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FEBRUARY 2026 MCQ COMPILIATION



**THE HINDU**



The Indian EXPRESS



**UPSC 2024 EXAM**



**AIR 79**

MEGHNA  
CHAKRAVORTY



**AIR 153**

SAHARS  
KUMAR



**AIR 477**

PARAMITA  
MALAKAR



**AIR 165**

SAIMA  
KHAN



**AIR 338**

ASHISH  
KUMAR



**AIR 346**

BRATATI  
DUTTA



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**UPSC 2023 EXAM**

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**FEBRUARY CA MCQs**

**Q1. With reference to the 'New START' (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a bilateral treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation that limits the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550 for each side.
2. The treaty's scope includes limits on intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), but it excludes heavy bombers.
3. Initially signed in 2010 for a period of ten years, the treaty was extended in 2021 and is currently scheduled to remain in force until February 2026.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. All of the above

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The treaty officially caps both nations at **1,550 deployed strategic nuclear warheads**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The treaty specifically includes **heavy bombers** in its delivery system limits (700 deployed systems including ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** It was signed in 2010, entered into force in 2011 for 10 years, and was extended in 2021 for an additional 5 years, setting the new expiry date for **February 5, 2026**.

**Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the new Consumer Price Index (CPI) series (Base Year 2024):**

1. The revision of weights in the new series is primarily based on the data derived from the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2023-24.
2. In a significant shift, the weightage of 'Food and Beverages' has been increased to better reflect the rising food inflation in the post-pandemic era.
3. The new basket of goods and services now includes elements of the digital economy, such as OTT platforms and online airfares.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) shifted the base year to 2024 using the **HCES 2023-24** as the underlying data source.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Following Engel's Law (which suggests that as income

grows, the percentage of income spent on food decreases), the weightage of **Food and Beverages** has actually been **decreased** significantly from ~46% to ~37%.

- **Statement 3 is correct:** To modernize the index, the new series has increased the representation of the **services and digital sector**, including modern consumption like OTT subscriptions and telecom plans.

**Q3. With reference to the 'Discombobulator' weapon system recently mentioned in the news, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a single, kinetic-energy-based missile system designed to physically destroy enemy power grids and radar installations.
2. The system integrates multiple non-lethal technologies, including 'Visual Dazzlers' for temporary disorientation and the 'Suter Programme' for airborne cyber-attacks on air defense networks.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The "Discombobulator" is described by experts not as a single device, but as a deployment of multiple **non-lethal and electronic warfare** technologies. It focuses on "soft-kill" capabilities (jamming, disabling, and disorienting) rather than kinetic (explosive) destruction.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The system is an umbrella for various sub-capabilities. **Visual Dazzlers** use high-intensity lasers to disorient personnel, while the **Suter Programme** is a specific cyber-warfare component used to penetrate and take control of enemy air defense sensor networks.

**Q4. Consider the following statements regarding Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs):**

1. Stealth CMEs are solar eruptions that are easily detectable in real-time because they are always accompanied by strong solar flares and X-ray bursts.
2. The VELC (Visible Emission Line Coronagraph) payload on India's Aditya-L1 mission is specifically designed to study the dynamics and origin of CMEs.
3. CMEs can cause the expansion of Earth's upper atmosphere, thereby increasing atmospheric drag on low-earth orbit satellites.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Stealth CMEs are characterized by their **lack** of clear low-

coronal signatures like solar flares or X-ray bursts, making them very difficult to detect in real-time compared to traditional CMEs.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** One of the primary objectives of the **Aditya-L1** mission is to use the **VELC** payload to observe the solar corona and the parameters of CMEs.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** When a CME hits Earth, the resulting geomagnetic storm heats the upper atmosphere, causing it to expand. This increased density at higher altitudes creates **atmospheric drag**, which can pull satellites (like the Starlink fleet in 2022) out of their intended orbits.

**Q5. With reference to the 'USDU' stablecoin recently approved by the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a fiat-collateralized cryptocurrency where the issuer maintains a 1:1 reserve in US Dollars or high-quality liquid assets like US Treasury Bills.
2. The USDU is the first USD-backed stablecoin to be approved under the UAE's Payment Token Services Regulation.
3. Universal Digital, the issuer of USDU, is a firm regulated by the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC).

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** USD-backed stablecoins like USDU are designed to maintain a stable value by being pegged 1:1 to the US Dollar, backed by equivalent reserves in cash or liquid assets.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** This approval marks a major milestone as it is the first such token approved under the Central Bank of the UAE's new **Payment Token Services Regulation**.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Universal Digital is regulated by the **Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM)**, not the DIFC. It is the first foreign payment token issuer registered with the UAE Central Bank under this framework.

**Q6. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Biopharma Shakti' (SHAKTI) Initiative:**

1. The initiative primarily focuses on tackling communicable diseases by ramping up the domestic production of chemical generics and vaccines.
2. It involves significant infrastructure expansion, including the establishment of three new National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs) and over 1,000 accredited clinical trial sites.
3. As part of the broader bio-manufacturing support, the government has proposed 3 dedicated Chemical Parks and excluded the value of biogas for Central Excise duty calculations on biogas-blended CNG.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The initiative specifically targets **non-communicable diseases (NCDs)** such as cancer and diabetes. Furthermore, the focus is on **biologics and biosimilars**, which are high-value complex medicines, rather than traditional chemical generics.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The scheme aims to bolster the pharmaceutical ecosystem by adding 3 new NIPERs (upgrading 7 existing ones) and creating a massive network of 1,000+ accredited clinical trial sites.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To support a circular bioeconomy and the chemical sector, the budget proposed 3 Chemical Parks and provided a tax incentive for biogas-blended CNG by excluding the value of biogas from excise duty.

**Q7. With reference to the 'Moltbook Platform', consider the following statements:**

1. It is a decentralized social media network where human users and AI agents interact through a hybrid interface to generate unscripted content.
2. Participation is restricted to verified autonomous software programs that communicate via APIs rather than traditional keyboards.
3. The platform is designed to observe emergent social behaviors and self-organization among different large language model families like GPT, Claude, and Gemini.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Humans are **strictly passive observers** on Moltbook. They cannot participate in discussions, post, or comment; the platform is "AI-only."
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Only verified AI agents can interact. These agents use **APIs (Application Programming Interfaces)** to post and debate, which allows for machine-speed interaction without the need for a graphical user interface (keyboard).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** A primary feature of Moltbook is observing **emergent social behavior** and cross-model interaction, where agents from different LLM families (like Gemini or Claude) organize communities and create narratives based on probabilistic reasoning and context windows.

**Q8. With reference to the 'Rare Earth Corridors' and Rare Earth Elements (REEs), consider the following statements:**

1. The corridors aim to establish integrated value chains in Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu to facilitate the local manufacturing of Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPMs).
2. Rare Earth Elements are named "rare" because they are among the least abundant elements in the Earth's crust, found in significantly lower quantities than common metals like copper.
3. Monazite-rich beach sands, which serve as a primary source for REEs in India, are often found in association with the radioactive element Thorium.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The policy targets these four coastal states to co-locate mining, processing, and R&D, specifically to move up the value chain toward manufacturing REPMs.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The term "rare" is a misnomer. These elements are actually relatively abundant in the Earth's crust (some are as common as copper). They are called rare because they are difficult to extract in high concentrations and are rarely found in pure, easily mineable forms.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** In India, REEs are primarily extracted from Monazite sands, which are notoriously difficult to process because they are typically mixed with **Thorium**, a radioactive element.

**Q9. Consider the following statements regarding Shri Guru Ravidas Maharaj:**

1. He was a contemporary of Sant Kabir and is traditionally considered a disciple of the Bhakti saint Ramananda.
2. Although he was a proponent of Nirguna Bhakti (formless divine), he is famously revered as the spiritual preceptor (Guru) of the Saguna devotee Meera Bai.
3. His vision of an ideal society, "Begumpura," described a state with structured social hierarchies and specific religious taxes intended to alleviate the suffering of the poor.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** He lived during the 14th–15th century, was a contemporary of Kabir, and is part of the lineage of Ramananda.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** This is a unique aspect of his history; despite his focus on the formless divine, he bridged traditions by being the Guru to Meera Bai.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** His vision of "**Begumpura**" (the city without sorrow) was an egalitarian utopia. It specifically envisioned a society with **no taxes, no social hierarchies**, and complete equality and freedom of movement for all residents.

**Q10. Consider the following statements regarding Coking Coal in the Indian context:**

1. Under the MMDR Act, 1957, coking coal has been notified as a "Critical and Strategic Mineral," granting it exemptions from public consultation requirements for mining.
2. While India is the world's second-largest crude steel producer, it remains nearly self-sufficient in coking coal, importing only a negligible amount of its metallurgical requirements.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** As of January 2026, the government moved Coking Coal to the high-priority "Critical and Strategic Mineral" bracket (Part D of the First Schedule), which streamlines mining through faster clearances and exemptions from public consultations.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** India is actually **heavily dependent** on imports for coking coal. Nearly **95%** of the steel sector's requirement is met through imports, primarily from countries like Australia.

**Q11. With reference to 'Bharat Parv 2026', consider the following statements:**

1. It is an annual event organized by the Ministry of Culture to coincide with the Republic Day celebrations.
2. The 2026 edition marks the 150th anniversary of the composition of "Vande Mataram" by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay.
3. It provides a platform to display all the tableaux that participated in the Republic Day parade at Kartavya Path.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While the event focuses on culture, it is organized by the **Ministry of Tourism**, not the Ministry of Culture.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The 2026 edition specifically highlights the 150-year milestone

of "Vande Mataram" and its role in the freedom struggle.

- **Statement 3 is correct:** One of the key features of Bharat Parv is the public display of the Republic Day tableaux (41 in the year 2026) at the Red Fort lawns for the general public.

**Q12. With reference to the Royal Bengal Tiger in India, consider the following statements:**

1. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is a constitutional body established to oversee Project Tiger, which is a Central Sector Scheme.
2. According to the 2022 census, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, and Uttarakhand are the top three states in terms of tiger population.
3. The species is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List and is protected under Appendix II of CITES.

**How many of the above statements are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The NTCA is a **statutory body** (not constitutional), established under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (2006 amendment). Furthermore, Project Tiger is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**, not a Central Sector Scheme.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Per the 2022 baseline, the order is Madhya Pradesh (785), Karnataka (563), and Uttarakhand (560).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The Royal Bengal Tiger is listed as **Endangered** (not Critically Endangered) on the IUCN Red List and is under **Appendix I** (not Appendix II) of CITES to prohibit international commercial trade.

**Q13. With reference to Ramsar Sites in India, consider the following statements:**

1. India currently has 98 Ramsar Sites, giving it the largest network of such sites globally, surpassing the UK and Mexico.
2. The Patna Bird Sanctuary, located in the Etah district of Uttar Pradesh, is the smallest bird sanctuary in that state.
3. Currently, Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Loktak Lake (Manipur) are the only Indian sites listed on the Montreux Record.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While India has a large network, it ranks **3rd globally** (after

the UK and Mexico) and has the largest network specifically in **South Asia** (not the entire Asian continent).

- **Statement 2 is correct:** Despite its name, Patna Bird Sanctuary is in the Etah district of UP and is indeed its smallest bird sanctuary.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** These are the two current sites on the Montreux Record; Chilika Lake was removed in 2002.

**Q14. With reference to the 'Motion of Thanks' to the President's Address, consider the following statements:**

1. According to the Constitution, the President must address every session of Parliament to outline the government's legislative agenda.
2. The defeat of the Motion of Thanks in the Lok Sabha is equivalent to the passing of a no-confidence motion against the government.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Originally, the President addressed every session, but the **First Amendment (1951)** changed this. Now, under Article 87(1), the Special Address is mandatory only at the first session after a General Election and the first session of every year.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Since the Motion of Thanks is a statement of government policy, its defeat in the Lok Sabha implies the government has lost the confidence of the House, mandating its resignation.

**Q15. With reference to the 'CHAKRA' Centre of Excellence launched in 2026, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a strategic initiative by the State Bank of India (SBI) specifically aimed at financing "Sunrise Sectors" like Green Hydrogen, Semiconductors, and Electric Mobility.
2. The centre functions primarily as a government think-tank to draft policy guidelines for the Ministry of Finance regarding digital public infrastructure.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** SBI launched CHAKRA to provide specialized financing and project appraisal for high-growth, high-tech "Sunrise Sectors" (Renewable energy, green ammonia, etc.).

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** CHAKRA is an institutional platform of **SBI**, not a government think-tank. Its focus is on **execution and debt financing** (with a target of ₹20–22 lakh crore) rather than drafting policy for the Ministry.

**Q16. Consider the following statements regarding the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect:**

1. The UHI effect is primarily a daytime phenomenon because urban materials like asphalt and concrete reach their peak absorption of solar radiation at noon.
2. Higher ambient temperatures in cities act as a catalyst for the formation of Ground-Level Ozone which is a primary pollutant emitted directly from vehicle exhausts.
3. The "Urban Canyon" effect, caused by high-rise buildings, contributes to higher temperatures by obstructing wind flow and reducing the rate at which heat escapes the ground level.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is Incorrect:** While heat is absorbed during the day, the UHI effect is most pronounced **at night**. This is because urban structures (thermal mass) release stored heat slowly, whereas rural areas cool down much faster after sunset.
- **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** While higher temperatures do accelerate the formation of Ground-Level Ozone,  $O_3$  is a **secondary pollutant**, not a primary one. It is formed by chemical reactions between  $NO_x$  and VOCs in the presence of sunlight; it is not emitted directly from exhausts.
- **Statement 3 is Correct:** This accurately describes how urban morphology (tall buildings) traps heat and reduces natural ventilation, a key driver of the UHI effect.

**Q17. Consider the following statements regarding the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In):**

1. It is a statutory body functioning under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
2. All service providers and intermediaries are legally mandated to report cyber security incidents to CERT-In within 24 hours of detection.
3. Under a recent update, it has been included in the Second Schedule of the RTI Act, 1992, thereby exempting it from the purview of the Right to Information.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is Incorrect:** CERT-In functions under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, not the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** The mandatory reporting window is **6 hours**, not 24 hours.
- **Statement 3 is Incorrect:** While it has been moved to the Second Schedule of the RTI Act to seek exemption, the Act mentioned is the **RTI Act, 2005**, not 1992. (UPSC often tests candidates on the specific years of landmark Acts).

**Q18. With reference to the 'Turtle Trails' initiative, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a conservation-cum-tourism initiative introduced in the Union Budget 2026-27 to develop regulated eco-tourism at sea turtle nesting sites.
2. The geographical focus of the initiative is currently limited to the mass nesting sites (Arribada) along the coast of Odisha.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: A****Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is Correct:** The initiative was indeed introduced in the Union Budget 2026-27 with the goal of balancing marine conservation with sustainable tourism and livelihood generation.
- **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** While Odisha is a primary focus due to its *Arribada* sites, the initiative specifically identifies **three** coastal states for development: **Odisha, Karnataka** (Uttara and Dakshina Kannada), and **Kerala** (Malabar Coast).

**Q19. With reference to Seychelles and its strategic ties with India, consider the following statements:**

1. The archipelago is geographically divided into Granitic Inner Islands and Coralline Outer Islands, with the capital Victoria situated on the coralline atoll of Aldabra.
2. Under a bilateral agreement, India is developing a joint military facility on Assumption Island to enhance maritime surveillance over the Mozambique Channel.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: B****Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is Incorrect:** While the division into Granitic and Coralline groups is correct, the capital **Victoria** is located on **Mahé**, which is one of the granitic (mountainous) Inner Islands, not on the Aldabra atoll.
- **Statement 2 is Correct:** The **Assumption Island Agreement** is a key strategic pact

between India and Seychelles aimed at monitoring the Mozambique Channel and boosting maritime security/counter-piracy efforts in the Western Indian Ocean.

**Q20. With reference to 'Project Vault', recently in the news, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a public-private stockpiling programme designed to manage critical minerals and rare earth elements, functioning on a concept similar to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.
2. The project is entirely funded by the US federal budget to ensure that private commodity traders have no role in the sourcing or storage of these strategic metals.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is Correct:** Project Vault is indeed a strategic stockpiling initiative aimed at securing minerals like cobalt and gallium to protect against global supply shocks and reduce dependence on dominant processors like China.
- **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** The project is funded through a **mix of private capital** and the US Export-Import Bank. Furthermore, it relies on **private-sector execution**, where commodity traders (such as Mercuria and Traxys) handle the actual sourcing and storage of the minerals.

**Q21. Consider the following statements regarding Sodium-Ion Battery (SIB) technology:**

1. Unlike Lithium-ion batteries, which require copper current collectors for the anode, Sodium-ion batteries can utilize aluminum foil for both the cathode and the anode.
2. Sodium-ion batteries possess a higher energy density than Lithium-ion batteries because Sodium ions are larger and heavier, allowing for greater charge storage per unit volume.
3. In the construction of SIBs, graphite is the preferred material for the anode because its ordered structure facilitates the easy intercalation of large sodium ions.

**How many of the above statements are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is CORRECT:** This is a major cost advantage for SIBs. Lithium reacts (alloys) with aluminum at low potentials, necessitating expensive copper for the anode. Sodium does not alloy with aluminum, allowing the use of cheaper **aluminum foil** for

both electrodes.

- **Statement 3 is INCORRECT:** Sodium ions are significantly larger than lithium ions and cannot easily fit between the layers of standard **graphite**. Therefore, SIBs typically use **Hard Carbon** (disordered carbon), which has larger spacing between its layers to accommodate the Na<sup>+</sup> ions.
- **Statement 2 is INCORRECT:** While Sodium ions are indeed larger and heavier, this is actually a **disadvantage** for energy density. It makes the battery bulkier and heavier for the same amount of energy stored. Therefore, SIBs have a **lower** energy density compared to LIBs, making them less ideal for long-range EVs but great for stationary storage.

**Q22. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Bharat Taxi' initiative:**

1. It is a cooperative-led digital platform managed by the Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Limited (STCL), where drivers are treated as shareholders or 'Sarathis' rather than gig workers.
2. The platform operates on a zero-commission model for drivers, substituting per-ride commissions with a flat daily access fee.
3. The app is integrated with India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), utilizing DigiLocker for document verification and providing multi-modal connectivity with metro networks.

**How many of the above statements are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The initiative is launched by the Ministry of Cooperation to promote the vision of '*Sahkar se Samridhi*'. Unlike private aggregators, it uses a cooperative model where drivers (Sarathis) own shares in the operating body, STCL.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** One of the USP's of Bharat Taxi is the **zero-commission** model. Instead of taking a 20-30% cut per ride, the cooperative charges a nominal flat fee (approx. ₹30/day), ensuring the full fare goes to the driver.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** It leverages India's **DPI** (Digital Public Infrastructure) by integrating with DigiLocker for instant verification and the UMANG app. It also focuses on "last-mile" connectivity by integrating with public transport like the Metro.

**Q23. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Sampoornata Abhiyan 2.0':**

1. It is a three-month intensive campaign launched by NITI Aayog aimed at achieving 100% saturation of key development indicators in all Aspirational Districts and Blocks.
2. Under the initiative, the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Aspirational Blocks specifically include bovine vaccination against Foot and Mouth Disease.
3. The Abhiyan is a new central sector scheme that provides a dedicated budget for building new infrastructure in the targeted 112 Aspirational Districts.

**How many of the above statements are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The campaign is a mission-mode "saturation drive" by NITI Aayog to bridge development gaps in the most socio-economically challenged regions (112 Districts and 513 Blocks).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** One of the specific focus areas for the Aspirational Blocks (ABP) is animal husbandry, specifically ensuring 100% vaccination coverage against Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The *Sampoornata Abhiyan* is not a new financial scheme with its own budget for infrastructure. Instead, it is an **implementation and governance strategy** focused on the "saturation" (100% coverage) of existing schemes through better planning, monitoring, and behavioral change.

**Q24. Consider the following statements regarding the 'SabhaSaar' Initiative:**

1. It is a voice-to-text AI tool launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to live-stream Gram Sabha proceedings to the e-GramSwaraj portal.
2. The initiative operates under the IndiaAI Mission and utilizes the *Bhashini* platform to support transcription and translation in over 13 Indian languages.

**How many of the above statements are incorrect?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While MeitY is a technical partner, the initiative was launched by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)**. Furthermore, the tool is not for *live-streaming*; it is an **AI-enabled documentation tool** designed to generate structured **Minutes of Meetings (MoM)** and summaries from audio or video recordings.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** SabhaSaar is a flagship example of the **IndiaAI Mission**. It leverages the **Bhashini** platform (India's National Language Translation Mission) to ensure that village-level discussions in various regional languages (currently 13+) can be accurately transcribed and summarized into official records.

**Q25. Consider the following statements regarding 'Operation Kiya':**

1. It was a joint security operation conducted in the dense forests of the Udhampur district to neutralize infiltrated foreign terrorists.
2. The operation was unique for its focus on complex cave-based warfare and involved the

coordinated efforts of the Indian Army's White Knight Corps, J&K Police, and the CRPF.

**How many of the above statements are incorrect?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Answer: D**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Operation Kiya was specifically launched in the **Basantgarh** region of Udhampur, Jammu & Kashmir, targeting highly trained terrorists hiding in high-altitude foliage.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is a prime example of the **Joint Security Grid**. It gained significant attention for "cave-based warfare," where security forces had to flush out terrorists from natural hideouts in the Jophar and Gujrada forests.

**Q26. Consider the following statements regarding the Kavach 4.0 system:**

1. It is an indigenous Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system certified to Safety Integrity Level-4 (SIL-4), which is the highest global safety standard for railway signaling.
2. Unlike the previous version 3.2, Kavach 4.0 supports LTE (4G/5G) based communication and uses Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) for station-to-station interfaces.
3. The system is equipped with an SOS feature that allows a signal to be sent to stop all trains within a 50 km radius during emergencies.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Kavach is indeed an indigenous ATP developed by RDSO and meets the SIL-4 certification standards.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** A key upgrade in version 4.0 is the transition to LTE-based communication and OFC interfaces to allow for pan-India deployment and better handling of complex yards.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While Kavach does have an SOS facility, it allows the station master or loco pilot to stop all trains within a **5 km radius**, not 50 km.

**Q27. With reference to Self-Charging Energy Devices (SCEDs), consider the following statements:**

1. Unlike conventional systems, SCEDs convert ambient energy directly into stored chemical energy in a single unit, bypassing the need for external power converters.
2. The photo-capacitor developed by the Centre for Nano and Soft Matter Sciences (CeNS)

utilizes nickel–cobalt oxide nanowires as a key component for integrating harvesting and storage.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The core innovation of SCEDs is the "harvest + store" mechanism within a monolithic unit. This eliminates the energy losses typically associated with wiring and transferring energy from a separate harvester (like a solar panel) to a separate storage unit (like a battery).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Researchers at CeNS Bengaluru (an autonomous institute under the Dept. of Science and Technology) specifically used binder-free nickel–cobalt oxide ( $\text{NiCo}_2\text{O}_4$ ) nanowires grown on nickel foam to create their integrated photo-capacitor.

**Q28. Consider the following statements regarding the International Space Station (ISS) and India's participation:**

1. The ISS is a collaborative project between NASA, Roscosmos, ESA, JAXA, and CSA, functioning as a microgravity research laboratory in Low Earth Orbit.
2. Under the Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4), Shubhanshu Shukla became the first Indian astronaut to stay on the ISS, conducting ISRO-led experiments on muscle regeneration and crop viability.
3. The ISS is currently slated for retirement in 2030, with Russia indicating a potential withdrawal from the partnership after 2028.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The ISS is the largest artificial body in orbit, governed by five international space agencies (USA, Russia, Europe, Japan, and Canada).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India's participation through the private Ax-4 mission (June 2025) involved sending a "Gaganyatri" to the ISS to perform critical microgravity research as a precursor to India's own space station.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Due to structural aging, the station is planned for decommissioning by 2030, with its final descent aimed at Point Nemo in the Pacific Ocean.

**Q29. With reference to the National Guidelines on Disaster Victim Identification (DVI), consider the following statements:**

1. The guidelines categorize fingerprints, forensic odontology, and DNA profiling as primary identifiers, whereas personal ornaments and tattoos are treated only as supporting evidence.
2. The "Reconciliation" stage of the DVI process involves the systematic retrieval and tagging of human remains from the disaster site before forensic examination begins.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** According to international (Interpol) and the new National DVI standards, scientific methods like DNA, Fingerprints, and Dental records are "Primary Identifiers" because they are unique and reliable. Secondary identifiers like clothing or tattoos are supporting evidence but not sufficient for legal identification on their own.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The systematic retrieval and tagging of remains is **Stage 1 (Scene/Recovery)**. The **Reconciliation** stage is the final step (Stage 4) where Post-Mortem data is scientifically matched with Ante-Mortem data to confirm the victim's identity.

**Q30. With reference to the 'IndiaAI Stack', consider the following statements:**

1. It is designed as a five-layer integrated framework that includes a 'Compute Layer' providing subsidized GPU access to startups and a 'Model Layer' featuring indigenous Large Language Models like BharatGen.
2. The 'Application Layer' of this stack focuses exclusively on the development of 5G and 6G network infrastructure to ensure population-scale connectivity.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The IndiaAI Stack follows a five-layer architecture. The Compute Layer (via the IndiaAI Compute Portal) provides the necessary processing power (GPUs), while the Model Layer hosts sovereign AI models such as BharatGen.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Application Layer is the user-facing layer involving tools like Bhashini (translation) and health diagnostics. 5G/6G networks and data centers actually fall under the **Infrastructure Layer**, not the Application Layer.

**Q31. Consider the following statements regarding Rat-hole Mining:**

1. It is a method of coal extraction predominantly practiced in Meghalaya due to the presence of thin coal seams.
2. Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) caused by this mining leads to the acidification of rivers like Kopili and Lukha.
3. The Supreme Court in 2019 completely overthrew the NGT ban, allowing the practice to continue in its traditional form.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** It is a primitive method used in Meghalaya to reach thin coal seams where large-scale mining is unviable.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** High sulfur content in coal reacts with water/oxygen to create sulfuric acid (AMD), which has severely damaged the aquatic ecosystems of local rivers.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While the Supreme Court upheld the NGT's ban on *unscientific* mining, it ruled that mining could only continue if it follows the **Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957**, and is done scientifically. It did not allow the traditional/primitive form to continue.

**Q32. Consider the following statements regarding the Agni-III missile:**

1. It is a two-stage, liquid-fuelled Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) with a strike range of 3,000 km to 3,500 km.
2. The missile is capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads and is integrated with a Ring Laser Gyro-based Inertial Navigation System.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While the range and classification (IRBM) are correct, Agni-III is a **solid-fuelled** missile, not liquid-fuelled. Solid propulsion is what allows for its "canisterization" and quick-launch capability.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It can carry a 1.5-tonne payload (conventional or nuclear) and uses a high-precision Ring Laser Gyro-based navigation system to achieve high accuracy (CEP of less than 40 meters).

**Q33. Consider the following statements regarding the Chabahar Port:**

1. It is located on the Makran Coast in the Persian Gulf and serves as Iran's only oceanic deep-sea port.
2. The port acts as a vital node for the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), significantly reducing transit time to Europe compared to the Suez Canal route.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While it is on the Makran Coast and is Iran's only oceanic port, it is situated on the **Gulf of Oman**, just *outside* the Persian Gulf. This distinction is geographically significant for maritime strategy.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is a key part of the 7,200 km long INSTC. By using this route, the transit time to Russia and Europe is reduced by approximately 40% and costs are lowered by 30% compared to the traditional sea route via the Suez Canal.

**Q34. Consider the following statements regarding Denotified Tribes (DNTs):**

1. They were originally notified as "born criminals" under the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871 and were "denotified" only after the implementation of the Constitution in 1950.
2. The Ayyangar Committee (1949) played a pivotal role by recommending the repeal of the discriminatory Criminal Tribes Act.
3. Currently, all communities identified as Denotified Tribes are legally classified under either Scheduled Castes (SC) or Scheduled Tribes (ST) to ensure their inclusion in welfare frameworks.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While they were notified under the 1871 Act, they were officially "denotified" in **1952** (not 1950) when the CTA was repealed and replaced by Habitual Offenders Acts.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Ayyangar Committee was indeed the body that recommended the repeal of the colonial-era Criminal Tribes Act.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** A significant number of DNT communities do not fit into SC, ST, or OBC categories. Approximately **260 communities** remain unclassified anywhere, leaving them outside the reach of formal reservation and welfare benefits.

**Q35. Consider the following statements regarding the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC):**

1. It is a statutory body chaired by the RBI Governor, consisting of six members where the external members are eligible for re-appointment after a four-year term.
2. The primary mandate of the MPC is to maintain price stability within a target inflation range of 4% (+/- 2%) while also considering the objective of economic growth.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While the MPC is a statutory body chaired by the Governor with six members, the three external members appointed by the Central Government are **not eligible for re-appointment** after their 4-year term.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The legal mandate of the MPC is to ensure price stability (targeting 2%–6% inflation) while simultaneously keeping the objective of growth in mind.

**Q36. Consider the following statements regarding the Kimberley Process (KP):**

1. It is a specialized agency of the United Nations established to regulate the global trade of both rough and polished diamonds.
2. Under the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), member countries are permitted to trade rough diamonds with non-participating nations, provided they use tamper-resistant containers.
3. India, a founding member of the process, has assumed the Chairmanship of the Kimberley Process for the year 2026.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Kimberley Process is **not** a UN body or a specialized agency (though it was established via a UNGA resolution). Furthermore, its mandate is strictly limited to **rough diamonds**; it does not cover polished diamonds or jewelry.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** A fundamental rule of the KPCS is that participants are **prohibited** from trading rough diamonds with non-participants. This ensures the integrity of the "conflict-free" supply chain.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** India is indeed a founding member and is serving as the **Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2026** (its third time in this role).

**Q37. Consider the following statements regarding Vitamin B12:**

1. It is a water-soluble vitamin that is synthesized naturally within the human body to support red blood cell formation and DNA synthesis.
2. Findings from the Pune Rural Intervention in Young Adolescents (PRIYA) trial suggest that supplementation of Vitamin B12 during adolescence can influence neonatal health via epigenetic mechanisms.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: B****Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While Vitamin B12 is indeed water-soluble and essential for red blood cell formation and DNA synthesis, the **human body cannot synthesize it**. It must be obtained from external sources (mainly animal-based foods) where it is produced by microorganisms.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The PRIYA trial specifically highlighted that B12 supplementation in the adolescent stage has a positive "intergenerational" impact on neonatal health through epigenetic changes.

**Q38. Consider the following statements regarding Stem Cells and their therapeutic use:**

1. Totipotent stem cells have the highest potency as they can differentiate into all cell types of the body, including extra-embryonic tissues like the placenta.
2. Hematopoietic stem cells are classified as pluripotent because they can develop into any cell type found in the adult human body.
3. According to a recent Supreme Court ruling, stem cell therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can be offered as a routine clinical service provided the doctor follows a reasonable standard of care.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A****Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Totipotent cells (like the zygote) are the most versatile because they can form both the embryo and the supporting extra-embryonic tissues (placenta).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Hematopoietic stem cells (blood-forming cells) are **Multipotent**, not pluripotent. They can only develop into a limited range of cell types within a specific family (e.g., various blood cells), whereas pluripotent cells (like ESCs) can form almost any adult cell but not the placenta.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The Supreme Court specifically ruled that stem cell therapy

**cannot** be offered as a clinical service for Autism (ASD) because it lacks established evidence of safety and efficacy. It can only be conducted within the scope of approved clinical trials.

**Q39. Consider the following statements regarding Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD):**

1. It is a viral hemorrhagic fever caused by a virus belonging to the same family as the Zika and Dengue viruses.
2. While the disease can be transmitted from infected monkeys to humans through tick bites, there is no documented evidence of human-to-human transmission.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans:**

**Explanation: C**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** KFD is caused by the KFD virus, which belongs to the *Flaviviridae* family. This is the same family that includes other significant human pathogens like Yellow Fever, Dengue, and Zika viruses.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The disease is zoonotic, primarily spreading from monkeys (the reservoir) to humans via hard ticks (*Haemaphysalis spinigera*). A key characteristic of KFD, distinguishing it from many other viral hemorrhagic fevers like Ebola, is that it does **not** spread from person to person.

**Q40. With reference to the India–Malaysia IMPACT Framework, consider the following statements:**

1. It is designed to operationalize the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership by focusing on institutional outcomes in sectors like semiconductors, fintech, and green energy.
2. Under the framework, both nations have agreed to establish a Digital Council to collaborate specifically on Artificial Intelligence and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both of the above
- D. None of the above

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The IMPACT (India-Malaysia Partnership for Advancing Collective Transformation) framework builds on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (upgraded in 2024) to move beyond traditional diplomacy into concrete areas like semiconductor supply chains and energy transition.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The establishment of the **Malaysia–India Digital Council (MIDC)** is a key pillar of the framework, intended to facilitate cooperation in high-tech areas including AI, Cybersecurity, and DPI.

**Q41. With reference to the removal of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, consider the following statements:**

1. A resolution to remove the Speaker requires a minimum of 14 days' notice and must be supported by at least 100 members to be admitted for discussion.
2. The resolution for removal must be passed by an effective majority, which is a majority of all the then members of the Lok Sabha.
3. While a resolution for their removal is under consideration, the Speaker can take part in the proceedings and vote in the first instance, but cannot exercise a casting vote.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While the 14 days' notice is correct, the motion needs the support of **50 members** for admissibility, not 100 members.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Article 94(c) specifies that the Speaker is removed by a resolution passed by a "majority of all the then members." This is technically known as an **Effective Majority** (Total strength minus vacancies).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Under Article 96, the Speaker cannot preside but has the right to speak and participate. They can vote in the "first instance" (like any other member) to defend their position, but lose the power of the "casting vote" in the event of a tie.

**Q42. Consider the following statements regarding the P-8I Poseidon aircraft of the Indian Navy:**

1. India was the first international customer for this platform, which is a modified version of the Boeing 737-800 commercial airliner.
2. The aircraft is equipped with Harpoon Block II missiles and Mk-54 lightweight torpedoes, primarily for anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare.
3. Unlike the standard US Navy version, the Indian P-8I features a unique Aft Radar that provides a 360 view for enhanced surveillance.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is Correct:** India signed the contract for 8 aircraft in 2009, becoming the first international customer. The airframe is indeed based on the Boeing 737-800 Next-Generation (NG) fuselage.
- **Statement 2 is Correct:** Its primary offensive suite includes the Harpoon Block II (for ships) and Mk-54 Torpedoes (for submarines), making it a formidable Long-Range

Maritime Patrol (LRMP) asset.

- **Statement 3 is Correct:** One of the key India-specific modifications is the "Telephonics APS-143C(V)3" multi-mode radar (Aft Radar) installed in the rear, which, combined with the main radar, gives the crew  $360^\circ$  coverage.

**Q43. Consider the following statements regarding India's planned Regional Service Centre (RSC) for tsunami monitoring:**

1. The RSC is proposed to be established at Swaraj Dweep in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to provide warning services to India as well as other Indian Ocean countries.
2. The upgraded system will move beyond purely seismic triggers to detect tsunamis caused by non-seismic events like submarine landslides and volcanic eruptions.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The RSC will be located at Vijaynagar on Swaraj Dweep (Andaman & Nicobar). It is designed to strengthen regional cooperation by providing critical data and alerts to neighboring Indian Ocean Rim nations like Sri Lanka.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** A major limitation of the current system is its reliance on undersea earthquakes. The "Next-Gen" system (supported by 270 km of sub-sea cables) is specifically designed to detect "silent" or non-seismic tsunamis, such as those triggered by the 2022 Tonga volcanic eruption.

**Q44. Consider the following statements regarding the dragonfly species *Lyriothemis keralensis*:**

1. It is a species endemic to the Western Ghats and is characterized by significant sexual dimorphism, where males are bright blood-red and females are yellow.
2. The species is perennial in its adult form and can be easily spotted in rubber and pineapple plantations throughout the 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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** *Lyriothemis keralensis* is endemic to the Western Ghats (primarily Kerala). It exhibits marked sexual dimorphism: males have a slender, bright blood-red abdomen with black markings, while females are yellow with black markings and a bulkier body.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While it is found in shaded rubber and pineapple plantations,

the adults are **not** visible throughout the year. They are seen only during the **Southwest monsoon (May–August)**; for the remainder of the year, they exist in their aquatic larval stage.

**Q45. Consider the following statements regarding the Network Readiness Index (NRI) 2025:**

1. Published by the Portulans Institute, the index assesses economies based on four pillars.
2. In the 2025 report, India secured the 1st global rank in indicators such as AI Scientific Publications and ICT Services Exports.
3. According to the report, India's strongest performance is in the Governance pillar, while its weakest area remains Technology.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The index is published by the Portulans Institute (USA) and uses a framework of four pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India is a global leader (Rank 1) in four specific indicators: AI Scientific Publications, Annual Investment in Telecommunication Services, ICT Services Exports, and E-commerce Legislation.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The report actually highlights the opposite. India excels in **Technology and Impact**, but the **Governance** pillar is its weakest area (ranking 73rd), particularly due to low scores in privacy protection and the digital gender gap.

**Q46. With reference to the Indian Air Force's firepower demonstration, Exercise Vayu Shakti, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a biennial exercise conducted at the Pokhran range to demonstrate the IAF's capability to conduct full-spectrum operations only during daylight hours.
2. The 2026 edition of the exercise specifically aims to showcase indigenous platforms like the Tejas (LCA) and Prachand (LCH) to emphasize the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" initiative.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Exercise Vayu Shakti is a **triennial** (once every three years) exercise, not biennial. Furthermore, a major focus of the exercise is its **Day-Dusk-Night capability**, demonstrating that darkness does not degrade the IAF's precision

strike capability.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The exercise highlights India's self-reliance in defense by featuring indigenous assets such as the Tejas fighter jet, the Prachand Light Combat Helicopter (LCH), and the Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH).

**Q47. Consider the following statements regarding the Thwaites Glacier:**

1. It is a marine-based glacier located in West Antarctica that flows into the Amundsen Sea and is recognized as the widest glacier on Earth.
2. The glacier sits on a retrograde bedrock (sloping downward inland below sea level), which allows warm ocean currents to melt the ice from beneath the grounding line.
3. Often termed the "Doomsday Glacier," its complete collapse has the potential to raise global sea levels by more than 0.5 metres.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: D**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Thwaites is indeed located in West Antarctica, flows into Pine Island Bay (Amundsen Sea), and is the widest glacier globally at approximately 120 km.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Its geographical vulnerability lies in the fact that it sits on bedrock below sea level that slopes inland, facilitating "Marine Ice Sheet Instability" as warm water infiltrates its base.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** It is nicknamed the "Doomsday Glacier" because it contains enough ice to raise sea levels by roughly 65 cm (over 0.5 m) and acts as a buffer for the wider West Antarctic Ice Sheet.

**Q48. With reference to the National Large Optical-Near Infrared Telescope (NLOT), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a 10-12 meter class telescope being established at Hanle, Ladakh, designed to observe deep-space phenomena specifically in the visible and near-infrared light spectrums.
2. The project demonstrates "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" by utilizing the India TMT Optics Fabrication Facility (ITOFF) in Bengaluru to manufacture its indigenous segmented hexagonal mirrors.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The NLOT is a major astronomical project boosted in the 2026

Budget, located at the Indian Astronomical Observatory in Hanle (India's first Dark Sky Reserve). It operates in wavelengths ranging from 0.3 to 5 micrometers (Optical and NIR).

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The project is a prime example of indigenous capability. It leverages the ITOFF facility—originally set up for India's contribution to the international Thirty Meter Telescope—to produce the ~90 hexagonal segments required for the NLOT's primary mirror.

**Q49. Consider the following statements regarding the "Business Ready" (B-READY) Assessment:**

1. It is a flagship data project launched by the World Bank Group to replace the discontinued Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) index.
2. Unlike its predecessor, the B-READY framework evaluates a firm's life cycle through three distinct pillars: Regulatory Framework, Public Services, and Operational Efficiency.
3. The assessment integrates cross-cutting themes such as digital adoption, environmental sustainability, and gender equality across all its evaluated topics.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The B-READY index was developed by the World Bank to provide a more transparent and balanced assessment following the discontinuation of the EoDB index in 2021.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It moves beyond just "regulatory burden" to look at the quality of laws (*de jure*), the actual services provided by the state, and the real-world efficiency of operations (*de facto*).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** A key innovation of B-READY is the horizontal integration of digital, green, and gender-based indicators to reflect a modern and sustainable business environment.

**Q50. With reference to the consolidated guidelines on the National Song 'Vande Mataram' issued in 2026, consider the following statements:**

1. The official version of the National Song now comprises the full original six stanzas with a rendition duration of approximately 190 seconds.
2. In official protocols where both are performed, the National Anthem must be rendered first, followed by the National Song to maintain constitutional hierarchy.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The 2026 guidelines have restored all **six stanzas** as the official version (moving away from the previous practice of singing only the first two). The duration is set at approximately **190 seconds**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** According to the new order of precedence, when both are performed together, **Vande Mataram must be rendered first**, followed by the National Anthem. This aligns with the 1950 declaration that both shall be honored equally.

**Q51. With reference to India's first 'Musical Road' inaugurated in February 2026, consider the following statements:**

1. It is located on the northbound lane of the Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj Coastal Road in Mumbai.
2. The road utilizes Japanese technology to play the Academy Award-winning song 'Jai Ho' through tactile vibrations.
3. The melody is designed as a speed-calming measure, requiring motorists to maintain a specific speed range of 70–80 kmph to hear the tune clearly.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The road is located on the northbound stretch of the Mumbai Coastal Road, spanning 500 metres after the tunnel exit.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While Japan was a pioneer of this technology in 2007, the Mumbai project specifically utilized **Hungarian technology** for the calibration of the musical notes.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The primary objective is road safety; the grooves act as a "speed-calming measure" where the pitch of the song 'Jai Ho' only sounds correct if the driver maintains a steady speed of 70–80 kmph.

**Q52. With reference to the induction of indigenous dog breeds in the Assam Rifles, consider the following statements:**

1. The Tangkhul Hui, an indigenous breed from Manipur, is currently being utilized for narcotics detection under a pilot project.
2. The Kombai, often referred to as the "Indian Rottweiler," is traditionally a hunting and war dog originating from the Theni district of Tamil Nadu.
3. The Assam Rifles has set a target to completely replace foreign breeds like the Belgian Malinois with indigenous breeds by the year 2027.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Tangkhul Hui (or Haofa) from Manipur was inducted into a pilot project in 2022 and is actively used for narcotics detection.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Kombai is a native of Tamil Nadu, known for its fearlessness and history as a "war dog" used for big game hunting.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While **March 2027** is the milestone for the full induction and integration of the initial Tangkhul Hui and Kombai squads, the long-term target to significantly replace or phase out foreign breeds is set for **2050**.

**Q53. With reference to the 'Sarvam Vision' and 'Bulbul V3' models launched in February 2026, consider the following statements:**

1. **Sarvam Vision** is a 3-billion parameter multimodal model that utilizes a state-space architecture to perform high-accuracy knowledge extraction from complex documents across 22 official Indian languages.
2. **Bulbul V3** is a text-to-speech model that has achieved a global benchmark by outperforming all international competitors, including ElevenLabs, in the general 48 kHz studio-quality audio category.
3. Both models are being developed as part of India's **Sovereign AI** initiative, with Sarvam AI being one of the entities selected under the ₹10,300-crore **IndiaAI Mission**.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Sarvam Vision is indeed a 3B-parameter model designed for "Document Intelligence." It uses a state-space architecture (rather than just traditional transformers) to handle the 22 scheduled languages and outperformed models like Gemini 3 Pro in Indian OCR benchmarks.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While Bulbul V3 is highly successful, it specifically outperformed competitors in the **8 kHz telephony-grade** audio category (ideal for call centers and voice bots). In the **48 kHz general full-band (studio quality)** category, Sarvam AI acknowledged that **ElevenLabs v3 alpha** still maintains the lead in overall audio quality.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Sarvam AI is a key player in India's push for Sovereign AI and is one of the 12 startups/entities selected to develop indigenous foundational models under the government-funded **IndiaAI Mission**.

**Q54. With reference to the 'Substantive Motion' in the Indian Parliamentary system, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a self-contained, independent proposal submitted for the approval of the House, drafted such that it is capable of expressing a decision of the House on its own.
2. Unlike subsidiary or substitute motions, a substantive motion requires the prior recommendation of the President of India before it can be moved in either House.
3. The conduct of high constitutional authorities, such as the Chief Election Commissioner and Judges of the Supreme Court, can only be discussed or criticized in the House through this motion.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** By definition, a substantive motion is an independent proposal that does not depend on any other motion or proceeding to have meaning. It is intended to result in a formal decision of the House.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** There is no general constitutional or procedural requirement that all substantive motions require the prior recommendation of the President. While specific types of motions (like certain Money Bills under Article 117) require such recommendation, the category of "Substantive Motion" as a whole—such as motions for the removal of a Speaker or an impeachment—follows its own specific constitutional or rule-based notice procedures.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Parliamentary rules and the Constitution protect certain "high authorities" from criticism during regular debates. Their conduct can only be brought under the scrutiny of the House through a Substantive Motion (e.g., Article 61 for the President or Article 124(4) for Judges).

**Q55. With reference to the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2025, consider the following statements:**

1. Released by Transparency International, the 2025 report shows that the global average score has dropped to its lowest level in over a decade.
2. While India's rank improved marginally to 91st, its score of 39 remains below the global average, placing it in the "high corruption" perception category.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The index is released by the Berlin-based NGO Transparency

International. The 2025 report noted a global average score of 42, which is the lowest recorded in more than ten years, signaling a global backslide in integrity.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** India was ranked 91st out of 182 nations with a score of 39. Since the global average is 42 and more than two-thirds of countries scored below 50, India's score of 39 keeps it within the category of countries perceived to have high levels of public sector corruption.

**Q56. With reference to the Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAMs), consider the following statements:**

1. They represent the primary healthcare pillar of Ayushman Bharat, aiming to transition from selective healthcare to Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC).
2. The Community Health Officer (CHO) is a specialized cadre posted at the Sub-Centre level AAMs to facilitate the delivery of expanded service packages.
3. These centers are fully funded by the Central Government as a Central Sector Scheme to ensure uniform healthcare delivery across all States and Union Territories.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (formerly AB-HWCs) were established under the National Health Policy 2017 to move beyond just maternal and child health toward **Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC)**.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The **Community Health Officer (CHO)** is a key human resource innovation introduced at the Sub-Centre level to act as a bridge between the community and doctors, managing the 12 expanded service packages (including NCD screening and mental health).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Ayushman Arogya Mandir is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**, not a Central Sector Scheme. The funding is shared between the Centre and States, typically in a **60:40** ratio (90:10 for North-Eastern and Hilly states).

**Q57. Consider the following statements regarding the Privilege Motion in the Indian Parliamentary system:**

1. Parliamentary privileges in India are explicitly codified through a specific Act of Parliament as mandated by Articles 105 and 194 of the Constitution.
2. A Privilege Motion can be initiated against both members of the House and non-members, such as citizens or journalists, if they are deemed to have insulted the House.
3. The Presiding Officer of the House has the discretionary power to either decide on the merit of a breach of privilege case themselves or refer it to a Committee of Privileges.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While Articles 105 and 194 mention privileges, they have **not been codified** by any specific law. They currently rely on the Constitution, parliamentary conventions, and judicial interpretations.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Privileges are meant to protect the dignity of the House; therefore, any person (member or outsider) who commits a breach or contempt can be held liable.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Speaker (LS) or Chairman (RS) acts as the first level of scrutiny. They have the authority to provide consent, refuse it, or refer the matter to the **Committee of Privileges** (15 members in LS, 10 in RS) for examination.

**Q58. With reference to the Arctic Sentry Mission, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a new standing army established by NATO to replace national military assets in the High North and the Arctic Circle.
2. The mission was fast-tracked following the "Greenland Crisis" to enhance the defense of critical infrastructure and counter-sabotage threats in the region.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

A. 1 only

B. 2 only

C. Both 1 and 2

D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Arctic Sentry Mission is not a new standing army. It is a **coordination framework** designed as an Enhanced Vigilance Activity (eVA) to bring existing national exercises and assets under a single, unified NATO command structure.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The mission was triggered by the "**Greenland Crisis**" and the subsequent Trump-Rutte deal in 2026. Its primary focus is to protect territory and critical infrastructure from sabotage threats, specifically across Norway, Iceland, and the Danish Straits.

**Q59. With reference to the Dornier 228 (Do-228) aircraft, consider the following statements:**

1. It is an indigenous twin-engine turboprop aircraft designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) under the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" initiative.
2. The aircraft is equipped with a "supercritical wing" design, which enables high lift at low speeds, making it ideal for maritime surveillance and search-and-rescue operations.
3. In February 2026, the Ministry of Defence signed a contract for additional units of this aircraft featuring more than 70% indigenous content under the "Buy (Indian)" procurement category.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While it is manufactured in India by HAL (Kanpur division), its **origin is German** (originally designed by Dornier GmbH). HAL manufactures it under a license/transfer of technology agreement that dates back to 1983.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Dornier 228 features a unique **supercritical wing** design. This aerodynamic feature reduces drag and improves lift, which allows the aircraft to carry heavy surveillance equipment while maintaining stable flight at the slower speeds required for maritime patrolling.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** On February 12, 2026, the Ministry of Defence signed a ₹2,312 crore contract with HAL for eight aircraft for the Indian Coast Guard. These latest units are being procured under the **"Buy (Indian)"** category and are reported to have over **71% indigenous content**.

**Q60. Consider the following statements regarding Dal Lake in Jammu & Kashmir:**

1. It is a monomictic freshwater lake situated in the Zabarwan mountain valley and is hydrologically connected to the Jhelum River.
2. The 'Raad' refers to the lake's unique floating islands, which are natural formations of matted vegetation and soil used for cultivation.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Dal Lake is classified as **monomictic** (waters mix once a year). It is located at the foothills of **Shankaracharya Hill** in the **Zabarwan valley** and maintains a hydrological link with the **Jhelum River** through an outflow channel.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The local term '**Raad**' refers to the floating gardens or islands. These are composed of matted vegetation, organic matter, and soil, and are a signature feature of the lake's lacustrine ecosystem used by the local community for traditional farming.

**Q61. Consider the following statements regarding the Strait of Hormuz:**

1. It serves as a vital maritime link connecting the Persian Gulf in the west to the Gulf of Aden in the east.
2. The strategic islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb, located near its shipping lanes, are subjects of a territorial dispute between Iran and the UAE.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Strait of Hormuz connects the **Persian Gulf** to the **Gulf of Oman** and the Arabian Sea. The Gulf of Aden is located further west, connecting the Red Sea to the Arabian Sea (via the Bab-el-Mandeb strait).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb are indeed strategically significant and remain a point of contention between Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

**Q62. Consider the following statements regarding Reynisfjara Beach:**

1. Located on the South Coast of Iceland, it is characterized by a subpolar oceanic climate influenced by the warm North Atlantic Drift.
2. The beach is geologically significant for its "Gardar" basalt columns and black sand formed from fragmented basaltic lava originating from the Katla Geopark region.
3. It is prone to "Sneaker Waves," which are large, sudden waves occurring due to high-energy Atlantic swells and deep near-shore bathymetry.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Reynisfjara is situated in Southern Iceland and its climate is indeed moderated by the North Atlantic Drift, a warm ocean current.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The iconic black sand is the result of volcanic activity (Katla volcano), and the Gardar columns are a prime example of columnar jointing in basalt.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** "Sneaker waves" are a major hazard at this location because the Atlantic swells don't lose energy before hitting the shore due to the deep seafloor profile.

**Q63. With reference to the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF), consider the following statements:**

1. It marks a shift in urban financing by requiring cities to raise at least 50% of project costs from market sources like Municipal Bonds or PPPs.
2. The fund is primarily targeted at all State capitals and cities with a population of 10 lakh (1 million) or more.
3. A dedicated Credit Repayment Guarantee corpus is provided under the scheme to assist smaller Tier-II and Tier-III cities in accessing market finance.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The UCF uses a 25-50-25 model (25% Center, 50% Market/Borrowing, 25% State/ULB), moving away from traditional 100% grant-based funding.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Eligibility is focused on Million-plus cities, State/UT capitals, and major industrial hubs with a population above 1 lakh.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To ensure inclusive growth, a ₹5,000 crore guarantee fund exists to help smaller or less creditworthy Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) enter the bond/loan market.

**Q64. Consider the following statements regarding Army Ants, recently in the news for the discovery of species like *Aenictus chittoorensis*:**

1. These ants are known for their nomadic lifestyle and do not build permanent nests, instead forming temporary structures called "bivouacs" using their own bodies.
2. In the Indian context, these new species were discovered in the Sri Venkateswara Wildlife Sanctuary located in the Western Ghats.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Army ants are famous for their "Army Ant Syndrome," which includes nomadism and the formation of living nests (bivouacs) to protect the queen and brood.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While the species were discovered in the **Sri Venkateswara Wildlife Sanctuary**, this sanctuary is located in the **Southern Eastern Ghats** (Andhra Pradesh), not the Western Ghats.

**Q65. Consider the following statements:**

1. The Indian Pangolin and the Chinese Pangolin are both listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, providing them the same level of protection as the Tiger.
2. While the Indian Pangolin is distributed throughout most of India, the Chinese Pangolin is primarily found in Northeast India and the Himalayan foothills.
3. The Sangtam community, which recently passed a resolution to protect pangolins, is a recognized Naga tribe primarily inhabiting the Kiphire and Tuensang districts of Nagaland.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Both species found in India (Indian and Chinese) are placed in Schedule I of the WPA 1972.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** There is a clear geographical divide; the Indian species covers the plains and arid regions, whereas the Chinese species is restricted to the humid, hilly forests of the North-East and Himalayas.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Sangtam Naga tribe is based in eastern Nagaland (Kiphire and Tuensang) and is notable for using its customary governance to implement conservation resolutions for the pangolin.

**Q66. Consider the following statements regarding the Bharat-VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources) initiative:**

1. The "Knowledge Layer" of its core architecture utilizes a multilingual AI engine to merge real-time weather data from IMD.
2. It is an interoperable platform built on InDEA 2.0 functioning as a closed network restricted only to government stakeholders to ensure data security.
3. The system integrates a voice-first interface named 'Bharati' and provides access to 10 major central schemes.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The description provided belongs to the **Intelligence Layer**. The **Knowledge Layer** specifically integrates the Indian Council of Agricultural Research's (ICAR) "Package of Practices" (scientific standards for crops).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While it is built on InDEA 2.0, it is an **open, federated public network** (plug-and-play model) that allows **both private and public stakeholders** to connect, rather than being a closed network.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** It features the 'Bharati' voice-assistant for farmers without smartphones and integrates 10 major central schemes for eligibility and grievance redressal.

**Q67. Consider the following statements regarding the Airbus H125 helicopter initiative in India:**

1. The Final Assembly Line for the H125, established at Vemagal represents India's first

private-sector helicopter manufacturing facility.

2. The H125 is a twin-engine multi-role utility helicopter specifically designed to replace the aging Chinook fleet of the Indian Air Force.
3. It holds the world record for the highest-altitude landing and takeoff, a capability that makes it suitable for "high and hot" operations in the Himalayan terrain.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The facility at Vemagal (Kolar), Karnataka, is indeed India's first private-sector final assembly line for helicopters, ending the monopoly of state-owned HAL.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The H125 is a **single-engine** helicopter (not twin-engine). Furthermore, its military variant (H125M) is pitched as a successor to the light **Cheetah and Chetak** helicopters, not the heavy-lift Chinook fleet.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The H125 famously landed on the summit of Mount Everest in 2005, proving its extreme high-altitude performance which is critical for Indian border operations.

**Q68. Consider the following statements regarding the Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*):**

1. In India, it is strictly confined to the Himalayan rivers and is listed as a 'Vulnerable' species under the IUCN Red List.
2. It is considered a bio-indicator of wetland health, and its physical features include a distinctive W-shaped naked nose and a double-layered fur coat.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While found in the Himalayas, it also has a "patchy" distribution in Southern India (Western Ghats) and Central India (Satpura). Globally, it is categorized as '**Near Threatened**' on the IUCN Red List, not Vulnerable.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is indeed an "Ambassador of Wetlands" indicating clean water. It possesses a unique W-shaped/zig-zag rhinarium (nose) and two layers of fur (an insulating under-layer and a waterproof outer layer) to survive in aquatic environments.

**Q69. Consider the following statements regarding 6th Generation Aero Engines:**

1. Unlike the fixed bypass ratio of 5th generation engines, these engines utilize Adaptive

Cycle Technology to switch between high-thrust combat modes and fuel-efficient cruise modes.

2. The "Third Stream" of airflow in these engines is primarily designed to increase the radar cross-section (RCS) to improve the aircraft's visibility to friendly tankers.
3. India aims to integrate 6th generation engine technology into the AMCA Mk2 to provide the massive electrical power required for Directed Energy Weapons (DEWs).

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The core innovation of 6th-gen engines is the Variable/Adaptive Cycle, which allows the engine to behave like a turbojet for combat and a high-bypass turbofan for fuel saving.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The "Third Stream" is actually used for **thermal management** and cooling. It helps hide the infrared "heat signature" of the aircraft, thereby **improving stealth** (ultra-low signature) rather than increasing visibility or radar cross-section.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** One of the main reasons India is pursuing this tech for the AMCA Mk2 is to generate the high electrical output needed for modern electronic warfare and laser-based weapon systems (DEWs).

**Q70. Consider the following statements regarding the CBDC-linked Public Distribution System (PDS) pilot launched in 2026:**

1. The digital currency (e₹) used in this system is "purpose-bound," meaning the digital food coupons can only be spent at authorized Fair Price Shops for specific commodities.
2. Unlike traditional Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), these digital tokens are time-bound and will expire if not used within a specific period, such as 30 days.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** One of the core features of the CBDC-based PDS is "Programmability." The e-Rupee is credited as a digital food coupon that is merchant-bound and purpose-bound, ensuring the subsidy is used only for intended food grains at authorized shops.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** To prevent subsidy hoarding and identify "ghost" beneficiaries, the digital tokens have an expiration period. This differentiates it from traditional cash-based DBT where the money remains in a bank account indefinitely and can be spent on

any item.

**Q71. With reference to the Loggerhead Sea Turtle (*Caretta caretta*), consider the following statements:**

1. It is the world's largest hard-shelled turtle and the only living species in its genus.
2. In the Indian Ocean, its largest nesting site is located along the coast of Odisha, India.
3. Like many reptiles, its sex determination is temperature-dependent, where warmer sand temperatures result in a higher proportion of female hatchlings.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** It is indeed the largest hard-shelled turtle (the Leatherback is larger but is soft-shelled) and it is the sole species in the genus *Caretta*.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While India's Odisha coast is famous for the *Arribada* of **Olive Ridley** turtles, Loggerheads are rarely seen nesting on Indian mainland beaches. Their largest nesting site in the Indian Ocean is actually **Masirah Island, Oman**.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** They exhibit Temperature-Dependent Sex Determination (TSD); higher temperatures during incubation produce females, while lower temperatures produce males.

**Q72. Consider the following statements regarding Exercise MILAN 2026:**

1. It is a biennial multilateral naval exercise that originated in 1995 under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command.
2. The 2026 edition marks the first time India is hosting the "Maritime Trifecta," which includes Exercise MILAN, the International Fleet Review (IFR), and the IONS Conclave of Chiefs.
3. While the exercise has grown to include over 70 countries, nations such as Germany and the Philippines are participating with military assets for the first time in this edition.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While MILAN is indeed a biennial multilateral exercise, it originated in 1995 at the **Andaman and Nicobar Command**, not the Eastern Naval Command. It was shifted to Visakhapatnam (Eastern Naval Command) only in recent years.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The 2026 event is unique as it combines the operational drills (MILAN), the ceremonial parade (IFR reviewed by the President), and the high-level dialogue (IONS Conclave) simultaneously in Visakhapatnam.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The 13th edition is the largest to date with 70+ countries, and it marks the debut participation of military assets from Germany, the UAE, and the Philippines.

**Q73. With reference to the 'Bee Corridor' initiative launched by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), consider the following statements:**

1. The initiative aims to develop ecological plantations by creating continuous linear stretches of bee-friendly vegetation at intervals of 500 meters to 1 km.
2. The primary objective is to replace ornamental plantations with a staggered seasonal flowering cycle that provides a year-round supply of nectar and pollen.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The NHAI has launched this to promote ecological infrastructure. The spacing of 500m to 1km is specifically chosen to match the average foraging distance of honeybees and wild bees.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The concept shifts focus from purely "ornamental" plants to "ecological" ones. By selecting species with staggered blooming cycles, the corridors ensure there are no "food deserts" for pollinators during off-seasons.

**Q74. With reference to the Group of Seven (G7), consider the following statements:**

1. It is an intergovernmental organization with a permanent secretariat that operates out of Brussels, similar to the European Union.
2. The European Union (EU) has participated fully in the G7 since 1981 but does not hold the rotating presidency or host the summit.
3. The Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) is a G7 initiative designed as an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The G7 has **no permanent secretariat** or legal charter. It operates through a rotating presidency and personal representatives of the leaders known as "Sherpas."

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The EU is often called the "non-enumerated" member. It has been a full participant since 1981 but is excluded from hosting or holding the presidency.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The PGII was launched by G7 nations to provide a values-driven, high-standard, and transparent infrastructure partnership to meet the enormous infrastructure needs of low- and middle-income countries, serving as a counter to China's BRI.

**Q75. With reference to the 'Beat the Heat' Programme, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a global initiative led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and has been integrated into the COP30 Presidency to accelerate the "Global Cooling Pledge."
2. In the Indian context, the programme focuses on structural interventions like nature-based solutions and passive cooling to combat the Urban Heat Island (UHI) effect.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The programme is a flagship initiative of the UNEP's Cool Coalition. Its significance has increased with formal integration into the COP30 agenda under Brazil's presidency.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Unlike traditional awareness-only campaigns, this programme emphasizes technical and structural changes—such as creating "blue spaces" (water bodies), urban greening, and implementing "Cool Roof" policies—to lower city temperatures and protect vulnerable populations.

**Q76. Consider the following statements regarding the Nilgiri Tahr (*Nilgiritragus hylocrius*):**

1. It is the only mountain ungulate endemic to the Western Ghats and is the state animal of Kerala.
2. It is listed as 'Endangered' on the IUCN Red List and is protected under Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
3. The species is restricted to high-altitude montane grasslands and shola forests of Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
4. "Saddlebacks" is a term used for mature adult females that develop a distinctive light-grey patch on their back.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three

D. All four

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While it is the only endemic mountain ungulate of the Western Ghats, it is the state animal of **Tamil Nadu**, not Kerala (Elephant is the state animal of Kerala).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It holds the highest legal protection (Schedule-I) and is classified as Endangered by the IUCN.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Its distribution is restricted to a specific 400 km stretch in the southern Western Ghats across these two states.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The "Saddleback" patch is a characteristic feature of **mature adult males**, not females.

**Q77. With reference to the 'Vibrant Village Programme 2.0' (VVP-II) cleared by the Union Cabinet in 2025, consider the following statements:**

1. Unlike the first phase, VVP-II is a Central Sector Scheme that expands the programme's scope to include strategic villages along the borders with Pakistan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh.
2. The primary objective of the initiative is to transform border villages into "growth centres" to prevent migration and make local residents the "eyes and ears" of the Border Guarding Forces.
3. Under VVP-II, the government has proposed a uniform expenditure of ₹15 crore per village to ensure the saturation of basic infrastructure and digital connectivity.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** VVP-II is indeed a Central Sector Scheme (cleared in April 2025) and marks a major shift by expanding beyond the China border to include all international borders (Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The programme aims to prevent migration by improving quality of life and infrastructure, essentially using the civilian population as a strategic asset ("eyes and ears") for national security.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The proposed expenditure under VVP-II is **₹3 crore per village**, not ₹15 crore.

**Q78. With reference to the SAHI and BODH initiatives launched in 2026, consider the following statements:**

1. SAHI (Strategy for Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare for India) acts as a technical benchmarking platform developed by IIT Kanpur to validate AI clinical solutions.

2. The BODH initiative is a national governance framework intended to align AI innovation with public health goals and ethical standards.

**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

**Ans: D**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The definitions have been swapped. **SAHI** is the **national governance framework** and policy roadmap (the "policy compass"). It is not the technical validation platform.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** **BODH** (Benchmarking Open Data Platform for Health AI) is the **technical benchmarking platform** developed by **IIT Kanpur** and the NHA. Its role is to evaluate and validate AI solutions before deployment, whereas the governance framework is SAHI.

**Q79. With reference to the Committee of Privileges in the Indian Parliament, consider the following statements:**

1. The Lok Sabha committee consists of 15 members nominated by the Speaker, while the Rajya Sabha committee consists of 10 members nominated by the Chairman.
2. The committee functions as a quasi-judicial body with the power to summon witnesses and recommend specific punishments, though the final decision rests with the respective House.
3. Parliamentary privileges in India have been clearly codified under a law enacted by Parliament as per the provisions of Article 105 of the Constitution.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The composition is different for both houses—15 members in Lok Sabha and 10 in Rajya Sabha, with members nominated by the respective presiding officers.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is a quasi-judicial body that performs fact-finding roles. While it recommends action (like suspension or admonition), it is the House itself that has the ultimate power to accept or reject these recommendations.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Parliamentary privileges in India are **not yet codified** by law. According to the Constitution, until Parliament makes a law, these privileges are based on those of the British House of Commons as of January 26, 1950.

**Q80. With reference to the 'AI-for-Energy' Mission launched in 2026, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a strategic international initiative launched by the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to assist the Global South in bypassing legacy energy infrastructure through digital leapfrogging.
2. The mission utilizes "Digital Twin Technology" to create virtual replicas of power distribution companies for real-time simulation and predictive maintenance.
3. Under this mission, the "India Energy Stack" is proposed as a global template to facilitate interoperable digital connections between consumers, vendors, and utilities.

**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

**Ans: D**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The mission was launched at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 by the ISA in partnership with Indian ministries to help over 125 member countries, primarily in the Global South, modernize their energy systems.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** A key feature of the mission is the use of Digital Twins—virtual replicas of DISCOMs—to manage outages and perform real-time simulations of the grid.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Much like India's digital payment infrastructure (UPI), the "India Energy Stack" serves as the foundational interoperable platform to unite all stakeholders in the energy ecosystem.

**Q81. Consider the following statements regarding the administration of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj:**

1. In the Ashta Pradhan system, all eight ministers were mandatorily required to lead military campaigns when called upon by the Chhatrapati.
2. Under his revenue reforms, the Jagirdari system was abolished in favor of the Ryotwari system, and land was measured using a rod known as the Kathi.
3. While Chauth was a tax paid by non-Maratha territories to avoid raids, Sardeshmukhi was an additional 10% levy claimed by virtue of being the hereditary head of the Deccan.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** In the Ashta Pradhan council, the *Panditrao* (High Priest) and *Nyayadhish* (Chief Justice) were exempt from military duties.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** Shivaji Maharaj moved away from the intermediary Jagirdari system to establish direct contact with peasants (Ryotwari) and standardized land measurement using the *Kathi*.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Chauth was exactly 1/4th (25%) of the revenue paid by outside territories for protection, and Sardeshmukhi was an extra 10% based on his legal claim as the *Sardeshmukh*.

**Q82. With reference to India's 'M.A.N.A.V. Vision' for Artificial Intelligence, consider the following statements:**

1. It advocates for a "Glass Box" approach to AI development, which emphasizes algorithmic explainability and transparency over opaque "Black Box" models.
2. The pillar of 'National Sovereignty' under this framework focuses on ensuring data ownership remains with the creators and securing indigenous compute capacity.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The M.A.N.A.V. Vision promotes the "Glass Box" model to ensure that AI systems are not just autonomous forces but are transparent and explainable to human users.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** 'National Sovereignty' (the 'N' in MANAV) is built on the principle of "Whose data, his right," emphasizing domestic control over data and infrastructure to achieve "Sovereign AI."

**Q83. With reference to the Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a vital ecological corridor in the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) that connects the Corbett-Rajaji landscape in India with the Shuklaphanta National Park in Nepal.
2. The sanctuary is primarily characterized by Alpine grasslands and is flanked by the Yamuna River to its west and the Nandhaur River to its east.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Nandhaur serves as a crucial transboundary link between the protected areas of Uttarakhand and Nepal within the Terai Arc Landscape.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The sanctuary's vegetation consists primarily of **Sal forests** (Tropical Moist Deciduous), not Alpine grasslands. Geographically, it is flanked by the

**Gola River** to the west and the **Sharda River** to the east.

**Q84. With reference to 'Salem Sago' (Javvarisi), recently in the news, consider the following statements:**

1. It is derived from the starch extracted from the roots of *Manihot esculenta*, which thrives specifically in the red loamy soil and tropical climate of Tamil Nadu.
2. The Geographical Indication (GI) tag was awarded to it primarily due to the unique quality of water and specific processing techniques used in the Salem region.
3. While it is widely used as a gluten-free food product, its industrial application is limited strictly to the food and pharmaceutical sectors.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Salem Sago is produced from Tapioca (*Manihot esculenta*), which grows well in the specific soil and climatic conditions of the Salem district.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The uniqueness of Salem Sago (its pearly white color and texture) is attributed to the local water quality and the traditional processing methods of the region, forming the basis for its GI status.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** According to the notes, Salem Sago has **multi-sector usage**, including the paper, textile, cosmetic, construction, and alcohol industries, in addition to food and pharmaceuticals.

**Q85. With reference to 'Shalimar Wheat' varieties (SW-3 and SW-4), consider the following statements:**

1. These varieties are specifically bred to mature late in July to synchronize with the monsoon-based paddy transplantation in the Kashmir Valley.
2. They exhibit robust resistance to Yellow Rust and Brown Rust, which are significant fungal threats in humid and cool temperate climates.
3. Unlike wheat varieties from the plains, these are biofortified with micronutrients and are adapted to mid-altitude temperate regions up to 1,850 meters.

**How many of the above statements are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The primary purpose of Shalimar Wheat is **early maturity** (vacating fields by late May or early June) to *prevent* delays in rice transplantation, not to mature late.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** One of the strategic advantages of these varieties is their resistance to fungal diseases like Yellow Rust (*Puccinia striiformis*), which are common in the Kashmir region.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** These are the first high-yielding wheat varieties for the Himalayan region to be biofortified with micronutrients and specifically adapted for high-altitude temperate climates rather than the sub-tropical plains.

**Q86. With reference to the KC-390 Millennium aircraft, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a jet-powered military transport aircraft developed by Brazil that features full Fly-By-Wire technology.
2. Under the 'Make in India' initiative, its manufacturer has partnered with the Mahindra Group to bid for the Indian Air Force's Medium Transport Aircraft (MTA) program.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The KC-390 is developed by the Brazilian company Embraer. Unlike many of its competitors (like the C-130J) which use turboprops, the KC-390 is jet-powered (turbofan) and is equipped with modern Fly-By-Wire technology to enhance maneuverability and safety.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Embraer and the Mahindra Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to fulfill the IAF's requirement for approximately 80 Medium Transport Aircraft (MTA) to replace the aging An-32 fleet. If selected, the project aims to establish an industrial hub in India for the aircraft.

**Q87. With reference to the Gaganyaan Mission's deceleration system, consider the following statements:**

1. The Drogue Parachutes are conical ribbon-type parachutes designed to reduce the "opening shock" by allowing air to pass through the canopy.
2. The deployment sequence involves a total of 10 parachutes, where the Pilot Parachutes are responsible for the stabilization of the Crew Module at high altitudes.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Drogue Parachutes use a conical ribbon design. This is a critical engineering feature that allows air permeability, ensuring that when the

parachute opens at high speeds, the "opening shock" (sudden mechanical jerk) is minimized, preventing damage to the module or the parachute itself.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While the system does consist of 10 parachutes, the roles are different. It is the **Drogue Parachutes** (2 in number) that are responsible for stabilization and initial velocity reduction at high altitudes. The **Pilot Parachutes** (3 in number) have the specific job of extracting the large Main Parachutes.

**Q88. With reference to the International Criminal Court (ICC), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a principal organ of the United Nations, headquartered at The Hague, Netherlands.
2. The Court operates under the "principle of complementarity," meaning it only exercises jurisdiction when national legal systems are unwilling or unable to prosecute.
3. While India and the USA are not members, the UN Security Council can refer a situation to the ICC even if it involves a non-member state.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The ICC is **NOT** a UN organ; it is an independent intergovernmental organization established by the **Rome Statute**. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), however, is a principal UN organ. Both are headquartered at The Hague.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The ICC is a "**court of last resort**." It does not replace national courts. Under the principle of complementarity, it only intervenes if a State is genuinely unwilling or unable to investigate or prosecute the core crimes (Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity, and Aggression).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Although India, the USA, China, and Russia are not parties to the Rome Statute, the **UN Security Council (UNSC)** has the power to refer a case to the ICC Prosecutor regardless of the country's membership status (e.g., the referrals regarding Darfur, Sudan, and Libya).

**Q89. With reference to the newly launched vessel 'INS Krishna', consider the following statements:**

1. It is the first of three Cadet Training Ships (CTS) indigenously designed and built by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) under the Buy (Indian-IDDMM) category.
2. Specifically designed as a "floating classroom," the ship features a specialized training bridge and chart room, with the capacity to accommodate 200 cadets simultaneously.
3. While primarily a training vessel, it is equipped with a defensive suite including a 76mm naval gun and AK-630M Close-In Weapon Systems (CIWS).

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one

- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** INS Krishna is the lead ship of the three-ship Cadet Training Ship project. It was built at L&T's Kattupalli shipyard and falls under the Indian-IDDMM (Indigenously Designed, Developed, and Manufactured) category of the Defense Acquisition Procedure.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The ship is uniquely designed to bridge the gap between shore-based training and life at sea. It acts as a "living lab" with dedicated classrooms and a training bridge for hands-on navigation, capable of carrying 200 cadets, 150 sailors, and 20 officers.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Despite its training role, the ship maintains high utility for secondary missions like HADR or evacuation. For self-defense, it is armed with a 76mm main gun, two AK-630M CIWS for air defense, and 12.7mm remote-controlled guns.

**Q90. With reference to the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a voluntary and non-binding initiative conceived by the Indian Navy to increase maritime cooperation among the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.
2. In February 2026, India assumed the chairmanship of IONS from the Royal Thai Navy during the 9th Conclave of Chiefs held in Visakhapatnam.
3. The forum is geographically divided into four sub-regions, with France (Reunion) being categorized under the East African Littorals.
4. Membership in IONS is limited exclusively to the 25 member nations, with no provision for observer status for non-littoral states.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** IONS was indeed launched by India in 2008 as a voluntary and inclusive platform for naval cooperation.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India took over the chair for the 2026–2028 tenure from Thailand. This event was part of a "Maritime Trifecta" in Visakhapatnam, alongside Exercise MILAN 2026 and the International Fleet Review.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To ensure organized functional cooperation, the forum is divided into South Asian, West Asian, East African, and South East Asian & Australian littorals. France participates in the East African sub-region due to its overseas territory, Reunion.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** While there are **25 Member nations**, there are also **10**

**Observers** (such as the Philippines, which recently joined as an observer in 2026). Observer status allows non-littoral states or interested parties to engage with the forum.

**Q91. With reference to Neurotoxins, consider the following statements:**

1. Unlike Tetrodotoxin which blocks sodium channels, Batrachotoxin forces sodium channels to remain open, leading to cardiac arrest.
2. Botulinum toxin (Botox) disrupts nerve signaling by blocking the receptors on the "docking station," preventing the signal from being received.
3. The Blood-Brain Barrier (BBB) acts as a complete shield against all neurotoxins, necessitating direct injection for any toxin to affect the central nervous system.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. 1, 2, and 3

**Ans: A**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** According to the mechanism of ion channel blockers, Tetrodotoxin (from pufferfish) blocks the channels, while Batrachotoxin (from the golden poison frog) forces them to stay open. Both disrupt electrical impulses but through opposite actions.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Botulinum toxin works by the **inhibition of release** (stopping the signal from leaving the neuron). It is **Curare** that is cited as the example for **receptor blocking** (sitting on the docking station).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While the BBB is a protective semi-permeable membrane that makes many neurotoxins ineffective, it is not a "complete shield." Small molecules or fat-soluble toxins (like certain pesticides or ethanol) can **cross it easily**.

**Q92. With reference to the Embraer E175 jets and the recent MoU between Adani Defence & Aerospace and Embraer, consider the following statements:**

1. The partnership aims to establish a Final Assembly Line (FAL) in India for the E175, which is specifically designed for high-frequency operations connecting Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.
2. The E175 jet has a maximum service ceiling of 41,000 ft and can reach its cruising altitude in approximately 18 minutes.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The MoU between Adani Defence and Brazil's Embraer

specifically focuses on establishing a Final Assembly Line (FAL) in India to support the regional transport ecosystem and the UDAN scheme, targeting Tier-2 and Tier-3 connectivity with its ~88-seat capacity.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** According to the technical specifications of the aircraft provided, it has a service ceiling of 41,000 feet and exhibits high climb performance, reaching cruising altitude in about 18 minutes.

**Q93. With reference to the Delhi–Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) and the Meerut Metro, consider the following statements:**

1. In a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, the local Meerut Metro and the high-speed Namo Bharat trains operate on shared tracks using a common signaling system.
2. The RRTS project is implemented by the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC), which is a joint venture between the Government of India and the state of Uttar Pradesh only.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans: A**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The project features a unique integrated model where the Meerut Metro (intra-city) and Namo Bharat (inter-city) share infrastructure, tracks, and the ETCS Level-2 signaling system.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While the NCRTC implements the project, it is a joint venture between the **Government of India** and four states: **Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh**, not just Uttar Pradesh.

**Q94. With reference to C. Rajagopalachari, consider the following statements:**

1. He was the only Indian to hold the office of Governor-General of India and was among the first recipients of the Bharat Ratna in 1954.
2. During the Civil Disobedience Movement, he led a parallel Salt Satyagraha from Trichinopoly to Vedaranyam on the Tanjore coast.
3. He was a staunch supporter of the Quit India Movement (1942), viewing it as the most effective way to secure immediate independence during World War II.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** He served as the first and last Indian Governor-General (1948–1950) and received the first-ever Bharat Ratna alongside C.V. Raman and S.

Radhakrishnan.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** Rajaji led the Vedaranyam Salt March in 1930, which was the Tamil Nadu equivalent of Gandhi's Dandi March.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** He actually **opposed** the Quit India Movement. He resigned from the Congress Working Committee at the time because he believed in negotiating with the British during the war and felt the movement was ill-timed.

**Q95. With reference to the Takeshima/Dokdo Islands, consider the following statements:**

1. Geographically, the islands are located closer to South Korea's Ulleungdo Island than to Japan's Oki Islands, and they consist of two main islets—Dongdo and Seodo.
2. While Japan officially incorporated the islands into Shimane Prefecture in 1905, South Korea traces its historical claim back to the 6th-century Silla Kingdom.
3. Beyond their strategic location, the islands are economically significant due to the presence of rich fishing grounds and potential deposits of methane clathrates.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: C**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The islands are approximately 87 km from South Korea's Ulleungdo and 157 km from Japan. They are composed of two main islets (East and West) and 89 smaller rocks.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Japan claims the 1905 incorporation was legal under *terra nullius*, whereas South Korea maintains historical sovereignty through ancient records dating back to the Silla Kingdom.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The surrounding waters are a major flashpoint not just for territory, but for lucrative fishing and energy resources like gas hydrates (methane clathrates).

**Q96. With reference to the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and its vaccination in India, consider the following statements:**

1. HPV is a double-stranded DNA virus with over 200 strains, where Types 16 and 18 are responsible for the majority of cervical cancer cases.
2. Cervavac, India's first indigenous quadrivalent HPV vaccine, was developed by the Serum Institute of India (SII) in collaboration with DBT and BIRAC.
3. The Indian government's national vaccination campaign primarily targets women in the age group of 18–45 years to maximize clinical efficacy.
4. The U-WIN portal, modeled after the Co-WIN platform, is designated for managing HPV vaccination records.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one

- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** HPV is indeed a double-stranded DNA virus. While there are over 200 strains, high-risk types 16 and 18 cause approximately 70% of cervical cancers.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Cervavac is the first indigenous qHPV vaccine, developed through a partnership involving SII, the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), and BIRAC.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The government targets girls in the **9–14 years** age group, not 18–45. This is because the vaccine is most effective when administered before the onset of sexual activity.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The U-WIN platform is the digital infrastructure being used to track and manage the rollout of HPV vaccinations, following the success of the Co-WIN model.

**Q97. With reference to the 'Anjadip' vessel recently in the news, consider the following statements:**

1. It is the third ship of the Arnala-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) being built for the Indian Navy.
2. The vessel is powered by a high-speed Water-Jet Propulsion system, specifically designed for high maneuverability in coastal waters.
3. It has been developed entirely by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) without any private sector collaboration to ensure 100% indigenization.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Anjadip is indeed the third of eight vessels in the Arnala-class ASW-SWC series.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** One of its primary technical features is the Water-Jet Propulsion, which allows it to operate effectively in shallow/littoral waters at speeds up to 25 knots.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While it has high indigenization (over 80%), it was built under a **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)** model between the public sector GRSE and the private sector **L&T Shipyard** (Kattupalli).

**Q98. Regarding the National Monetisation Pipeline 2.0 (NMP 2.0), consider the following statements:**

1. It focuses exclusively on the monetisation of brownfield assets to unlock capital for new

greenfield infrastructure projects.

2. Under this pipeline, the government transfers both the ownership and the operational rights of the public assets to private investors for a fixed period.
3. The Core Group of Secretaries on Asset Monetisation (CGAM), chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, serves as the monitoring body for the program.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The core philosophy of NMP is "Asset Recycling," where operational (brownfield) assets are leveraged to fund new (greenfield) infrastructure without increasing the fiscal deficit.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** A key feature of the NMP is that the **government retains ownership** of the assets. Only the rights to operate, manage, and maintain them are transferred to the private sector for a specific tenure, after which the assets revert to the government.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The CGAM, headed by the Cabinet Secretary, is the apex body responsible for monitoring the progress of the monetisation targets and resolving inter-ministerial issues.

**Q99. With reference to the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006, consider the following statements:**

1. It was established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to serve as the "fourth pillar" of international maritime law.
2. The convention aims to ensure decent working conditions for seafarers and to prevent unfair competition from substandard ships.
3. India is a signatory to the convention, having ratified it in 2015.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While it is indeed considered the "fourth pillar" of international maritime law (alongside SOLAS, MARPOL, and STCW), it was established by the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, not the IMO.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** One of the primary goals of the MLC is to create a level playing field for shipowners by ensuring universal labor standards, thereby preventing competition based on poor working conditions.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** India ratified the MLC in 2015, ensuring that Indian seafarers

and those on Indian-flagged vessels are protected under these global standards.

**Q100. With reference to the International Energy Agency (IEA), consider the following statements:**

1. To become a full member of the IEA, a country must traditionally be a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
2. Under the "90-Day Rule," all member countries are required to maintain emergency oil reserves equivalent to at least 90 days of their total domestic oil consumption.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The IEA is an autonomous organization within the OECD framework, and OECD membership is a standard prerequisite for full membership. However, as of February 2026, the IEA is considering amending its legal framework to accommodate India, which is not an OECD member.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The 90-day rule specifies that members must maintain reserves equivalent to at least 90 days of their **net imports** from the previous year, not their total domestic consumption.

**Q101. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Speaker of the Knesset' Medal:**

1. It is the highest honor bestowed by the Israeli Parliament and was recently conferred upon the Indian Prime Minister for his role in strengthening the India-Israel strategic alliance.
2. The current recipient is the only global leader to have received the highest state honors from both Israel and the State of Palestine.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The medal was established in 2026 as the Knesset's highest honor, specifically recognizing leadership in security, technology, and cyber-cooperation.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** PM Modi received the **Grand Collar of the State of Palestine** in 2018. Holding the highest honors from both entities is a rare diplomatic feat, highlighting India's "de-hyphenation" policy in the Middle East.

**Q102. Consider the following statements regarding Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs) in India:**

1. The proceeds from these bonds are deposited directly into the Public Account of India to ensure they are ring-fenced for specific environmental projects.
2. The Green Finance Working Committee, chaired by the Chief Economic Adviser, is responsible for the selection of eligible green projects.
3. Projects related to nuclear power and fossil fuels are strictly excluded from receiving funding through these bond issuances.

**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

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The proceeds are actually deposited into the **Consolidated Fund of India (CFI)**. From there, they are allocated to specific green projects.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The **Green Finance Working Committee (GFWC)**, under the chairmanship of the Chief Economic Adviser, serves as the institutional framework for project selection.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To maintain high environmental standards and prevent "greenwashing," the framework strictly excludes sectors like **fossil fuels, nuclear power, and direct waste incineration**.

**Q103. Consider the following statements regarding the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) and the recent India-France Amending Protocol:**

1. Under the Tax Credit Method of a DTAC, income is taxed only in the source country and remains entirely exempt in the resident country.
2. The amended India-France DTAC formally removes the Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) clause to prevent automatic extension of lower tax rates granted to other treaty partners.
3. The revised dividend tax rates under the India-France protocol provide a lower rate of 5% for small shareholders, while major stakeholders (holding at least 10% capital) are taxed at 15%.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The description provided is for the **Exemption Method**. In the **Tax Credit Method**, income is taxed in both countries, but the resident country allows a credit for taxes already paid in the source country.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** One of the key features of the new protocol is the **deletion of the MFN clause**. This aligns with the Indian Supreme Court's stance and ensures that treaty benefits are limited to specifically agreed terms, ending interpretational disputes.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The rates are actually the opposite. The amended protocol sets a **5% rate for major stakeholders** (those holding at least 10% of the company's capital) to encourage large-scale investment, and a **15% rate for all other cases** (small shareholders).

**Q104. Consider the following statements regarding the joint military exercises conducted by India in February 2026:**

1. **Exercise Dharma Guardian** is a biennial land force exercise conducted between India and Japan, with the 2026 edition held at Chaubattia, Uttarakhand.
2. **Exercise Vajra Prahar** involves the Special Forces of India and the USA and focuses on sharing tactics for operations in mountainous terrain.
3. In the 7th edition of Exercise Dharma Guardian, the Indian Army is represented by the **Ladakh Scouts**, specializing in mountain warfare.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While the location and partners are correct, **Exercise Dharma Guardian** is an **annual** exercise, not biennial. (Small "frequency" traps are common in UPSC Prelims).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The 16th edition of **Vajra Prahar** (Feb-March 2026) at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh, specifically focuses on high-altitude and rugged terrain operations between Indian Special Forces and the US Green Berets.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The **Ladakh Scouts** are representing India in the 2026 edition of Dharma Guardian, highlighting the focus on specialized infantry tactics.

**Q105. Consider the following statements regarding Lakes Mai Ndombe and Tumba:**

1. These are shallow blackwater lakes situated within the *Cuvette Centrale*, characterized by high acidity and tea-colored water due to dissolved organic matter.
2. The Tumba-Ngiri-Maindombe area, which includes these lakes, is recognized as the world's largest Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.
3. Recent studies indicate that these lakes act as carbon sinks by capturing and storing ancient carbon from surrounding peatlands for over 3,000 years.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** These lakes are indeed in the central depression of the Congo Basin (*Cuvette Centrale*). Their dark color and high acidity (pH 4.0–5.5) come from humic acids leached from surrounding peatlands and swamp forests.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The **Tumba-Ngiri-Maindombe** complex is a massive wetland system that holds the record for being the largest Ramsar site globally.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** This is the "Climate Concern" trap. The recent study found that these lakes are actually **releasing** (emitting) ancient carbon that was stored for thousands of years, rather than acting as a sink. Up to 40% of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from these lakes originate from peat carbon that is over 3,000 years old.

**Q106. With reference to the Fields Medal, consider the following statements:**

1. It is awarded annually by the International Mathematical Union (IMU) to recognize outstanding mathematical achievement.
2. To be eligible for the medal, a mathematician must be under 40 years of age on January 1 of the year in which the award is presented.
3. Manjul Bhargava and Akshay Venkatesh are the only two mathematicians of Indian origin to have received this honor to date.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While the IMU is the awarding authority, the medal is awarded once every **four years** (at the International Congress of Mathematicians), not annually.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The age limit of **under 40** is a unique and strict criterion of the Fields Medal intended to encourage future achievement.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Manjul Bhargava won in **2014** and Akshay Venkatesh won in **2018**; they remain the two recipients of Indian origin.

**Q107. With reference to the 'Sweden–India Technology and Artificial Intelligence Corridor' (SITAC), consider the following statements:**

1. It was launched through a Statement of Intent (SoI) between NITI Aayog and the Swedish Innovation Agency (Vinnova) during the India AI Impact Summit 2026.
2. The partnership follows a "Triple Helix" model of engagement, involving the three pillars of Government, Academia, and Industry.
3. A primary objective of the corridor is to focus on the deployment of "value-based" and "trusted" AI solutions to address industrial and societal challenges.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** While the occasion and the name are correct, the agreement was signed between the **IndiaAI Mission (under MeitY)** and **Business Sweden**, not NITI Aayog and Vinnova.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The "Triple Helix" model is a key feature of SITAC, ensuring that government, research institutions (academia), and private industry work in a structured, connected ecosystem.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The partnership emphasizes "Responsible AI," combining India's talent pool with Sweden's expertise to create trusted AI for sectors like healthcare and climate.

**Q108. With reference to 'Switch Auctions' conducted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), consider the following statements:**

1. It involves the simultaneous buyback of short-term government securities nearing maturity and the issuance of new long-term securities to the same holders.
2. The primary objective of this mechanism is to manage the yield curve and lower long-term interest rates in the economy.

**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

**Ans: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** As per the definition, it is a debt management "swap" where the government replaces short-term bonds (source securities) with long-term bonds (destination securities) to postpone repayment.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While managing interest rates is the goal of "Operation Twist," the primary objective of a **Switch Auction** is to smooth the **redemption profile**, reduce rollover risk, and prevent the "bunching" of repayments.

**Q109. With reference to the functioning of Large Language Models (LLMs), consider the following statements:**

1. LLMs process text by converting word pieces or characters into tokens, which are then represented as vectors (embeddings) in a high-dimensional space to capture semantic similarity.
2. The Self-attention mechanism allows the model to assign weights to different tokens in a sequence, enabling it to understand context and link references regardless of their

distance.

3. In the transformer architecture, lower layers are primarily responsible for capturing complex reasoning patterns and intent, while higher layers focus on basic grammar and form.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** LLMs use tokenization to break down text and embeddings to map those tokens into a mathematical space where similar meanings are placed closer together.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** This is the core innovation of the transformer model; self-attention allows the model to "attend" to relevant parts of the input to build a coherent understanding of the context.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** It is actually the opposite. According to the layers of refinement, **lower layers** catch basic form and grammar, while **higher layers** capture more abstract representations like relationships, intent, and reasoning patterns.

**Q110. With reference to Carbon Capture and Utilisation (CCU) technologies, consider the following statements:**

1. Unlike Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS), which focuses on permanent underground sequestration, CCU aims to recycle CO<sub>2</sub> as a feedstock for producing building materials and sustainable fuels.
2. In the Union Budget 2026-27, a dedicated outlay of ₹20,000 crore was announced specifically to scale these technologies in hard-to-abate sectors like steel and cement.

**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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The fundamental difference between the two is that CCS is a storage solution (injecting into saline aquifers/oil wells), whereas CCU is a "Utilisation" solution that supports a circular carbon economy by creating products like green methanol or carbon-cured concrete.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** As per the latest policy updates for 2026, the government has allocated ₹20,000 crore to target the five "hard-to-abate" sectors (Power, Steel, Cement, Refineries, and Chemicals) where direct electrification is technically challenging.

**Q111. With reference to the ‘March 23 Movement’ (M23), recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:**

1. The group primarily operates in the North and South Kivu provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and recently seized control of the strategic border city of Goma.
2. The ‘Doha Framework’ and the ‘Luanda Process’ are international mediation efforts specifically aimed at de-escalating the conflict between the M23 and the DRC 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

**Ans: C**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** M23 is concentrated in the **Eastern DRC** (North and South Kivu). In early 2025, the group achieved a major strategic victory by taking control of **Goma**, the capital of North Kivu, which sits on the border with Rwanda and the shores of Lake Kivu.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Multiple peace tracks are active as of 2026. The **Doha Framework** (mediated by Qatar in Nov 2025) sought a direct ceasefire, while the **Luanda Process** is the long-standing African Union-led mediation effort headed by Angola to resolve tensions between the DRC and Rwanda over their alleged support for various rebel groups.

**Q112. With reference to the ‘52 Reforms in 52 Weeks’ initiative, recently launched by the Ministry of Railways, consider the following statements:**

1. The initiative is a time-bound program that commits to implementing one major structural reform every week throughout the calendar year 2026.
2. The ‘Rail Tech Policy’ introduced under this initiative aims to create a digital single-window platform for the end-to-end processing of innovation proposals from startups and industry.
3. As part of the reforms, the Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT), which operates with 23 benches across India, is targeted for full digitization within the next 12 months.

**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

**Ans: D**

**Explanation**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Launched in early 2026, this is an ambitious, time-bound program where Indian Railways commits to one structural reform per week for the entire year to ensure comprehensive transformation.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The **Rail Tech Policy** (and its associated Portal) is designed as a high-tech, 24/7 digital single-window platform to streamline the submission and processing of proposals from innovators, startups, and academic institutions.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** A major pillar of the initiative is the digitization of the **Railway Claims Tribunal (e-RCT)**. It involves end-to-end computerization across all **23 benches** (with the Principal Bench in Delhi) to make the adjudication of claims faster and more transparent.

**Q113. With reference to the ‘State of India’s Environment 2026’ report, consider the following statements:**

1. According to the report, the world has now breached seven of the nine planetary boundaries, with Ocean Acidification being the latest addition to the breached category.
2. Atmospheric Rivers have been identified as a major emerging driver of extreme precipitation and flash floods in India, specifically in regions beyond the tropical zones.
3. The report highlights that over 50% of India’s population currently lives within a 10 km radius of a real-time continuous air pollution monitoring station.

**How many of the statements given above are incorrect?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Ans: A**

**Explanation**

**Correct Answer: A) Only one**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The 2026 report highlights that 7 out of 9 planetary boundaries are now breached, and **Ocean Acidification** is the newest entrant to this critical list.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The report notes that **Atmospheric Rivers** (narrow corridors of concentrated moisture in the atmosphere) are increasingly responsible for extreme weather and floods in India's extra-tropical regions.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The report actually highlights a significant monitoring gap, stating that **only 15%** of India’s population (approx. 200 million) lives within 10 km of a real-time monitor. The remaining 85% constitutes a "blind spot" in air quality data.

**Q114. With reference to the ‘Druzhba Oil Pipeline’, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:**

1. It is one of the world's longest pipeline networks, originating in Russia and splitting in Belarus into a Northern branch supplying Germany and a Southern branch passing through Ukraine.
2. Due to the suspension of flows in the Southern branch in early 2026, landlocked countries like Hungary are utilizing the Adria Pipeline via Croatia as an alternative route for crude oil.

**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

**Ans: C**

### Explanation

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Druzhba (Friendship) pipeline begins at **Almetyevsk** in Russia. It travels to **Mazyr** in Belarus, where it bifurcates. The **Northern branch** serves Poland and Germany, while the **Southern branch** traverses Ukraine to supply Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Following the disruption of the Southern branch in January 2026, affected landlocked Central European nations have turned to the **Adria Pipeline**. This pipeline allows these countries to import seaborne crude oil via the Croatian port of Omišalj, bypassing the transit issues in Ukraine.

**Q115. With reference to the new GDP series (Base Year 2022–23) released by the MoSPI, consider the following statements:**

1. The new series marks the 9th revision of India's GDP base year and adopts 'Double Deflation' for manufacturing and agriculture to calculate real Gross Value Added (GVA).
2. The 'Proportional Denton Method' has been introduced to eliminate artificial jumps in data by aligning quarterly estimates with annual benchmarks.
3. For the first time, the series integrates real-time administrative datasets like the Public Finance Management System (PFMS) and e-Vahan to move away from proxy-based estimations.

**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

**Ans: D**

### Explanation

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The shift from 2011–12 to 2022–23 is indeed the **9th revision**. A critical technical shift is the move to **Double Deflation**, where inputs and outputs are deflated separately, providing a more accurate measure of real growth compared to the previous single deflation method.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The **Proportional Denton Method** is a globally recognized technique used to ensure consistency between low-frequency (annual) and high-frequency (quarterly) data, preventing the statistical "jumps" seen in the older pro-rata approach.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The 2026 series leverages "Big Data" and administrative portals. **PFMS** allows for capturing actual government spending instead of budget estimates, and **e-Vahan** provides high-frequency data on the transport sector. Additionally, it integrates **ASUSE** for better informal sector capture.