorest countries.

Statement 2 is correct: With membership drawn from a range of partner organisations, as well as experts from the private sector, the Board provides a forum for balanced strategic decision making, innovation and partner collaboration.

It normally meets twice a year.

235) With reference to National Monetization Plan, consider the following statements-

1. It aims to unlock the value of brown field investments by transferring them ownership and revenue rights.
2. Assets of Central Government and State Governments have been included for monetization.
3. It will run co-terminus with National Infrastructure Pipeline.

Select the correct answer using the code below-

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

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are not correct.

About the NMP:

It aims to unlock value in brownfield projects by engaging the private sector, transferring to them revenue rights and not ownership in the projects, and using the funds generated for infrastructure creation across the country.

The NMP has been announced to provide a clear framework for monetisation and give potential investors a ready list of assets to generate investment interest.

Union Budget 2021-22 has identified monetisation of operating public infrastructure assets as a key means for sustainable infrastructure financing.

Currently, only assets of central government line ministries and Central

Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in infrastructure sectors have been included.

The government has stressed that these are brownfield assets, which have been “de-risked” from execution risks, and therefore should encourage private investment.

Roads, railways and power sector assets will comprise over 66% of the total estimated value of the assets to be monetised, with the remaining upcoming sectors including telecom, mining, aviation, ports, natural gas and petroleum product pipelines, warehouses and stadiums.

In terms of annual phasing by value, 15% of assets with an indicative value of Rs 0.88 lakh crore are envisaged for rollout in the current financial year.

The NMP will run co-terminus with the Rs 100 lakh crore National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) announced in December 2019.

236) Consider the following statements regarding Nuakhai Juhar.

1. It is celebrated in the areas of Odisha and Jharkhand.
2. People offer their first produce from their lands to Lord Jagannath.
3. Nuakhai means new body i.e., old idols of lord Jagannath is replaced with new idol.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

d) 1 only

Explanation: Statement 2 and 3 are not correct.

Nuakhai is the most auspicious and important social festival in Western Odisha and the neighbouring areas of Simdega in Jharkhand. It is an annual harvest festival in Odisha, celebrated to welcome the season's new rice and celebrated a day after Ganesh Chaturthi

On this day, people worship food grain and prepare special meals. Farmers offer the first produce from their lands to Goddess Samaleswari, the famous 'Mother Goddess' of Sambalpur district of Odisha.

Nuakhai is a combination of two words signifies eating of new rice as 'nua' means new and 'khai' means eat. During the festival, food grains are worshipped. On this special festival, people organize dances and folk songs in their districts with an aim to display their culture and tradition.

237) Consider the following statements regarding SAMARTH Udyog Bharat 4.0, seen recently in news:

1. It is an Industry 4.0 initiative of the Department of Heavy Industry.
2. Industry 4.0 refers to the fourth industrial revolution, which is related to the cyber-physical transformation of services sector.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Smart Advanced Manufacturing and Rapid Transformation Hub (SAMARTH) -Udyog Bharat 4.0 is an Industry 4.0 initiative of the Department of Heavy Industry, under its scheme on Enhancement of Competitiveness in Indian Capital Goods Sector.

Industry 4.0 refers to the fourth industrial revolution, which is the cyber-physical transformation of manufacturing.

Industry 4.0 has been defined as a name for the current trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies, including cyber-physical systems, the Internet of things, cloud computing and cognitive computing and creating the smart factory.

238) With reference to Nidhi Companies, consider the following statements:

1. It works on the principle of mutual benefits that are regulated by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
2. They have been exempted from core provisions of RBI Act applicable to NBFCs.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Nidhi Company is a company registered under Companies Act and notified as a Nidhi company by Central Government under Section 620A of Companies Act, 2013. These are governed by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA).

Under Nidhi Rules, 2014, it is a company with the objective of cultivating the habit of thrift and saving amongst its members, receiving deposits from, and lending to, its members only, for their mutual benefit.

It is a non-banking finance company (NBFC) doing the business of lending and borrowing with its members or shareholders.

RBI has powers to issue directives to them though not directly.

They have been exempted from core provisions of RBI Act applicable to NBFCs.

239) Which of the following is the objective of Mission Sagar, sometimes seen in news?

- a) To explore and extract polymetallic nodules from ocean depth in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India.
- b) To Provide Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief in Afghanistan
- c) To deliver Covid-19 related assistance to the countries in the Indian Ocean Littoral States.
- d) None of the above

Explanation: Mission Sagar is India's initiative to deliver Covid-19 related assistance to the countries in the Indian Ocean Littoral states.

The countries including Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros and Seychelles had requested India for assistance in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The assistance is in line with India's role as the first responder in the Indian Ocean region.

This is different from the Security and Growth for All in the region (SAGAR) vision which is India's strategic vision for the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) to deepen economic and security cooperation with its maritime neighbours.

240) Consider the following statements regarding Global Manufacturing Risk Index 2021:

1. It assesses the most advantageous locations for global manufacturing among 47 countries in Europe, the Americas and Asia-Pacific (APAC).
2. India ranks second as the most sought-after manufacturing destination globally.
3. United States is the most sought-after manufacturing destination globally, driven by cost competitiveness.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Global Manufacturing Risk Index assessed the most advantageous locations for global manufacturing among 47 countries in Europe, the Americas and Asia-Pacific (APAC).

The rankings in the report are determined based on four key parameters, including the country's capability to restart manufacturing, business environment (availability of talent/labour, access to markets), operating costs, and the risks (political, economic and environmental).

The baseline ranking for top manufacturing destinations is determined

on the basis of a country's operating conditions and cost effectiveness.

Key findings of the report:

India takes the second spot after China as the most sought-after manufacturing destination globally.

The US is at third position, followed by Canada, Czech Republic, Indonesia, Lithuania, Thailand, Malaysia and Poland.

The growing focus on India can be attributed to India's operating conditions and cost competitiveness. Also, the country's proven success in meeting outsourcing requirements has led to the increase in the ranking year-on-year.

241) With reference to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), consider the following statements:

1. Companies with a minimum net worth of Rs 500 crore, turnover of Rs 1,000 crore, or net profit of Rs 5 crore are required to spend at least 2 per cent of their average profit for the previous three years on CSR activities every year.

2. Any CSR expenditure in excess of the mandated 2 per cent expenditure cannot be set off against mandatory CSR expenditure.

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

Explanation: The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has clarified that excess Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) expenditure

prior to FY21 cannot be set off against future CSR expenditure requirements and that corporate donations to government schemes cannot be counted as CSR.

What is the clarification on setting off of excess CSR expenditure?

Companies with a minimum net worth of Rs 500 crore, turnover of Rs 1,000 crore, or net profit of Rs 5 crore are required to spend at least 2 per cent of their average profit for the previous three years on CSR activities every year. The ministry has clarified that any CSR expenditure in excess of the mandated 2 per cent expenditure can be set off against mandatory CSR expenditure in the three subsequent fiscals. Notably however, excess expenditure prior to FY21 is not eligible to be set off against future CSR requirements. The government had in May notified that donations made to the PM CARES fund on March 31, 2020 in excess of CSR requirements could be set off against CSR expenditure requirements for FY21.

242) With reference to the 'Karmayogi' Digital Learning Facility', consider the following statements:

- 1. Its objective is to enhance governance through Army Personnel Capacity Building.
- 2. This digital learning platform will help further extend the citizen-centric reforms.

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

Explanation: Union Minister of Personnel inaugurated the "Karmayogi" Digital Learning Facility for Civil Servants at the Institute of Secretariat Training & Management (ISTM), a premier Central Training Institution under the Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT).

This digital learning platform will help further extending the citizen centric reforms initiated by the Government under 'Mission Karmayogi'. The National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building ('NPCSCB') – "Mission Karmayogi" was approved by the Government on 2nd September, 2020 with the objective of enhancing governance through Civil Services Capacity Building. NPCSCB has been carefully designed to lay the foundations for capacity building for Civil Servants so that they remain entrenched in Indian Culture and sensibilities and remain connected, with their roots, while they learn from the best institutions and practices across the world. The training of Civil Servants at various Academies is being restructured to include optimum use of the digital learning platform of Integrated Government Online Training (iGOT). Hence option(b) is correct.

243) With reference to the 'Triple active galactic nucleus', consider the following statements:

1. It is a compact region at the centre of a newly discovered galaxy that has a much-higher-than-normal luminosity.
2. A combination of three Supermassive black holes, which are difficult to detect as they emit too much light.

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

Explanation: Indian researchers have discovered three supermassive black holes from three galaxies merging together to form a triple active galactic nucleus, a compact region at the center of a newly discovered galaxy that has a much-higher-than-normal luminosity. This rare occurrence in our nearby Universe indicates that small merging groups are ideal laboratories to detect multiple accreting supermassive black holes and increases the possibility of detecting such rare occurrences. Supermassive black holes are difficult to detect because they do not emit any light. But they can reveal their presence by interacting with their surroundings. When the dust and gas from the surroundings fall onto a supermassive black hole, some of the mass is swallowed by the black hole, but some of it is converted into energy and emitted as electromagnetic radiation that makes the black hole appear very luminous. They are called active galactic nuclei (AGN) and release huge amounts of ionized particles and energy into the galaxy and its environment. Both of these ultimately contribute to the growth of the medium around the galaxy and ultimately the evolution of the galaxy itself. Many AGN pairs have been detected in the past, but triple AGN are extremely rare, and only a handful has been detected before using X-ray observations. Hence option(a) is correct.

244) Which of the following statements are false about Dipor beel Wildlife sanctuary?

a) It located in the west of Guwahati city in Assam

b) Deepar Beel is one of the largest freshwater lakes in Assam and the State's only Ramsar site besides being an Important Bird Area.

c) It is situated in North Assam on the Banks of Brahmaputra.

d) It has been declared an eco-sensitive zone.

Explanation: About Dipor Beel:

It is located to the south-west of Guwahati city.

It is a permanent freshwater lake, in a former channel of the Brahmaputra River, to the south of the main river. It is also called a wetland under the Ramsar Convention which has listed the lake in November 2002, as a Ramsar Site for undertaking conservation measures on the basis of its biological and environmental importance.

It is Considered one of the largest beels in the Brahmaputra valley of Lower Assam(south Assam), it is categorised as representative of the wetland type under the Burma monsoon forest biogeographic region. Thus Statement c is false.

Among activities prohibited in the eco-sensitive zone are hydroelectric projects, brick kilns, commercial use of firewood and discharge of untreated effluents in natural water bodies or land areas.

Assam's only Ramsar site has shrunk by at least 35% since 1991.

245) "Adaptation Gap" report is released by which of the following organization?

a) United Nation Environment Programme

b) World Intellectual Property Organization

c) World Health Organization

d) World Meteorological Organization

Explanation: Recently, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Adaptation Gap Report 2020 estimated the annual cost of adaptation to the effects of climate change for developing countries to at least quadruple by 2050.

The current cost for these countries is in the range of USD 70 billion (Rs 5.1 lakh crore) and may rise to USD 140-300 billion in 2030 and USD 280-500 billion in 2050.

Adaptation Cost:

It includes costs of planning, preparing for, facilitating and implementing adaptation measures.

The ever-increasing adaptation cost has also outpaced the growth in adaptation finance and that is the reason for a maintained Adaptation Finance gap.

Adaptation Finance: It refers to the flow of funds to developing countries to help them tide over the damages caused by weather events from climate change.

Adaptation Finance gap: It is the difference between Adaptation Cost and Adaptation Finance.

Adaptation costs, in actual terms, is higher in developed countries but the burden of adaptation is greater for developing countries in relation to their gross domestic product.

The developing countries, especially in Africa and Asia, which are least equipped

to tackle climate change will also be the most impacted by it.

246) "Kalapani, Limpiyadharu and Lipulekh" dispute involves which of the following countries?

a) India and China

b) Nepal and India

c) India and Bhutan

d) India and Myanmar

Explanation: Border Dispute Between India and Nepal

Currently, India and Nepal have border disputes over Kalapani - Limpiyadhura - Lipulekh trijunction between India-Nepal and China and Susta area (West Champaran district, Bihar).

Kalapani Region:

Kalapani is a valley that is administered by India as a part of the Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand. It is situated on the Kailash Mansarovar route.

Kalapani is advantageously located at a height of over 20,000 ft and serves as an observation post for that area.

The Kali River in the Kalapani region demarcates the border between India and Nepal.

The Treaty of Sugauli signed by the Kingdom of Nepal and British India (after Anglo-Nepalese War) in 1816 located the Kali River as Nepal's western boundary with India.

The discrepancy in locating the source of the Kali river led to boundary disputes between India and Nepal, with each country producing maps supporting their own claims.

247) Which of the following activities are normally approved activities under corporate social responsibility in India:

1. eradicating extreme hunger, poverty,
2. promotion of education
3. promoting gender equality
4. Funding military programme

Select the correct code:

a) 1, 2 and 3

b) Only 2 and 3

c) 2, 3 and 4

d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Explanation: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The term "Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)" can be referred to as a corporate initiative to assess and take responsibility for the company's effects on the environment and impact on social welfare.

Regulations

In India, the concept of CSR is governed by clause 135 of the Companies Act, 2013.

Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility) Rules, 2014

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India has recently notified the Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013 along with Companies (Corporate Social Responsibility Policy) Rules, 2014.

Companies with net worth of Rs 500 crore or more, or a turnover of Rs 1,000 crore or more, or net profit of Rs 5 crore or more, are required to spend 2% of their average net profit of the preceding three years on CSR activities.

CSR Activities: Normally approved activities under Schedule VII of CSR include

eradicating extreme hunger, poverty,

promotion of education,

promoting gender equality and women's empowerment as well as reducing the child mortality,

improving maternal health and combating diseases.

Ensuring environmental sustainability and prompting employment enhancing vocational skills are other activities approved under CSR.

Funding military programmes is not an approved activity.

248) EASE 4.0 recently launched by the Union Government is a reform agenda for:

a) Agricultural sector

b) Manufacturing sector

c) Banking sector

d) Services sector

Explanation: EASE 4.0 or Enhanced Access and Service Excellence is a common reform agenda aimed at institutionalising clean and smart banking.

EASE 4.0 commits Public Sector Banks to tech-enabled, simplified and collaborative banking to further the agenda of customer-centric digital transformation.

Following agenda has been proposed under EASE 4.0:

Under EASE 4.0, the theme of new-age 24x7 banking with resilient technology has been introduced to ensure

uninterrupted availability of banking services.

Banks have also been asked to come up with specific schemes for the North-East.

Banks will be urged to work with state governments to push the 'one district, one export' agenda.

Now industries have the option of raising funds even from outside the banking sector.

249) Consider the following statements about Malabar Exercise

1. Australia joined Malabar Exercise for the first time in the year 2020

2. Malabar Exercise 2020 was conducted in Arabian Sea

3. This exercise is a part of QUAD's official military engagement

Which of the above statement is/are incorrect?

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect: It is a multilateral war-gaming naval exercise which started in 1992 as bilateral exercise between India and USA. Japan and Australia first participated in 2007.

Statement 3 is incorrect: It is not a part of Quad official military engagement

250) Consider the following statements regarding Project Bachpan:

1. The project aims to eradicate the menace of child malnutrition in and

around the surrounding areas of National Coalfields Limited.

2. It is an initiative launched by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct

Statement 2 is incorrect

About Project Bachpan:

Project Bachpan was launched based on the MoU signed between Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) and Singrauli District Administration, Madhya Pradesh.

Aim: The project aims to eradicate the menace of child malnutrition in and around the surrounding areas of NCL.

Under the Project, nutritional needs of more than 260 undernourished children will be taken care of. This will ensure the malnourished children's good health and wellbeing

251) An important tool in recent past namely, Palm Ratio is used for measuring?

- a) Unemployment
- b) Inequality
- c) Tax base
- d) Environmental Degradation

Explanation: The Palma ratio is a measure of inequality. It is the ratio of the richest 10% of the population's share of gross

national income (GNI) divided by the poorest 40%'s share.

252) Chagos Islands, seen recently in news, is located in:

- a) Indian Ocean
- b) Pacific Ocean
- c) North Atlantic Ocean
- d) South Atlantic Ocean

Explanation: Chagos Islands is a group of seven atolls comprising more than 60 islands in the Indian Ocean about 500 kilometres south of the Maldives archipelago.

This chain of islands is the southernmost archipelago of the Chagos-Laccadive Ridge, a long submarine mountain range in the Indian Ocean.

In the 19th century, Chagos were governed from Mauritius, which was a British Colony.

Mauritius became independent in 1968, but the Chagos archipelago remained under British control. The U.K. government refers to it as British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT).

The UK retained possession of the Chagos archipelago, which includes the strategic US airbase of Diego Garcia, after Mauritius gained its independence by paying Mauritius more than 4 million pounds for the islands.

Since 1975, Mauritius has made a concerted legal effort to secure the archipelago's return to its fold.

253) Consider the following statements regarding Nationally Determined Contributions-Transport Initiative for Asia (NDC-TIA):

1. It aims to promote a comprehensive approach to decarbonize transport sector in India, Vietnam, and China.

2. The India component of NDC-TIA is implemented by the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: The NDC Transport Initiative for Asia (NDC-TIA) aims to promote a coherent strategy of effective policies for decarbonising transport co-ordinated among various sector ministries, civil society, and the private sector.

The project engages in China, India and Vietnam over the period 2020-24.

The goal is to enable the countries' transport sectors to contribute to achieving their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and increase ambition in transport sections of long-term strategies and 2025 NDCs.

The India component is implemented by six consortium organisations. On behalf of the Government of India, NITI Aayog, is the implementing partner.

The objectives of NDC-TIA India Component are:

Strengthening GreenHouse Gas (GHG) and transport modelling capacities.

Providing technical support on GHG emission reduction measures.

Financing climate actions in transport.

Offering policy recommendations on electric vehicle (EV) demand and supply policies etc

254) Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs):

1. ESZs are areas within 10 kms around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.

2. ESZs are notified under Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

3. Recently, ESZs around Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary has been notified.

Choose the correct answer from the codes given below:

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) or Ecologically Fragile Areas (EFAs) are areas within 10 kms around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.

In case of places with sensitive corridors, connectivity and ecologically important patches, crucial for landscape linkage, even area beyond 10 km width can also be included in the eco-sensitive zone.

ESZs are notified by MoEFCC, Government of India under Environment Protection Act 1986.

The basic aim is to regulate certain activities around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries so as to minimise the negative impacts of such activities on the fragile ecosystem encompassing the protected areas.

The purpose of declaring ESZs is to create some kind of “shock absorbers” to the protected areas by regulating and managing the activities around such areas. They also act as a transition zone from areas of high protection to areas involving lesser protection.

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified the eco-sensitive zone of Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary. It is a permanent freshwater lake, in a former channel of the Brahmaputra River, to the south of the main river. It is a wetland under the Ramsar Convention which has been listed since November 2002.

255) Nine-dashed line, recently in news is related to -

- a) European migration crisis
- b) Ukraine- Crimea border
- c) Syria – ISIS boundary

d) South China Sea

Explanation: The nine-dashed line is also called as a nine-dotted line or U-shaped line or nine-dash map.

- It refer to the demarcation line used initially by the government of the Republic of China(ROC / Taiwan) and subsequently also by the government of the People's Republic of China(PRC), for their claims of the major part of the South China Sea(SCS)

- The contested area in the SCS includes the Paracel Islands, the Spratly Islands, and various other areas including the Pratas Islands, the Macclesfield Bank and the Scarborough Shoal.

256) The Strait of Malacca connects which to important water bodies?

a) Andaman Sea and South China Sea

b) Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea

c) Yellow Sea and East China Sea

d) Phillipine Sea and East China Sea

Explanation: Strait of Malacca, waterway connecting the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) and the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean). It runs between the Indonesian island of Sumatra to the west and peninsular (West) Malaysia and extreme southern Thailand to the east and has an area of about 25,000 square miles (65,000 square km).

257) With reference to ‘Greater Malé Connectivity Project (GMCP)’, consider the following statements:

1. It is India's largest project in the Maldives.
2. It facilitates inter-island connectivity in the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Both statements are correct.

This infrastructure project, the largest-ever by India in the Maldives, involves the construction of a 6.74-km-long bridge and causeway link that will connect the Maldives capital Malé with the neighbouring islands of Villingli, Gulhifalhu and Thilafushi. This project was funded by India in a grant of \$100 million, with a line of credit of \$400 million. This project is significant because it facilitates inter-

island connectivity in the country. The GMCP is not only the biggest project India is doing in the Maldives but also the biggest infrastructure project in the Maldives overall

258) With reference to Panchayati Raj Institutions, arrange the following committees in a chronological manner-

1. Balwant Rai Mehta Committee
2. Ashok Mehta Committee
3. LM Singhvi Committee

Select the correct answer using the code below-

- a) 1-2-3
- b) 2-3-1
- c) 3-2-1
- d) 1-3-2

Explanation: Option A is the correct answer. Planning Commission appointed a committee headed by Balwantrao Mehta in 1957 to study the Community Development Programmes and National Extension Services Programme especially to assess the extent of people's participation and to recommend ways to ensure this.

Ashok Mehta Committee's recommendations in 1978 for a two-tier system with Zilla Parishad at the district level and Mandal Panchayat as the base and L. M. Singhvi Committee's (1986) recommendations that the PRIs should be enshrined in the Constitution and 'Gram Sabha' should be the base for decentralised democracy, bore fruits in the form of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993.

259) Consider the following statements regarding Interest Subvention Scheme:

1. It aims to provide short-term crop loans up to 3 lakh to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum.
2. The Interest Subvention Scheme is being implemented by NABARD and RBI.

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

Explanation: Both statements are correct.

The Interest Subvention Scheme aims to provide short-term crop loans up to Rs. 3 lakhs to farmers at an interest rate of 7 per cent per annum.

The Interest Subvention Scheme is being implemented by NABARD and RBI.

260) 'Kunming Declaration', which was seen in the news recently, is associated with which country?

- a) China
- b) Japan
- c) USA
- d) South Korea

Explanation: China has recently submitted a "zero draft" of the 'Kunming Declaration' to the United Nations.

The declaration includes the key Chinese Communist Party concept of "ecological civilisation".

The document also calls on parties to focus biodiversity protection in decision-

making and recognise the importance of conservation in protecting human health.

The COP 15 biodiversity talks are due to take place in October 2021.

261) With reference to Oil Palm cultivation, consider the following statements-

1. India produces Oil Palm far less than it what consumes.
2. India is the largest consumer of Palm Oil in the world.
3. National Edible Oil Mission-Palm Oil aims to increase production of oil by three times to 11 Lakh tonnes by 2025.

Select the correct answer using the code given below-

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

Explanation: All statements are correct.

Recently, the Prime Minister has announced a new national initiative on palm oil production to help increase farm incomes.

The scheme, called National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP), for self-reliance in edible oil involves investment of over Rs. 11,000 crore (over a five year period).

Key Points

Aims:

To harness domestic edible oil prices that are dictated by expensive palm oil imports.

To raise the domestic production of palm oil by three times to 11 lakh MT by 2025-26.

This will involve raising the area under oil palm cultivation to 10 lakh hectares by 2025-26 and 16.7 lakh hectares by 2029-30.

Features:

The special emphasis of the scheme will be in India's north-eastern states and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to the conducive weather conditions in the regions.

Under the scheme, oil palm farmers will be provided financial assistance and will get remuneration under a price and viability formula.

India consumes 10 per cent of the total global production of palm oil, with the consumption significantly exceeding domestic production. India produces less than 0.7 million tonnes of palm oil annually, while it imports around 7.4 million tonnes.

The demand for palm oil is primarily driven by high consumption as a vegetable oil in food and fast-moving consumer goods industry led by its versatility.

As many as 194.4 million people are still undernourished in India, highlighting the need to prioritise food security in the country, according to United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report.

262) "Global Forest Resource Assessment" report sometimes, seen in news is released by-

a) Food and Agriculture Organization

b) IUCN

c) United Nation Environment Program

d) World Bank

Explanation: Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 has been released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The FRA 2020 has examined the status of, and trends in, more than 60 forest-related variables in 236 countries and territories in the period 1990–2020.

Key findings:

Forest area has declined all across the world in the past three decades. The world lost 178 mha of forest since 1990, an area the size of Libya.

The rate of forest loss has also declined due to the growth of sustainable management. The rate of forest loss in 2015-2020 declined to an estimated 10 million hectares (mha), down from 12 million hectares (mha) in 2010-2015.

The area of naturally regenerating forests worldwide decreased since 1990, but the area of planted forests increased by 123 mha.

Highest loss and highest gains:

Africa had the largest annual rate of net forest loss in 2010–2020, at 3.9 mha, followed by South America, at 2.6 mha.

On the other hand, Asia had the highest net gain of forest area in 2010–2020, followed by Oceania and Europe.

Geographical extent:

The world's total forest area was 4.06 billion hectares (bha), which was 31 per

cent of the total land area. This area was equivalent to 0.52 ha per person.

The largest proportion of the world's forests were tropical (45 per cent), followed by boreal, temperate and subtropical.

More than 54 per cent of the world's forests were in only five countries — the Russian Federation, Brazil, Canada, the United States of America and China.

The highest per cent of plantation forests were in South America while the lowest were in Europe.

263) Consider the following statements about Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvIT)-

1. It is an instrument which works like Mutual Fund.
2. They cannot be listed on stock exchange.
3. They are modified version of REITs (real-estate investment infrastructure).

Which of the above statements given above is/are correct?

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

Explanation: Statement 2 is not correct.

What are Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvIT)?

It is like a mutual fund, which enables direct investment of small amounts of money from possible individual/institutional investors in

infrastructure to earn a small portion of the income as return.

InvITs can be treated as the modified version of REITs designed to suit the specific circumstances of the infrastructure sector.

They are similar to REIT but invest in infrastructure projects such as roads or highways which take some time to generate steady cash flows.

It can listed on stock exchange. Like IPO.

What are Real Estate Investment Trusts (REIT)?

A REIT is roughly like a mutual fund that invests in real estate although the similarity doesn't go much further.

The basic deal on REITs is that you own a share of property, and so an appropriate share of the income from it will come to you, after deducting an appropriate share of expenses.

Essentially, it's like a group of people pooling their money together and buying real estate except that it's on a large scale and is regulated.

Why need InvITs and REITs?

Infrastructure and real estate are the two most critical sectors in any developing economy.

A well-developed infrastructural set-up propels the overall development of a country.

It also facilitates a steady inflow of private and foreign investments, and thereby augments the capital base available for the growth of key sectors in an economy, as well as its own growth, in a sustained manner.

Given the importance of these two sectors in the country, and the paucity of public funds available to stimulate their growth, it is imperative that additional channels of financing are put in place.

264) The term "Nine Dash Line" often seen in news is related to which of the following place?

a) South China sea

b) Coral Sea

c) Lithium Triangle

d) Indian Ocean

Explanation: Recently, China has notified new maritime rules, warranting vessels to report their information when passing through what China sees as its "Territorial Waters", that will take effect from 1st September 2021.

China claims under a so-called "Nine Dash Line" on its maps most of the South China Sea's waters, which are disputed by several other countries, including the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Nine Dash Line:

Stretches hundreds of kilometers south and east of China's southerly Hainan Island, covering the strategic Paracel and Spratly island chains.

It is deemed by most countries as being inconsistent with the UNCLOS, which only gives states the right to establish a territorial sea up to 12 nautical miles.

China claims it by citing 2,000 years of history when the two island chains were regarded as its integral parts.

The Hague-based Permanent Court of Arbitration issued a decision in 2016,

rejecting China's claims as lacking a basis in international law. China dismissed the ruling then.

265) Consider the following pairs:

Hydropower Projects	Rivers
1. Tehri Dam	Bhagirathi river
2. Tapovan Vishnugad	Alaknanda river
3. Vishnugadh Pipalkoti	Dhauliganga river

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

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

Explanation: Recently, the central government has said that no new Hydropower projects would be allowed in the upper reaches of the Ganga and those sanctioned would have to abide by environment regulations that prescribe a minimum flow in the river at all times of the year to preserve its health.

Seven projects, all in Uttarakhand, have been allowed to complete construction primarily on the ground that they were over 50% complete.

The seven projects are the:

Tehri Stage 2 is a 1000 MW project on Bhagirathi river. Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.

Tapovan Vishnugad is a 520 MW project on Dhauliganga river. Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.

Vishnugadh Pipalkoti is a 444 MW project on Alaknanda river. Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.

Other projects in Uttarakhand are:

Singoli Bhatwari: 99 MW on Mandakini river

Phata Bhuyang: 76 MW on Mandakini river

Madhyamaheshwar: 15 MW on Madhyamaheshwar Ganga

Kaliganga 2: 6 MW on Kaliganga river

266) Consider the following statements regarding Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline (TAPI)

- 1. It is a natural gas pipeline
- 2. The end location of the pipeline is in Fazilka, India

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 and 2

Explanation: Recently, a Taliban leader mentioned that the Taliban would address the issues holding up Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project after the formation of the government. About the TAPI Pipeline:

The pipeline will transport natural gas from the Galkynysh Gas Field in Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and then to India

The pipeline will transport natural gas from the Galkynysh Gas Field in

Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and then to India.

The end location of the pipeline is located in Fazilka, India

267) Consider the following statements regarding National Supercomputing Mission (NSM):

1. The mission aims to connect research and academic institutions to a supercomputing grid all over the country.
2. Param Shakti supercomputer was set up under phase I of this mission?

a) 1 only

b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Explanation: Both statements are correct

About National Super Computing Mission(NSM):

Firstly, the government launched the National Super Computing Mission in 2015.

Secondly, the aim is to connect research and academic institutions to a Supercomputing grid all over the country. The grid consists of more than 70 high-performance computing facilities, It will increase the research capacities and capabilities in the country.

Thirdly, these supercomputers will also be networked on the National Supercomputing grid over the National Knowledge Network (NKN). The NKN is another program of the government. NKN connects academic institutions and R&D labs over a high-speed network.

Implementing Agency: Department of Science and Technology and Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) through the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

268) Which one of the following is the correct aim of Saksham Bitiya initiative of NITI aayog?

a) It aims to train girls in socio-emotional and ethical learning

b) It aims to encourage girls to participate in Olympic games

c) It aims at addressing drop out among girl child

d) It aims to improve academic performance of girl child

Explanation: About Saksham Initiative: NITI Aayog, with the help of civil society organisations, had started a community programme led by volunteers called "Saksham Bitiya". It aims to train girls in socio-emotional and ethical learning.

269) India entered into Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS) with which among the following countries?

a) Japan

b) Australia

c) USA

d) Russia

Explanation: As part of the efforts to further deepen the defence cooperation between India and Russia, India and Russia are expected to conclude the bilateral logistics agreement, Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS)

during the upcoming Russian Defence Minister's visit to India.

This means Indian ships or aircraft can now use Russian ports or airfields without having to take permission or make immediate payments. India has already signed a similar agreement with the USA. The LEMOA or the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement between India and the United States was signed in 2016.

270) Consider the following statements with respect to the South China Sea:

1. It is the connecting link between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.
2. It is connected by Taiwan Strait with the East China Sea and by Luzon Strait with the Philippine Sea.
3. The Scarborough Shoal is claimed by the Philippines, China, and Taiwan.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Explanation: The South China Sea is the connecting link between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.

The South China Sea is connected by Taiwan Strait with the East China Sea and by Luzon Strait with the Philippine Sea.

South China Sea



The Scarborough Shoal located in the disputed South China Sea is claimed by the Philippines, China, and Taiwan.



271) With reference to the Gilgit-Baltistan, consider the following statements:

1. Gilgit was part of the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir, but was ruled directly by the British.
2. In 1974, Pakistan adopted its first full-fledged civilian Constitution, which lists 6 provinces including Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Gilgit-Baltistan.

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

Explanation: Pakistan's Law and Justice Ministry has finalised draft legislation to incorporate Gilgit-Baltistan, the region known before 2009 as Northern Areas, as a province of the country.

Gilgit was part of the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir, but was ruled directly by the British, who had taken it on lease

from Hari Singh, the Hindu ruler of the Muslim-majority state.

On November 1, 1947, a political outfit called the Revolutionary Council of Gilgit-Baltistan had proclaimed the independent state of Gilgit-Baltistan. On November 15, it declared it was acceding to Pakistan.

In 1974, Pakistan adopted its first full-fledged civilian Constitution, which lists four provinces — Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Gilgit-Baltistan were not incorporated as provinces.

One reason ascribed to this is that Pakistan did not want to undermine its international case that the resolution of the Kashmir issue had to be in accordance with UN resolutions that called for a plebiscite.

In 2009, Pakistan brought in the Gilgit-Baltistan (Empowerment and Self-Governance) Order, 2009, replacing the Northern Areas Legislative Council (NALC) with the Legislative Assembly, and the Northern Areas were given back the name of Gilgit-Baltistan.

On November 1, 2020, observed in Gilgit-Baltistan as “Independence Day”, Imran Khan announced that his government would give the region “provisional provincial status”.

New Delhi, which has asserted that Gilgit-Baltistan is an integral part of India “by virtue of the legal, complete and irrevocable accession of Jammu & Kashmir to the Union of India in 1947”, is yet to respond to the latest report.

Hence only statement 1 is correct.

272) With reference to the Preventive detention, consider the following statements:

1. The second part of Article 20 grants protection to persons who are arrested or detained under a preventive detention law.
2. The detention of a person cannot exceed three months unless advisory board reports sufficient cause for extended detention. The board is to consist of judges of a high 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

Explanation: Preventive detention, the dreaded power of the State to restrain a person without trial, could be used only to prevent public disorder, the Supreme Court held in a judgment.

Preventive detention is a necessary evil only to prevent public disorder.

The court must ensure that the facts brought before it directly and inevitably lead to a harm, danger or alarm or feeling of insecurity among the general public or any section thereof at large, a Bench, led by Justice Rohinton F. Nariman, observed.

The State should not arbitrarily resort to “preventive detention” to deal with all and sundry “law and order” problems, which could be dealt with by the ordinary laws of the country.

Preventive detention must fall within the four corners of Article 21 (due process of

law) read with Article 22 (safeguards against arbitrary arrest and detention) and the statute in question.

The second part of Article 22 grants protection to persons who are arrested or detained under a preventive detention law. This protection is available to both citizens as well as aliens and includes the following:

The detention of a person cannot exceed three months unless advisory board reports sufficient cause for extended detention. The board is to consist of judges of a high court.

The grounds of detention should be communicated to the detention. However, the facts considered to be against the public interest need not be disclosed.

The detenu should be afforded an opportunity to make representation against the detention order.

Hence only statement 2 is correct.

273) Consider the following statements regarding “Compulsory licensing” under Patent law:

1. A government can allow someone else to produce a patented product or process without the consent of the patent owner.
2. The patent owner has a right to be paid compensation for copies of the products made under the compulsory licence.

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

Explanation: Compulsory licensing is when a government allows someone else to produce a patented product or process without the consent of the patent owner or plans to use the patent-protected invention itself. It is one of the flexibilities in the field of patent protection included in the WTO’s agreement on intellectual property — the TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) Agreement. 1 is correct

The patent owner still has rights over the patent, including a right to be paid compensation for copies of the products made under the compulsory licence. 2 is correct

274) Which one of the following institutions publishes the ‘Global Innovation Index’?

- a) World Intellectual Property Organization**
- b) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- c) World Economic Forum
- d) US Chamber of Commerce

Explanation: The Global Innovation Index is released by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). It provides detailed metrics about the innovation performance of 131 countries and economies around the world. India has climbed 33 notches from 81st position in 2015-16 to 48th in 2020.

275) A new person and purpose-specific cashless digital payment solution was recently launched by the Government of India. Its name is

- a) e-UPI
- b) e-PAISA**

c) e-RUPI

d) e-MUDRA

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched e-RUPI, a person and purpose-specific cashless digital payment solution, via videoconference on Monday.

Mr. Modi said the e-RUPI voucher was a symbol of how India was progressing by connecting people's lives with technology.

He expressed happiness that this reform initiative had come at a time when the country was celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav on the 75th anniversary of Independence.

e-RUPI is a cashless and contactless instrument for digital payment, an official statement said, adding that it is a QR code or SMS string-based e-voucher, which is delivered to the mobile of the beneficiaries.

276) Consider following statements about factoring.

1. Factoring is a transaction where an entity (like MSMEs) 'sells' its receivables to a third party for immediate funds (partial or full).
2. Factoring Regulation (Amendment) Bill 2020 empowers the Reserve Bank of India to make regulations with respect to factoring business.

Correct statement is/are

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2**
- d) None of the above

Explanation: Factoring is a transaction where an entity (like MSMEs) 'sells' its

receivables (dues from a customer) to a third party (a 'factor' like a bank or NBFC) for immediate funds (partial or full).

Currently, seven non-bank finance companies called NBFC factors do the majority of the factoring through the principal business condition.

Factoring Regulation (Amendment) Bill 2020:

The Bill has done away with threshold for NBFCs to get into the factoring business.

It widens the scope of financiers and to permit other non banking finance companies also to undertake factoring business and participate on the Trade Receivables Discounting System platform for discounting the invoices of micro, small and medium enterprises.

It reduces the time period for registration of invoice and satisfaction of charge upon it, in order to avoid possibility of dual financing.

It empowers the Reserve Bank of India to make regulations with respect to factoring business.

277) As per the Representation of People Act (1951), a person shall not be qualified for contesting in the elections to the Parliament in which of the following cases?

1. He is convicted for any offense resulting in imprisonment for two or more years.
2. He is detained under preventive detention law.
3. He is punished for preaching and practicing social crimes such as untouchability.

Correct statement is/are

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Section 8 deals with the provision of disqualification of a person on the basis of conviction to certain offenses.

A person can be disqualified on below grounds:

Disqualification on conviction for certain election offenses and corrupt practices in the election.

A person convicted of any offense and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years.

Disqualification on ground of corrupt practices

Disqualification for dismissal for corruption or disloyalty

Disqualification for office under Government Company

Disqualification for failure to lodge account of election expenses

Disqualification for promoting enmity between different groups or for the offense of bribery

A person must not have been punished for preaching and practicing social crimes such as

Untouchability, Dowry, Sati, etc.

Section 62 debars the person in police or judicial custody from contesting or voting into any election. It also provides that the person subjected to preventive detention under any law for the time being in force can vote in the election. Thus such a

person cannot be disqualified for being elected if he is detained under preventive detention law.

278) Consider the following protected areas:

1. Kaziranga

2. Bandipur

3. Simlipal

Which of the above protected areas received the accreditation of the Global Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS)?

a) 1 and 2 only

b) 2 and 3 only

c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation: Global Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS):

CA|TS is a set of criteria which allows tiger sites to check if their management will lead to successful tiger conservation.

CA|TS is organised under seven pillars and 17 elements of critical management activity.

CA|TS was developed by tiger and protected area experts. It was officially launched in 2013.

Sites taking part will initially be 'registered' (standards not yet attained) then, when all required standards are met, 'approved' (standards achieved). An approved site has achieved excellence in tiger site management. Sites are evaluated through an assessment and independent review process.

14 Tiger Reserves which have been accredited are:

Manas, Kaziranga and Orang Tiger Reserve in Assam,

Satpura, Kanha and Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh,

Pench Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra,

Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar,

Dudhwa Tiger Reserve in Uttar Pradesh,

Sunderbans Tiger Reserve in West Bengal,

Parambikulam Tiger Reserve in Kerala,

Bandipur Tiger Reserve of Karnataka

Mudumalai and Anamalai Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu.

279) What is the objective of I-MESA scheme, seen recently in news?

a) To act as a catalyst to promote India's exports on a sustained basis.

b) To monitor the implementation of the public procurement from MSMEs by Central Public Sector Enterprises

c) To perform social audit of social sector schemes

d) Augmenting facilities for quality medical education in the under-served States

Explanation: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has formulated a scheme, namely Information-Monitoring, Evaluation and Social Audit (I-MESA) in FY 2021-22.

Under this scheme, Social Audits are to be conducted for all the schemes of the Department starting FY 2021-22.

These social audits are done through Social Audit Units (SAU) of the States and National Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj.

280) Which among the following is/are Tiger Range Countries?

1. Iran

2. Cambodia

3. Bhutan

Choose the correct answer from the codes given below:

a) 1 only

b) 1 and 2 only

c) 3 only

d) 2 and 3 only

Explanation: The Tiger Range Countries (TRC) are the countries where tigers still roam free in wild.

There are currently 13 tiger range countries – India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam.

India is home to over 70% of the tiger population globally.

India is home to 51 tiger reserves spread across 18 states and the last tiger census of 2018 showed a rise in the tiger population.

India's strategy of tiger conservation attaches topmost importance to involving local communities.

