

**Q.1** With reference to “Operation Green”, consider the following statements:

1. It seeks to stabilize the supply of Onion, Wheat and Rice in India.
2. It was launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

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**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** It is a price fixation scheme that aims to ensure farmers are given the right price for their produce. It aims to promote Farmer Producers Organizations (FPO), Agri-logistics, processing facilities and professional management of agri-produce. It focuses on organized marketing of Tomatoes, Onions and Potatoes (TOP vegetables) by connecting farmers with consumers.

**Statement 2 is not correct: Operation Green** was originally **launched in 2018** by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI).

**Q.2** With reference to Asteroids, consider the following statements:

- 1.They orbit around the Sun and are larger than Planets.
- 2.They are found between the orbits of Mars and Venus.

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**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct**

- Asteroids are rocky objects that orbit the Sun, much smaller than planets.
- Asteroids are leftover from the formation of our solar system.

**Statement 2 is not correct**

- They are found between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

**Q.3** With reference to Amazonia-1 Mission, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1.It is an earth observation satellite which will monitor deforestation in North American Countries
- 2.It was launched by PSLV-C51 along with 18 co-passenger satellites.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct**

- It is a 637-kg optical earth observation satellite of the National Institute for Space Research.

- It is powered by lithium-ion batteries and two solar arrays. It has an 850km swath and 60m resolution.
- It will offer remote sensing data to users for monitoring deforestation in the Amazon region of Brazil including the analysis of diversified agriculture in the **South American country**.

**Statement 2 is correct**

- India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C51 successfully launched Amazonia-1 along with 18 co-passenger satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota.
- PSLV-C51 is the 53rd flight of PSLV and the 3rd flight of PSLV in 'DL' configuration (with 2 strap-on motors).

**Q.4** International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists caracals as a species

- (a) Near Threatened (NT)
- (b) Vulnerable (VU)
- (c) Endangered (EN)
- (d) Least Concern (LC)

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL]** The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists caracals as a species of 'least concern' and in India, now they are critically endangered species.

**Q.5** With reference to the Channapatna Toys, consider the following statements:

1. These toys are made with soft ivory wood and given a polished look.
2. For glazing, natural dyes are used and the polishing is done with high abrasive property grass.
3. Tipu Sultan is considered the Father of Channapatna Toys as he encouraged Persians artisans for making them.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News**

Recently, the Prime Minister of India has inaugurated the India Toy Fair 2021 in New Delhi, where he stressed the need for innovation and novelty in toys.

**Statement 1 is correct.** The Channapatna toys are made with soft ivory wood and given a polished look, adding colours and other beautifications.

**Statement 2 is correct.** The woodwork is coloured using vegetable dyes and is free of chemicals. For the glazing of the toys, the polishing is done with high abrasive property grass.

**Statement 3 is not correct.** The Father of Channapatna toy is Bavas Miyan, who is known for his commitment to life to help the local artisans with the art of toy-making and bringing in new technologies to improvise the toys. Tipu Sultan (1750-1799) encouraged the Persians to come down to India to teach the artisans the art of making wooden toys.

**Q.6** With reference to the National Green Tribunal, consider the following statements:

1. It is a statutory body formed under the Tenth Five-Year Plan.
2. It is mandated to make disposal of applications or appeals within 1 year of the filing of the case.

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**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct.** The National Green Tribunal (NGT) was established in 2010 (11th FYP) under the National Green Tribunal Act of 2010 as a statutory body. It is a specialised body for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** It is mandated to make disposal of applications or appeals finally within 6 months of the filing of the case.

**Q.7** Sugamya Bharat App, recently seen in the news, has been launched by?

- (a) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
- (b) Ministry of Science and Technology
- (c) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- (d) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] Option D is correct.** Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched “Sugamya Bharat App” and a handbook titled “Access: The Photo Digest”. It is a crowdsourcing mobile application that has been developed as a means to sensitise and enhance the accessibility.

**Q.8** With reference to the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is an executive body.
- 2. Developing Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) is its prime mandate.
- 3. Defence Ministry is the parent ministry of LPAI.

Which of the above statements are not correct?

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

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News:** Recently, the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI) has celebrated its 9<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** LPAI is a statutory body created by the Land Ports Authority of India Act, 2010.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Its prime mandate is developing Integrated Check Posts (ICPs).

**Statement 3 is not correct.** The Home Ministry is the parent ministry of LPAI.

**Q.9** With reference to the Jim Corbett National Park, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is India's oldest and most prestigious National Park.
- 2. It is honoured as the place where Project Tiger was first launched in 1973.

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**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct.** The Jim Corbett National Park was established in 1936 as the Hailey National Park. It is India's oldest and most prestigious National Park.

**Statement 2 is correct.** The National Park is a part of the larger Corbett Tiger Reserve, which is a Project Tiger Reserve. It is honoured as the place where Project Tiger was first launched in 1973.

**Q.10** With reference to the Rashtriya Ucchar Shiksha Abhiyan, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a Central Sector Scheme launched by the erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- 2. Funds under the scheme flow directly from the central ministry to identified institutions without any

intermediaries.

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

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

[ANS] c

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct.** The Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) was launched in 2013 under the erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development (now Ministry of Education). It is a centrally sponsored programme.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Under it, funds flow from the central ministry through the state governments/UTs to the State Higher Education Councils before reaching the identified institutions.

**Q.11** Consider the following statements:

- 1. Surcharge is a tax on tax.
- 2. Surcharge becomes part of the Public Accounts of India.
- 3. It is a part of a divisible pool of taxes as given in Article 271 of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

**[SOL] In News:** Cess, surcharge share doubled to 19.9% of central taxes in FY21: Report This massive spike in Cess and Surcharge has forced the 15th Finance Commission to suggest a higher Grant-in-Aid with lower share in divisible pool of taxes.

**Statement 1 is correct.** Surcharge is a charge (tax) on any tax, charged on the tax already paid.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Surcharge goes to Consolidated Fund of India and can be spent for any purpose.

**Statement 3 is not correct.** It is not a part of a divisible pool of taxes as given in Article 271 of the Constitution. Union may keep it fully for its own usage.

**Q.12** Mullaperiyar Dam, recently seen in news, is currently operated by?

- (a) Kerala
- (b) Karnataka
- (c) TamilNadu
- (d) Andhra Pradesh

[ANS] c

**[SOL] In News:** 126-year-old Mullaperiyar Dam (Masonry gravity dam on the Periyar River) has dangerously outlived its 50 years of life.

**Option C is correct.** Under lease agreement between British and Travancore (Current Kerala), TamilNadu got the rights to operate Mullaperiyar Dam even though it is situated in Kerala on Periyar River. It is bone of contention and sub judice due to Kerala's wish to decommission it.

**Q.13** With reference to the Better Than Cash Alliance, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is an initiative by the United Nations.
- 2. It aims to accelerate the transition from cash to digital payments to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 3. India is one of the founding members of the alliance.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct.** 'Better Than Cash Alliance' is a partnership of governments, companies and international organisations. It is not an initiative by the United Nations.

**Statement 2 is correct.** It aims to accelerate the transition from cash to responsible digital payments to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Statement 3 is not correct.** India is not one of the founding members of the alliance. The alliance came into existence in 2012 whereas India joined it in 2015.

**Q.14** Exercise Desert Flag VI, recently seen in the news, is hosted by?

- (a) United Arab Emirates
- (b) Egypt
- (c) Oman
- (d) Jordan

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Option A is correct.** Exercise Desert Flag VI is an annual multinational large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the United Arab Emirates' Air Force. In 2021, the Indian Air Force is participating in it for the first time along with air forces of the UAE, US, France, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Bahrain.

**Q.15** With reference to the Himalayan Serow, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. These can be widely found in the eastern, central, and trans Himalayan region.
2. These are protected under the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

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

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News:** The Himalayan serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis thar*) has been spotted for the first time in Assam.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** These are known to be found in the eastern, central, and western Himalayas, but not in the Trans Himalayan region. There are several species of serows, and all of them are found in Asia.

**Statement 2 is correct.** These are protected under the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. They are listed as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List and come under the Appendix I of the CITES.

**Q.16** Black-browed Babbler, recently seen in news, is a species of?

- (a) Frog
- (b) Rattlesnake
- (c) Primates
- (d) Bird

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News:** Black-browed babbler has been rediscovered in Borneo Island of Indonesia after 170 years.

**Option D is correct.** It is a bird endemic to Borneo. IUCN keeps it in the Data deficient category. It is a small brown-grey songbird with a distinctive broad, black eye-stripe running all the way around its head. Its Scientific Name is *Malacocincla perspicillata*. Its prime habitat is Subtropical or Tropical moist lowland forests, at altitudes of 200-1170 m.

**Q.17** Consider the following statements:

1. The expression 'contempt of court' has been defined by Article 129 of the Indian Constitution.
2. The power to punish for contempt of court is with the Supreme Court and High Court only.
3. The Attorney General's consent is mandatory when a private citizen wants to initiate a case of contempt of court against a person.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, Telangana High Court has sentenced Rajanna- Sircilla Collector and two others with 3 months' jail for contempt case.

**Option B is correct:** The prior consent in writing of the Attorney General is required for the Supreme Court to initiate criminal contempt action in a case a/c to the Contempt of Court Act, 1971. As per the Contempt of Courts Act 1971, contempt refers to the offence of showing disrespect to the dignity or authority of a court. It divides contempt into civil and criminal contempt.

**Civil contempt:** It is willful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other processes of a court or wilful breach of an undertaking given to the court.

**Criminal contempt:** It is any act which may result in scandalising the court by lowering its authority, interference in the due course of a judicial proceeding, an obstruction in the administration of justice. The expression 'contempt of court' has not been defined by the Constitution.

**Q.18** With reference to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), consider the following statements:

1. It is administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. It is legally binding on the Parties.
3. India is the member state of CITES.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News:** World Wildlife Day 2021 is being celebrated on 3rd March with the theme 'Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet'.

**Option D is correct:** The day was chosen as World Wildlife day by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on 20 December 2013 at its 68th session. The aim was to celebrate and raise awareness about animals and plants. The reason this date was selected for the occasion was that the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was signed on 3 March, 1973. CITES is a multilateral legally binding treaty to protect endangered plants & animals. It is administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). CITES is legally binding on state parties to the convention, which are obliged to adopt their own domestic legislation to implement its goals.

**Q.19** The Minimum Support Price (MSP) is decided on the recommendations of which of the following?

- (a) Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority
- (b) Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices
- (c) Food Corporation of India
- (d) Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture

[ANS] b

**[SOL] Option B is correct:** The Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a form of market intervention by the Government of India to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices. It is announced by the Government at the beginning of the sowing season for certain crops on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).

**Q.20** Similipal Biosphere Reserve, recently seen in the news, is located in?

- (a) West Bengal
- (b) Odisha
- (c) Chhattisgarh
- (d) Jharkhand

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News:** A recent massive fire has threatened to cause enormous damage to the Similipal Biosphere Reserve, Odisha.

**Option B is correct.** It lies in the eastern end of the eastern ghat and is located in the northern part of Odisha's Mayurbhanj district. It is one of the largest biospheres in India. It is a national park and a tiger reserve as well.

**Q.21** Consider the following statements

1. Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) is an executive body under the Finance Ministry.
  2. It is the nodal agency for implementing Bilateral Social Security Agreements with other countries.
- Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] In News:** EPFO has liquidated equity outlay and retains 8.5% payout as interest over deposits.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Labour.

**Statement 2 is correct.** It assists the **Central Board** in administering the following schemes for the workforce engaged in the organised sector in India.

- Compulsory contributory Provident Fund Scheme,
- Pension Scheme and
- Insurance Scheme

It is also the nodal agency for implementing Bilateral Social Security Agreements with other countries on a reciprocal basis.

**Q.22** Consider the following statements.

1. Public Employment (Requirement as to Residence) Act, 1957 was passed to give effect to Article 16(3) of Constitution.
2. A bill passed by the Legislative Assembly dealing with fundamental rights can become Act only with Presidential Assent.

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

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

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News:** Haryana Government has reserved 75% seats for locals in Private Jobs

**Statement 1 is correct.** Public Employment (Requirement as to Residence) Act, 1957 was passed to give effect to Article 16(3) of Constitution. It deals with Residence (Domicile) as criteria for employment.

**Statement 2 is correct.** A bill passed by the Legislative Assembly dealing with fundamental rights can become Act only with Presidential Assent. Governor's Assent will not suffice in such cases.

**Q.23** Which of the following falls under the term 'Capital Account'?

1. Portfolio investment
2. External Assistance
3. Transfer payments
4. Commercial borrowings

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] Option C is correct:** The balance of payments (BoP) records the transactions in goods, services and assets between residents of a country with the rest of the world for a specified time period typically a year. There are two main accounts in the BoP - the current account and the capital account. Capital Account Includes:

External Assistance, Commercial Borrowings, Foreign Investment, Portfolio, FII, Non-Resident Deposits, Banking Capital. The current account records exports and imports in goods and services and transfer payments.

**Q.24** With reference to the pardoning powers of the Governor, consider the following statements:

1. Article 161 deals with the Pardoning Power of the Governor.
2. The pardoning powers extend to any law relating to a matter to which the executive power of the state, as well as centre, extends.
3. The pardoning powers of the Governor have wider aspects as compared to those of the President.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below :

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Option A is correct:** Article 161 deals with the Pardoning Power of the Governor. The Governor can grant pardons, reprieves, respites and remissions of punishments or suspend, remit and commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence against any law relating to a matter to which the executive power of the state extends. The pardoning powers of the governor are narrower than those of the President.

**Q.25** With reference to the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), consider the following statements:

1. These are set of statutory norms laid under the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
2. The MCC is operational from the date the election schedule is announced till the last day of polling.
3. Certain provisions of MCC can be enforced by invoking certain corresponding provisions in other statutes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** The model code refers to a set of norms laid down by the Election Commission of India, with the consensus of political parties. It is not statutory. The purpose of these guidelines is to regulate political parties and candidates prior to elections, to ensure free and fair elections.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The MCC is operational from the date that the election schedule is announced till the date that results are announced.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The MCC is not enforceable by law. However, certain provisions of the MCC may be enforced through invoking corresponding provisions in other statutes such as the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and Representation of the People Act, 1951.

**Q.26** With reference to the Government e-Market (GeM) Portal, consider the following statements:

1. It is the national public procurement portal that offers end to end solutions for all procurement needs of the government.

2. It is operated under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct:** The Government e-Market (GeM) Portal is the national public procurement portal that offers end to end solutions for all procurement needs of Central and State Government Departments, autonomous institutions, Public Sector Units (PSUs) and local bodies.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** It was launched in 2016 and operates under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

**Q.27** With reference to Ramjet aircraft engine, consider the following statements:

1. It is an air-breathing jet engine which uses the engine's forward motion to compress incoming air.

2. A ramjet-powered vehicle requires an oxidiser for assisted take-offs.

3. It can reach up to the speed of Mach 15.

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

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] In News:** Recently, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully carried out a flight demonstration based on Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.

**Statement 1 is correct:** Ramjet is a form of air-breathing jet engine that uses the engine's forward motion to compress incoming air without an axial compressor or a centrifugal compressor.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** A ramjet-powered vehicle requires an assisted take-off like a rocket assist to accelerate it to a speed where it begins to produce thrust. They do not need oxidisers and hence can carry bigger warheads.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** Ramjets work most efficiently at supersonic speeds around Mach 3 (three times the speed of sound) and can operate up to speeds of Mach 6. Scramjet powered vehicles are envisioned to operate at speeds up to at least Mach 15.

**Q.28** The Food Waste Index Report, recently seen in the news, is released by?

(a) Food and Agriculture Organization

(b) United Nations Environment Programme

(c) International Fund for Agricultural Development

(d) United Nations Development Programme

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Option B is correct:** The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) releases the Food Waste Index Report. The Food Waste Index presents the most comprehensive food waste data collection, analysis and modelling to date, generating a new estimate of global food waste. It seeks to support efforts to halve food waste by 2030.

**Q.29** With reference to Indian Polity, consider the following statements:

1. No-Confidence Motion can be moved in both the Houses of the Parliament.
2. The member of the House needs to give a reason for moving the no-confidence motion.

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

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct.** No-Confidence Motion can be moved only in the Lok Sabha and not Rajya Sabha. Rule 198 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Lok Sabha specifies the procedure for it. **Statement 2 is not correct.** If any member of the House feels that the government in power does not have a majority then he/she can move a no-confidence motion. The member need not give a reason for moving the no-confidence motion.

**Q.30** With reference to Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), consider the following statements:

1. It is a permanent intergovernmental organization of oil-exporting developing nations.
2. It is the outcome of the 1960 Riyadh Conference.
3. Ecuador has recently withdrawn from the organisation.
4. OPEC+ countries include non-OPEC oil-producing countries.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News:** OPEC+ has agreed not to increase supply in April as they await a more substantial recovery in demand amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Crude prices rose after the announcement and are up 33% this year.

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent group consisting of 14 of the world's major oil-exporting nations.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** OPEC was founded in 1960 Baghdad Conference with Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela as founding members to coordinate the petroleum policies of its members and to provide member states with technical and economic aid.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Ecuador has withdrawn its membership of OPEC. In January 2019, Qatar withdrew its membership from the organisation.

**Statement 4 is correct:** The OPEC plus countries are the non-OPEC countries which export crude oil. OPEC plus countries include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

**Q.31** Consider the following Statements

1. Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is the world's largest nesting beach for Olive Ridley Tur-tles.
2. Olive ridley turtles migrate from the Atlantic Ocean to India via Cape Horn.

3. Arribada is the phenomenon of mass nesting by turtles

Which of the given above statements are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 2 and 3
- (c) 1 and 3
- (d) All of above

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News: Odisha HC has registered a suo motto PIL to look into Olive Ridley Turtles Death near Gahirmatha Sanctuary.

**Statement 1 is correct.** Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is the world's largest nesting beach for Olive Ridley Turtles.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Olive ridley turtles migrate from the Pacific Ocean to Indian Coasts via SriLankan Coast.

**Statement 3 is correct.** Arribada is the phenomenon of mass nesting by turtles.

**Q.32** Consider the following statements regarding Malaria Free Status:

- 1. El-Salvador became the first nation to get this status from Central America.
- 2. Malaria Free Status is granted when no cases of malaria are reported for 5 years.
- 3. India was awarded this status in 2017.

Which of the above statements are not correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News: El Salvador has officially been declared malaria-free by the World Health Organization (WHO) after no reports of new indigenous cases of the disease since 2017.

**Statement 1 is correct.** The country is the first in Central America to achieve the WHO's malaria-free certification status and third in the Americas overall after Argentina in 2019 and Paraguay in 2018.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** It is a WHO certification for which countries can apply for when there have been no local cases for three consecutive years.

**Statement 3 is not correct.** Globally, 38 countries and territories have achieved malaria-free status. India is yet to attain Malaria free status.

**Q.33** 'AXIOMATIC ASYMPTOTE', recently seen in news regarding Digital Security is related to

- (a) Quantum Computing
- (b) Edge Computing
- (c) End to End Encryption
- (d) Domain Spoofing

[ANS] d

[SOL] In News: Red Echo (a trojan allegedly operated by Chinese firms like APT41, Barium, Winnti, Wicked Panda, and Wicked Spider) had targeted 10 vital nodes in India's power distribution system and two seaports.

**Option D is Correct.** The US firm, Recorded Future, detected this malware attack by tracking AXIOMATIC ASYMPTOTE servers being contacted by IP addresses linked to critical Indian systems. Domains spoofing was observed. Eg. 'ntpc-co[.]com' domain spoofed the original ntpc[.]co[.]in. AXIOMATICASYMPTOTE servers act as command and control centres for a malware known as ShadowPad.

**Q.34** International Union for Conservation of Nature (I.U.C.N.) listed Red sanders as

- (a) Endangered

- (b) Near Threatened
- (c) Vulnerable
- (d) Least Concern

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Option B is correct.** Red sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinus*) are known for their rich hue and therapeutic properties. It is declared Near Threatened in the IUCN Red List.

**Q.35** With reference to Whale shark, consider the following statements:

1. They are found in all the tropical oceans of the world.
2. They are listed as vulnerable under the IUCN Red List.
3. They feed on plankton and travel large distances to find food.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 and 3 are correct.** Whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) are gigantic but harmless sharks (family Rhincodontidae) that are the largest living fish. They are found in all the tropical oceans of the world.

They feed on plankton and travel large distances to find enough food to sustain their huge size, and to reproduce.

**Statement 2 is not correct.**

The whale shark has been listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

**Q.36** With reference to the Banking system, consider the following statements:

1. When the loans are written-down, the recovery procedure is totally stopped.
2. Writing off loans frees up capital for better liquidity in banks.

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

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News:** Banks wrote off ₹1.2 lakh cr. in the past 9 months of FY21 to improve liquidity as per RBI.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** When the loans are written-down, the recovery procedure is not stopped but the mortgaged assets are reevaluated for their worth and loan recovery is attempted accordingly. Write-down is the opposite of a write-up, and it will become a write-off if the entire value of the asset becomes worthless and is eliminated from the account altogether.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Writing off loans frees up capital for better liquidity in banks. The banks reserve some capital based on CRAR requirements mandated by RBI on basis of BASEL norms. When loans are written off, banks' accounts are cleared of non performing assets and the capital frees increasing liquidity (money to give loan). It never means the Bank will stop efforts for recovery. Bank will try to recover the loan and the recovered amount will go to a separate head.

**Q.37** Consider the following statements regarding Polavaram Dam Project:

1. Its reservoir spreads in parts of Chhattisgarh and Orissa.
2. It is situated on Krishna River.
3. It has been accorded National Status.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News:** Recently Andhra Pradesh government extended the completion date to 2022 kharif season. **Statement 1 is correct.** Polavaram Project is in Andhra Pradesh but its reservoir spreads in parts of Chhattisgarh and Orissa too.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** It is situated on Godavari River.

**Statement 3 is correct.** Polavaram Project is a multipurpose dam project. Irrigation, electricity generation and drinking water supply are other objectives of Polavaram Dam. The project was started in 2008, accorded national status in 2014 in the Andhra Pradesh Bifurcation Act.

**Q.38** Under which Article of the Indian Constitution, the ‘Summoning of the Parliament’ has been specified?

- (a) Article 84
- (b) Article 85
- (c) Article 86
- (d) Article 87

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Option B is correct.** The summoning of Parliament is specified in Article 85 of the Constitution and the power rests with the government. The decision is taken by the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs, which is formalised by the President, in whose name MPs are summoned.

**Q.39** Which of the following is declared as a Mixed Site under UNESCO's Heritage Sites List?

- (a) Nanda Devi
- (b) Western Ghats
- (c) Khangchendzonga National Park
- (d) Kaziranga National Park

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option C is correct.** The Khangchendzonga National Park, a lesser-known destination in Sikkim, has been declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. This is for the first time that any Indian destination has been put under the Mixed criteria, thus recognising the outstanding universal values for its both natural and cultural significance.

**Q.40** Consider the following statements:

1. Sattras are monastic institutions created as part of the 16th century Neo-Vaishnavite reformist movement.
2. Sattras promulgate Sankardeva’s unique “worship through art” approach.
3. Ekasarana Dharma was first propagated by Srimanta Sankardeva in South India.

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

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, it has been noticed that politicians have started going to different Sattras to seek blessings or extolling the virtues of Sankardeva, especially in the run-up to Assam Assembly elections.

**Statement 1 is correct.** Sattras are monastic institutions created as part of the 16th-century Neo-Vaishnavite reformist movement started by Vaishnavite saint-reformer Srimanta Sankardeva. As he travelled across Assam, he spread his teachings and propagated an egalitarian society.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Sattras promulgate Sankardeva's unique "worship through art" approach with music (borgeet), dance (sattriya) and theatre (bhauna).

**Statement 3 is not correct.** Sankardeva propagated a form of Bhakti called Eka-sharana-naam-dharma in Assam and not in South India.

**Q.41** With reference to the Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology, consider the following statements:

1. It is based on the Hydrogen Fuel Cell, thus AIP submarines do not require to go to the surface for charging.
2. It has been developed by the Department of Science and Technology.

Which of the following statements is/are not correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct.** The Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology is based on the Phosphoric Acid Fuel Cell. Thus, the AIP fitted submarine does not require to go to the surface for charging its batteries and this way it can remain underwater for long periods.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed and successfully completed the trial of the land-based prototype.

**Q.42** Hareli is the festival of which of the following states?

- (a) Uttar Pradesh
- (b) Chhattisgarh
- (c) Himachal Pradesh
- (d) Assam

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Option B is correct.** Hareli is an agrarian festival of Chhattisgarh. It is observed in Shravan month. Farmers celebrate this festival by worshipping farm equipment and livestock. Walking on bamboo known as Gedi is held during the period and children also participate in the gedi race.

**Q.43** The joint military exercise 'Dustlik-II', recently seen in the news, is held between India and -

- (a) Uzbekistan
- (b) Afghanistan
- (c) Saudi Arabia
- (d) Kazakhstan

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Option A is correct.** Exercise Dustlik-II is the joint military exercise between India and Uzbekistan. The first-ever edition was held in 2019 and the second edition is being held in March 2021. It focuses on people-centric intelligence-based surgical operations, incorporating technological advancements to minimize collateral damage.

**Q.44** Consider the following statements:

1. The 102nd (Constitutional) Amendment Act, 2018 introduced Articles 338B and Article 342A in the Constitution of India.
2. Article 342A empowers the States to specify the socially and educationally backward communities.

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

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) has decided to examine whether its Indira Sawhney case of 1992, which fixed the ceiling limit of 50% for reservation in government jobs and educational admissions, requires a re-look by a larger Bench.

**Statement 1 is correct.** The 102nd (Constitutional) Amendment Act, 2018 introduced Articles 338B and Article 342A in the Constitution.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Article 342A empowers the President to specify the socially and educationally backward communities in a State.

**Q.45** The bridge 'Maitri Setu' was recently seen in the news. It is built on which of the following rivers?

- (a) Muhuri River
- (b) Padma River
- (c) Feni River
- (d) Teesta River

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option C is correct.** Recently, the Prime Minister of India has inaugurated the 'Maitri Setu' Bridge between India and Bangladesh. The bridge has been built over the Feni river which is a trans-boundary river in Tripura, India. It will give a boost to trade and people to people movement between India and Bangladesh.

**Q.46** Consider the following statements.

1. India has the second largest number of tobacco users in the world.
2. Passive Smoking means using e-cigarettes or nicotine alternatives.

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

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News:** No Tobacco Day is celebrated on the second wednesday of March every year.

**Statement 1 is correct.** India has the second largest number of tobacco users (268 million or 28.6 percent of all adults in the country) in the world.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Passive Smoking: It is unintentional exposure to Cigarettes and Tobacco smoke due to proximity with Active Smoker. The passive smokers are also at similar high risk as active smokers. Hence, to avoid passive smoking, the demand to ban designated Smoking areas in Public Places was raised.

**Q.47** India's largest floating solar power plant is situated at

- (a) Rewa, Madhya Pradesh
- (b) Ramagundam, Telangana
- (c) Bhadla, Rajasthan
- (d) Pavagada, Karnataka

[ANS] b

[SOL] **In News:** NTPC is ready to commission India's largest floating solar power plant at Ramagundam in Telangana by May 2021.

**Option B is correct.** Bhadla Solar Park in Jodhpur district of Rajasthan is the world's biggest solar park in terms of power generation and second largest in terms of area but it is not floating. The largest floating solar park in India is Ramgundam.

**Q.48** With reference to Pre-Pack Mechanism, consider the following statements:

1. It is an agreement for the resolution of the debt of a distressed company.

2. It is aimed at quicker insolvency resolution with a timeline of 145 days for the submission of a resolution plan.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct.** A pre-pack is an agreement for the resolution of the debt of a distressed company through an agreement between secured creditors and investors instead of a public bidding process. **Statement 2 is not correct.** The pre-pack scheme is aimed at quicker insolvency resolution with a timeline of 90 days for the submission of a resolution plan and 30 days for approval by adjudicating authority.

**Q.49** Economic Freedom Index, recently seen in the news, is published by?

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) National Bureau of Economic Research
- (c) World Bank
- (d) Heritage Foundation

**[ANS] d**

**[SOL] Option D is correct.** The Economic Freedom Index is published by the US think-tank, The Heritage Foundation. The Index is an annual guide published to measure the progress made in advancing economic freedom which it claims brings greater prosperity. The 2021 Index ranks India 121st out of the total 184 countries covered.

**Q.50** Consider the following statements:

1. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is an apex organisation under the Ministry of Agriculture.
2. This body has the responsibility of carrying out the inspection of food products and installing laboratories for testing.

Which of the given statements is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority is an apex body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It is responsible for the export promotion of agricultural products.

**Statement 2 is correct:** This body has assigned certain functions for the promotion of exports related to agricultural produce like inspection of food products, establishing labs for inspection, improving packaging and improving the marketing of the products.

**Q.51** India is working on the Lunar Polar Exploration mission (LUPEX) with which of the following countries?

- (a) Japan
- (b) Singapore
- (c) USA
- (d) France

**[ANS] a**

**[SOL] In News:** India and Japan are working on a joint lunar polar exploration (LUPEX) mission that aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's south pole around 2024.

**Option A is correct.** The Lupex mission is being planned to demonstrate new surface exploration technologies related to vehicular transport and lunar night survival for sustainable lunar exploration in the polar regions — the south pole of the Moon in this case. The mission will use a lunar features-matching algorithm along with navigational equipment from JAXA's Smart Lander for Investigating the Moon mission, and the rover will carry instruments from both the space agencies.

**Q.52** Which of the following best defines the Autocratic Form of Government?

- (a) Rule of a group of Elites.
- (b) Hereditary Ruler.
- (c) Unrestricted Ruler.
- (d) Oppressive Ruler.

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News:** VDem, a Sweden Based firm has released a report grading the quality of liberal democracies across the world. According to this data, India is an Elected Autocracy.

**Option C is correct.** When a group of Elites rule, it is Oligarchy or Aristocracy (Although both have minor differences). Hereditary Rulers are monarchs. Oppressive Ruler is the Dictator and rule is called Dictatorship. The autocracy is defined by unrestricted powers in the hands of one person.

**Q.53** With reference to Gaganyaan Mission, consider the following statements:

- 1. It aims to demonstrate human space flight capability to Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- 2. Reusable Launch Vehicle-Technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD) will be used as the launch vehicle.

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

[SOL] **In News:** In a recent reply in Lok Sabha, it has been highlighted that the four Indian astronaut candidates, under flight training in Russia for the Gaganyaan Mission, are nearing completion.

**Statement 1 is correct.** Under ISRO's Gaganyaan Mission, two uncrewed missions would be undertaken prior to the manned mission. It has the objective of demonstrating human space flight capability to Low Earth Orbit (LEO) with three crew members by 2022 when India completes 75 years of Independence.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Its launch vehicle will be ISRO's heavy-lift launch vehicle GSLV MkIII, where the high thrust solid propellant strap-on boosters S200 will play an important role.

**Q.54** With reference to the Arbitration Council of India (ACI), consider the following statements:

- 1. Its Chairperson should be a Judge of the Supreme Court only.
- 2. It maintains a depository of arbitral awards made in both India and abroad.

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

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct.** The Amendment Act 2019 seeks to insert a new Part 1A to the Act of 1996 for the establishment and incorporation of an independent body namely, the Arbitration Council of India (ACI) for the purpose of grading of arbitral institutions and accreditation of arbitrators, etc. The ACI will consist of a Chairperson who is either: (i) a Judge of the Supreme Court; or (ii) a Judge of a High Court; or (iii) Chief Justice of a High Court; or (iv) an eminent person with expert knowledge in the conduct of the arbitration.

**Statement 2 is correct.**

## Functions

- Framing policies for grading arbitral institutions and accrediting arbitrators
- Making policies for the establishment, operation and maintenance of uniform professional standards for all alternate dispute redressal matters
- Maintaining a depository of arbitral awards (judgments) made in India and abroad.

**Q.55** Consider the following statements:

1. The Right to Education Act (RTE), 2009 aims to provide free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 years of age under Article 21A.
2. Article 21A of the Indian Constitution was inserted by the Constitution (Sixty-eighth Amendment) Act. Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct.** The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or RTE is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4th August 2009. It describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution. Article 21-A and the RTE Act came into effect on 1st April 2010.

**Q.56** Consider the following statements:

1. Menstruation is the cyclic discharge of blood and mucus.
2. Ovaries release the egg on the first day of menstruation cycle.
3. Premenstrual Stress (PMS) syndrome is sufficient ground to plead defence of insanity in a criminal appeal.

Which of the statements mentioned above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News:** Gujarat High Court recently proposed 9 guidelines that the state should follow to end menstruation taboo and discrimination related to it.

**Statement 1 is correct.** Menstruation, also known as period, is normal vaginal bleeding that occurs as part of a woman's monthly cycle.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Ovaries release the egg between the 12th to 17th day of the menstruation cycle.

**Statement 3 is correct.** Rajasthan High Court in 2018 had deemed premenstrual stress (PMS) syndrome as a sufficient ground to plead defense of insanity in a criminal appeal.

**Q.57** '2001 FO32', sometimes seen in the news, is a?

- (a) Giant Red Star
- (b) Asteroid
- (c) Supernova
- (d) Blackhole

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Option B is correct:** The "2001 FO32" is the largest asteroid predicted to pass by Earth in 2021 and it will be at its closest on 21st March 2021. Apart from the stars, planets and satellites, there are

numerous tiny bodies which also move around the sun. These bodies are called asteroids. They are found between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

**Q.58** With reference to the Additional Tier-1 bonds (AT-1 Bonds), consider the following statements:

1. They are unsecured, perpetual bonds that banks issue to shore up their core capital base to meet the Basel-III norms.
2. The interest rate on these bonds is lower than fixed deposit rates.

Which of the statements mentioned above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct.** The Additional Tier-1 bonds (AT-1 Bonds) are a type of unsecured, perpetual bonds that banks issue to shore up their core capital base to meet the Basel-III norms.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** AT-1 bonds are annual coupon-bearing bonds that have no fixed maturity date. The interest rate on these bonds is higher than fixed deposit rates which make them an attractive investment option.

**Q.59** With reference to Benzene, consider the following statements:

1. It is a colourless or light-yellow chemical that is liquid at room temperature.
2. Benzene is formed naturally as well as anthropogenically.
3. If released in soil, it breaks down and contaminates the groundwater.

Which of the statements mentioned above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL] **Statement 1 is correct.** Benzene is a colourless or light-yellow chemical that is liquid at room temperature. It has a sweet odour and is highly flammable.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Benzene is formed from both natural processes and human activities. It can occur naturally in the environment. It is emitted into the atmosphere by erupting volcanoes, from the smoke of forest fires and some plants and animals. Anthropogenic factors include being released into the atmosphere by buses, cars, motorbikes, trains and aeroplanes. It can be emitted in exhaust fumes, and by evaporation of fuels from machinery, motors and petrol tanks.

**Statement 3 is correct.** Benzene can quickly evaporate into the air and be carried over long distances. If it is released into soil it can break down quickly and may contaminate groundwater.

**Q.60** With reference to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), consider the following statement?

1. It is released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and shows monthly growth rates of various industry groups.
2. The eight core industries comprise more than 70 per cent of the weight of items included in the IIP.

Which of the statements mentioned above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct.** The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. It shows the growth rates in different industry groups of the economy in a stipulated period of time.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the IIP. IIP is a composite indicator that measures the growth rate of industry groups classified under Broad sectors like mining, manufacturing, electricity, etc. and Use-based sectors like basic goods, capital goods and intermediate goods.

**Q.61** With reference to the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, consider the following statements:

1. It declared that the religious character of a place of worship shall continue to be the same as it was on 15th August 1947.

2. Places of worship which are archaeological sites, are exempted from the provisions of this Act.

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

**Answer: C**

**In News:** Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) has asked the Centre to respond to a plea challenging the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.

**Statement 1 is correct.** Sections 3 and 4 of the Act declared that the religious character of a place of worship shall continue to be the same as it was on 15th August 1947 and that no person shall convert any place of worship of any religious denomination into one of a different denomination or section.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Any place of worship that is an ancient and historical monument or an archaeological site, or is covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 stand exempted from the provision of the Act. Apart from these, Ram Janma Bhumi Babri Masjid, already settled/disposed of suits, and places which had been converted before the Act have been exempted too.

**Q.62** Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, recently seen in the news, is located in?

(a) Kerala

(b) Tamil Nadu

(c) Karnataka

(d) Telangana

**Answer: A**

**In News:** The gregarious flowering of bamboo inside the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS) poses a potential threat to wildlife in the Nilgiri biosphere, a major tiger and elephant habitat.

**Option A is correct.** The Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Kerala. It was set up in 1973 and is ranked 8th in the list of the World's Biodiversity Hotspots. The sanctuary is a component of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (5,520 km<sup>2</sup>) and of the Elephant Reserve No. 7 of South India.

**Q.63** With reference to the National Population Register (NPR), consider the following statements:

1. Under NPR, it is mandatory to register every resident of India including both India and foreigners.

2. Both the National Population Register (NRC) and Census are legally backed by the Census Act, 1948 and Citizenship Act, 1955.

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

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: B**

**In News:** The Centre will allow residents to fill columns in the National Population Register (NPR) forms on their own through online mode.

**Statement 1 correct:** National Population Register (NRC) is a register of usual residents of the country. It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR. It includes both Indian citizens as well as a foreign citizen.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** While the census is legally backed by the Census Act, 1948, the NPR is a mechanism outlined in a set of rules framed under the Citizenship Act, 1955.

Section 14A was inserted in the Citizenship Act, 1955, in 2004, providing for the compulsory registration of every citizen of India and the issue of a “national identity card” to him or her. It also said the Central government may maintain a “National Register of Indian Citizens”.

**Q.64** With reference to the Index Monitoring Cell (IMC), consider the following statements:

1. It was set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
2. It has the objective to improve India’s ranking in all Global Indices.

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

**Answer: A**

**Statement 1 is correct.** The Index Monitoring Cell (IMC) was set up by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry in 2020.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Its task is to improve India’s ranking in the World Press Freedom Index and to evolve an objective yardstick to gauge media freedom. It will also put in place a mechanism for States to come up with their own rankings of press freedom.

**Q.65** Which of the following is/are the freshwater lakes?

1. Kolleru lake
2. Pulicat lake
3. Loktak lake
4. Tsomoriri lake
5. Wular lake

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Answer: C**

**Statement 1 is correct:** Kolleru lake is a freshwater lake in Andhra Pradesh.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Pulicat lake is a saline and lagoon lake located at the border of Andhrapradesh and Tamilnadu.

**Statement 3 is correct:** Loktak lake is freshwater lake having inland drainage in Manipur.

**Statement 4 is not correct:** Tsomoriri is a salty lake of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Statement 5 is correct:** Wular Lake is a freshwater lake and it was created due to tectonic activities. It is located in Jammu and Kashmir.

**Q.66** The word ‘Martian Blueberries’ is recently mentioned in media in reference to

- (a) Fungus called Black mold
- (b) Hydrous Sulphate found in Kutch
- (c) Mediterranean Fruits

(d) Haematite Concretion

Answer: D

**In News:** Analogue of Martian Blueberries has been found in Haematite Congregations in Jhuran Formations of Kutch.

**Option D is correct.** In 2004, 'Opportunity' rover found several small spheres on the planet, informally named Martian blueberries. Mineral spectrometry revealed it as iron oxide compounds called haematites. Now, Jhuran Formations, Hydrous Sulphate of Kutch are also found to be similar to Martian Landforms (Martian Analogue). Black Mold, a microfungi was recently found to be capable of surviving in the Martian Atmosphere.

**Q.67** Consider the following statements

1. Rakhigarhi comprises two ancient sites of Rakhi-Khas and Rakhi-Shahpur.
2. It was located on the right bank of Palaeo-channel of Drishadvati.
3. Rakhigarhi is the largest Harappan site in the Indian subcontinent.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: **D**

**In News:** Rakhigarhi was declared as one of 5 iconic archaeological sites located across five states by the Union Budget of 2020.

**Statement 1 is correct.** The ancient sites of Rakhi-Khas and Rakhi-Shahpur are collectively known as Rakhigarhi.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Both of sites are located in Haryana on the right bank of the now dried up Palaeo-channel of Drishadvati. 7 mounds are located here and depict sequential development of Harappan culture in the now dried up Saraswati basin.

**Statement 3 is correct.** As per 2014 Archeological Survey of India findings, Rakhigarhi is the **largest Harappan Site**. Earlier Mohenjodaro was considered the largest.

**Q.68** Recently, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) launched 'Project RE-HAB', it is associated with which of the following?

- (a) Promotion of Khadi industries
- (b) Reducing Elephant-Human Conflicts
- (c) Providing Skills among the Women Entrepreneurs
- (d) Promotion of Minor Forest Produce

Answer: **B**

**In News:** Khadi and Village Industries Commission(KVIC) has launched a unique project called Project REHAB (Reducing Elephant – Human Attacks using Bees).

**Option B is correct:** Under this Project, bee boxes will be used as a fence to prevent the attack of elephants. The bee boxes are set up in the passageways of human-elephant conflict zones to block the entrance of elephants to human habitations. The boxes are connected with a string so that when elephants attempt to pass through, a tug causes the bees to swarm the elephant herds and dissuade them from progressing further. The total cost of the project is ₹15 lakh and Project RE-HAB is a sub-mission of KVIC's National Honey Mission.

**Q.69** Consider the following statements:

1. Saudi Arabia is the largest importer of arms in the world.
2. During 2016-20, Russia is the largest exporter of arms in the world.
3. India's arms imports increased by one-third between 2011-15 and 2016-20.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

**In News:** The Sweden-based think-tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released its annual report recently.

**Option B is correct:** According to the report, the five largest arms exporters in 2016-20 were the US, Russia, France, Germany and China, while the top importers were Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia and China. Saudi Arabia topped the list of arms importers (11%), followed by India, Egypt (5.8%), Australia (5.1%) and China (4.7%). India's arms imports decreased by 33% between 2011-15 and 2016-20. The drop in Indian arms imports seemed to have been the result of complex procurement processes combined with an attempt to reduce its dependence on Russian arms. In the last few years, India has taken a series of measures to boost the domestic defence industry to reduce dependence on imported military platforms and hardware.

**Q.70** With reference to the Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991, consider the following statements:

1. It inserted Article 239AA in the Constitution of India.
2. It empowers the Legislative Assembly of Delhi to make laws in all matters with the only exception of police.

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

Answer: A

**In News:** Recently, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has introduced the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in Lok Sabha, which gives more discretionary powers to the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) of Delhi.

**Statement 1 is correct.** The Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 inserted the Article 239AA in the Constitution of India. **Article 239AA:** The Council of Ministers will aid and advise the L-G in matters where the Legislative Assembly has the power to make laws except where the L-G can exercise discretion.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** As per the Act, the Legislative Assembly of Delhi has the power to make laws in all matters except public order, police and land.

**Q.71** The term “Rule Curve” was recently mentioned in the news, it is associated with

- (a) Naxal Corridor
- (b) Dam Reservoir Management
- (c) Road Alignment
- (d) Perseverance Landing

Answer: B

**In News:** The Supreme Court made the Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary “personally responsible” for developing **Rule Curve** for 123 years old Mullaperiyar Dam.

\* “Appropriate action” will be taken on failure to give information on the rule curve for Mullaperiyar dam to the Supreme Court-appointed Supervisory Committee.

**Option B is correct.** The rule curve divides the storage volume of a reservoir in zones where different strategies for demand supply will be applied. Rule curve in a dam decides the fluctuating storage levels in a reservoir. The gate opening schedule of a dam is based on the rule curve. It is part of the “core safety” mechanism in a dam. The limits of each zone may vary seasonally or remain constant during the whole year. Such tools may be used for flood control or water conservation during long dry spells.

**Q.72** With reference to Great Indian Bustard (GIB), consider the following statements.

1. It is endemic to India only.
2. It is a flightless and omnivorous bird.
3. IUCN has classified it as 'critically endangered'.

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

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

Answer: C

**In News:** Supreme Court has sought reports on undergrounding low voltage power cables and installing bird diverters.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** GIB is endemic to **Indian Subcontinent**. They are also found in Pakistan.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** It is one of **heaviest flying birds**. It is heavy but it can fly. It is omnivorous too as it eats insects and crops (berries).

**Statement 3 is correct.** IUCN has classified it as 'critically endangered'. Its number is reducing at a very rate and as per WII report, its number might be less than 150 at present.

**Q.73** With reference to Rajya Sabha, consider the following statements:

1. Rajya Sabha has 250 members, of which 12 members shall be nominated by the President.
2. One-third of its members retire every third year.
3. Nominated members of Rajya Sabha can vote in the election of the President.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: C

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Constitution provides that the Rajya Sabha shall consist of 250 members, of which 12 members shall be nominated by the President from amongst persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as literature, science, art and social service; and not more than 238 representatives of the States and of the Union Territories.

**Statement 2 and 3 are not correct:** The Rajya Sabha is not subject to dissolution; one-third of its members retire every second year. Nominated members have the same rights and privileges as elected members, with one notable difference — they cannot vote in the election of the President.

**Q.74** With reference to eSanjeevani, consider the following statement:

1. It has been launched by the Ministry of AYUSH.
2. eSanjeevani (AB-HWC) telemedicine platform provides outpatient services to the citizens in the confines of their homes.
3. eSanjeevani OPD is based on the hub-and-spoke model.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

Answer: D

**In News:** eSanjeevani is operational in 31 States and UTs and daily over 35,000 patients across the country are using this innovative digital medium.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** It has been launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Doctor to doctor (eSanjeevani AB-HWC) telemedicine platform based on the hub-and-spoke model.

**Statement 3 is not correct.** Patient to doctor telemedicine platform (eSanjeevani OPD) which provides outpatient services to the citizens in the confines of their homes.

**Q.75** With reference to PM Kisan Mandhan Yojana, consider the following statements:

1. Under it, a monthly pension of Rs. 5000 is given to all farmers on attaining the age of 60 years.
2. It aims to cover 3 crore beneficiaries by 2021-22.

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

**Answer: B**

**In News:** To double farm incomes, the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare must seek more funds, says House panel.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** The PM Kisan Mandhan Yojana is a voluntary and contributory scheme. Under it, a monthly pension of Rs.3000 is given to Small and Marginal farmers on attaining the age of 60 years.

**Statement 2 is correct.** When the scheme was launched in 2019, it aimed to cover five crore beneficiaries by 2021-22. The target was later downgraded to three crore.

**Q.76** Consider the following pairs:

**Dance Form : Origin**

1. Bharatanatyam : Tamil Nadu
2. Kuchipudi : Karnataka
3. Mohiniyattam : Kerala
4. Sattriya : Andhra Pradesh

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

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

**Answer: B**

**Explanation**

**In News:** Recently, the Kathakali actor Guru Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair has passed away in Kozhikode, Kerala. He popularised the classical dance, Kathakali in the Kerala state.

**Option B is correct as Pairs 1 and 3 are correctly matched.**

- Bharatanatyam: Tamil Nadu
- Kuchipudi: Andhra Pradesh
- Mohiniyattam: Kerala
- Sattriya: Assam

**Q.77** Which of the following department instituted SERB Women Excellence Award?

- (a) Department of Science and Technology
- (b) Department of Higher Education
- (c) Department of Social Justice and Empowerment
- (d) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

**Answer: A**

**Explanation**

**Option A is correct.** The SERB Women Excellence Award was instituted by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), Department of Science and Technology (DST). It recognises and rewards outstanding research achievements of young women scientists in frontier areas of Science and Engineering.

**Q.78** With reference to the Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV), consider the following statements:

1. It is a mosquito-borne flavivirus.
2. The first case of JE disease was documented in 1871 in Japan.

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

**Statement 1 is correct.** The Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV) is a mosquito-borne flavivirus and belongs to the same genus as dengue, yellow fever and West Nile viruses. It is the most important cause of viral encephalitis in Asia.

**Statement 2 is correct.** The first case of JEV was documented in 1871 in Japan.

**Q.79** This Tiger Reserve lies in western UP, south of the Indo-Nepal Border while River Sharada and Khakra mark the southern boundary. It was declared as the 45th Tiger Reserve in 2008. It was awarded the first Tx2, 2020 award for doubling tiger population before stipulated time.

Which Tiger Reserve is being referred to in the above description?

- (a) Raja ji Tiger Reserve
- (b) Pilibhit Tiger Reserve
- (c) Valmiki Tiger Reserve
- (d) Buxa Tiger Reserve

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

**In News:** In Pilibhit, a tigress carcass was found and her 4 cubs are missing.

**Option B is correct.** The above description is about Pilibhit Tiger Reserve. It lies in western UP, south of the Indo-Nepal Border while River Sharada and Khakra mark the southern boundary. It was declared as the 45th Tiger Reserve in 2008. It was awarded the first Tx2, 2020 award for doubling tiger population before stipulated time.

**Q.80** Which of the following Air Defence systems are correctly matched with their developing country?

1. THAAD: South Korea
2. Iron Beam: Israel
3. Advanced Air Defence: India
4. S400: Russia

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below

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

**Answer: C**

**Explanation:**

**In News:** Indo Russia S400 deal may face fresh challenge under US CAATSA Rule.

**Option C is correct:** THAAD Air Defence System is of US deployed in South Korea. Iron Dome and Iron Beam both have been developed by Israel. Prithvi Air Defence and Advanced Air Defence are defence systems of India. S400 is from Russia.

**Q.81** Dhubri Phulbari bridge will be constructed on which of the following rivers?

- A. Brahmaputra
- B. Ganga
- C. Indus
- D. Krishna

Answer. A

**Explanation**

Dhubri Phulbari bridge -

Foundation stone for 19-km-long four-lane Dhubri Phulbari bridge will be laid down over the Brahmaputra. It will be India's longest bridge over a river that connects Dhubri in Assam and Phulbari in Meghalaya, to be constructed at the cost of Rs 5,000 crore.

**Q.82** With reference to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), consider the following statements:

1. It is a global organisation of national parliaments, established in 1889.
2. It is financed by the United Nations Organisations.
3. India is not a member of the IPU.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

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

Answer: B

**Explanation**

**Statement 1 is correct.** The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the global organisation of national parliaments. It began in 1889 as a small group of parliamentarians, dedicated to promoting peace through parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** It is financed primarily by its Members out of public funds.

**Statement 3 is not correct.** It has a total 179 Member Parliaments and 13 Associate Members as of now and India is a member.

**Q.83** With reference to the Nordic countries, consider the following statements:

1. These are located in the eastern Europe along the Norwegian Sea.
2. These did not support India for its membership of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG).

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

Answer: D

**Explanation**

**Statement 1 is not correct.** The Nordic region is located in northern Europe along the Norwegian Sea and consists of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland, as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** These countries supported India for its membership of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) and a seat at the UNSC as a permanent member. The NSG support from the Nordic states is particularly significant because there was a time when these states had adopted a strong moralistic approach to India's nuclear programme.

**Q.84** In the context of which of the following do some scientists suggest the use of Diatom Test?

- (a) Weather forecasting in drought prone areas
- (b) Diagnosing death caused by drowning.
- (c) Checking adverse effects of solar wind on the Earth
- (d) Checking the global warming

Answer: B

Explanation:

**Option B is correct:** Diagnosis of death by drowning is deemed as a difficult task in forensic pathology. A number of tests have been developed to confirm the cause of such deaths with the diatom test emerging as one of the most important tests. Diatom analysis is considered positive only when the number of diatoms recovered from the body is more than a minimal established limit. Forensic experts also correlate the diatoms extracted from the body and the samples obtained from the water body where the drowning took place to ascertain the place of drowning.

**Q.85** With reference to the SAAMAR Campaign, consider the following statements:

- 1. It was announced by Madhya Pradesh state to tackle malnutrition.
- 2. It aims to target Primarily Vulnerable Tribal Groups 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

Answer: D

**Explanation**

**Both the statements are not correct:** The Jharkhand government announced the launch of the SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction) campaign to tackle malnutrition in the state. The campaign aims to identify anaemic women and malnourished children and converge various departments to effectively deal with the problem in a state where malnutrition has been a major problem. The campaign also tries to target Primarily Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

**Q.86** With reference to Lake Baikal, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is located in the north-west Siberia .
- 2. It has been recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- 3. Baikal-GVD, an underwater space telescope, has been deployed on it to search for neutrinos.

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

Answer: B

**Explanation**

**Statement 1 is not correct.** Lake Baikal is situated in south-east Siberia, the 3.15-million-ha lake is the oldest (25 million years) and deepest (1,700 m) lake in the world. It is a freshwater lake and contains 20% of the world's total unfrozen freshwater reserve.

**Statement 2 is correct.** In 1996, it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

**Statement 3 is correct.** Russian scientists have deployed Baikal-GVD, a giant underwater space telescope in Lake Baikal. It will search for neutrinos, which are nearly massless subatomic particles with no electrical charge.

**Q.87** With reference to Lok Adalats, consider the following statements:

1. These were established under the Legal Services Authority Act, 1987.
2. Their orders are deemed to be a decree of a civil court and are appealable in a court of law.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Answer: A**

**Explanation**

**In News:** Recently, a Supreme Court (SC) judge has outlined a three-pronged approach, with a special focus on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), to reverse the nearly 4 crore pendency in courts across the country.

**Statement 1 is correct.** Lok Adalats are one of the various modes of ADR and were established under the Legal Services Authority Act, 1987. These are voluntary agencies and are an interesting feature of the Indian legal system.

**Statement 2 is not correct.** Their orders are final and shall be deemed to be a decree of a civil court and shall be binding on the parties to the dispute. Also, its order is not appealable in a court of law.

**Q.88** The Devendrakula Vellalar community, recently seen in the news, belongs to which of the states?

- (a) Tamil Nadu
- (b) Karnataka
- (c) Andhra Pradesh
- (d) Maharashtra

**Answer: A**

**Explanation**

**In News:** Recently, Lok Sabha passed the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

**Option A is correct.** The Devendrakula Vellalar community is from Tamil Nadu. In ancient times, people from this community were warriors and agriculturists. They find mention in Tamil Sangam literature. They are also called Pallars in Tamil Nadu and are listed under the Scheduled Caste category.

**Q.89** With reference to the Sinatra Doctrine, consider the following statements:

1. It is the policy of non-interference in the internal policies of other countries.
2. Its implementation and popularisation was part of new political thinking by Mikhail Gorbachev.

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**

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct.** Sinatra Doctrine can be summed up as a policy of non-interference in internal policies of other countries and let them manage the affairs their way. The phrase was coined on 25th October 1989 by the Soviet foreign ministry spokesman, Gennadi Gerasimov.

**Statement 2 is correct.** The implementation of the doctrine was part of new political thinking by Mikhail Gorbachev. It replaced the Brezhnev doctrine, which was put forth by Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in 1968, and called on the Soviet Union to intervene, including militarily, in countries where a socialist rule was under threat.

**Q.90** With reference to Gram Ujala Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It provides LPG connections to women of Below Poverty Line families.

2. Under the UN Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), it claims and is financed entirely through carbon credits.

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

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, the Government has launched the Gram Ujala scheme from Arrah, Bihar.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** Under the scheme, high-quality and energy-efficient LED bulbs will be given for Rs. 10 per piece, which are offered by Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL).

**Statement 2 is correct.** Under the United Nations' Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), the scheme will claim carbon credits. It will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such programme in India.

**Q.91** With reference to Helium, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is the lightest element on the Earth.
- 2. It is the only element that cannot be solidified by sufficient cooling at normal atmospheric pressure.

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

[SOL] **In News:** The US is planning to cut off the export of helium from 2021 and the Indian industry stands to lose out heavily.

**Statement 1 is not correct.** Helium (He) is a chemical element, inert gas of Group 18 (noble gases) of the periodic table. It is the second lightest element after hydrogen.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Helium is the only element that cannot be solidified by sufficient cooling at normal atmospheric pressure and it is necessary to apply pressure of 25 atmospheres at a temperature of 1 K ( $-272^{\circ}\text{C}$ , or  $-458^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) to convert it to its solid form.

**Q.92** Namghar, recently seen in the news, is a?

- (a) Funeral house
- (b) Dormitory
- (c) Place for recitation and prayer
- (d) Observatory

[ANS] c

[SOL] **Option C is correct.** Namghar is an important cultural and religious institution in Assam. These are houses of recitation and prayer. These were initiated by Srimanta Sankardeva, the 15th-century social reformer and religious preacher.

**Q.93** Which of the following flagship initiatives are launched by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)?

- 1. Project REHAB
- 2. Project DigniTEA
- 3. Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

[ANS] d

[SOL] **In News:** A pilot project RE-HAB (Reducing Elephant-Human Attacks using Bees) has been launched in Karnataka which entails installing bee boxes along the periphery of the forest and the villages to mitigate human-elephant conflict.

**Option D is correct:** All the initiatives are launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC). Khadi and the village Industries Commission have launched a unique project called project REHAB (Reducing Elephant Human Attack Using Bees). It is intended to create “bee fences” to thwart elephant attacks in human habitations using honeybees. It is a sub-mission of KVIC’s National Honey Mission.

**Project DigniTEA** is an innovative project of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC). Under the project, the cycle-mounted tea/coffee selling units have been distributed to 6 unemployed local youths. And, **Kumbhar Sashaktikaran Program** is an initiative of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission(KVIC) for the empowerment of the potters community in the remotest of locations in the country. The program reaches out to the potters in U.P., M.P., Maharashtra, J&K, Haryana, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Assam, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Telangana and Bihar.

**Q.94** With reference to the Inter-State Council, consider the following statements:

1. It is a permanent constitutional body established under Article 263 of the Indian constitution.
2. It is established by the President of India.
3. The Union Home Minister is the chairman of the council.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 2 only

(d) 2 and 3 only

[ANS] c

[SOL]

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The Inter-State Council is a non-permanent constitutional body set up by a presidential order on the basis of provisions in Article 263 of the Constitution of India. The Council is formed to discuss or investigate policies, subjects of common interest, and disputes among states.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The Inter-State Council was set up in 1990 following the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission. Article 263 empowers the President of India to set up an inter-state council to deal with federal issues.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The council is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes six Union ministers and all chief ministers as members.

**Q.95** With reference to the ‘Candida Auris’, recently mentioned in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is a type of superbug that presents a serious global threat to human health.
2. It was identified in Andaman & Nicobar islands for the first time.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 and 2

[ANS] c

[SOL]

**Both the statements are correct:** According to the study carried out by the Vallabhbbhai Patel Chest Institute, Delhi, a deadly superbug identified for the first time in the coast of South Andaman district in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Superbugs are the microorganisms that have become resistant to battery of

antibiotic drugs after their prolonged exposure to antibiotics. *Candida Auris* is a type of fungus that belongs to the Superbug *Candida Auris* of the *Metschnikowia* Ceeae family of the order *Saccharomycetales*. Origin: Earlier, it was first identified in 2009 in a patient in Japan. The closest known relative of *C.auris* is *C. haemulonii*, which was first discovered in 1962 from the gut of a blue-striped grunt fish, the skin of dolphins, and the seawater off the coast of Portugal. It is a multidrug resistant pathogen that presents “a serious global threat to human health.

**Q.96** With reference to the National Nutrition Mission, which of the following statement(s) is/are not correct?

1. The main focus of the mission is to improve the nutritional outcomes of children and adolescents only.
2. It aims at removing hidden hunger from the country by 2025.
3. It is implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD).

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] a

[SOL]

**Statement 1 and 2 are not correct:** It is the government’s flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Aim: To reduce stunting and wasting by 2% per year (total 6% until 2022) among children and anaemia by 3% per year (total 9% until 2022) among children, adolescent girls and pregnant women and lactating mothers.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) is the nodal ministry for implementation.

**Q.97** With reference to the Gandhi Peace Prize Award, consider the following statements:

1. The Ministry of Culture confers it for social, economic and political transformation through non-violence.
2. It is open to all people regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or gender.
3. It can be awarded posthumously as well.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL]

**Statement 1 is correct:** The Gandhi Peace Prize Award was instituted in the year 1995. It is given by the Ministry of Culture for social, economic and political transformation through non-violence.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Given to individuals, associations, institutions or organizations who have worked selflessly for peace, non-violence and amelioration of human sufferings particular to the less-privileged section of society contributing towards social justice and harmony. It is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or gender.

**Statement 3 is correct:** It can be awarded posthumously as well. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Bangladesh) and Qaboos bin Said Al Said (Sultan of Oman) would be awarded for 2020 and 2019 respectively. This is the first time that the prize is being awarded posthumously.

**Q.98** It is a tribe from the highlands of the Bastar region in southern Chhattisgarh. It is known for its youth dormitories in which the unmarried of both sexes lead a highly organized social life. People have the custom of making stone pillars for the dead and the women still practice the ancient barter system to exchange forest products. Which tribe is this?

- (a) Bhil
- (b) Angami
- (c) Muria
- (d) Khasi

[ANS] c

[SOL]

**Option C is correct:** Muria is a Gond tribe from the highlands of the Bastar region in southern Chhattisgarh. They are known for their youth dormitories (ghotul) in which the unmarried of both sexes lead a highly organized social life and receive training in civic duties and in sexual practices. They have the custom of making dead pillars (gudi) in South Bastar, where people are buried with a wide and sharp 6-7 feet high stone placed on the grave. Muria tribal women participate in barter systems to exchange forest products like mahua flower, tamarind and other minor forest products.

**Q.99** With reference to ‘AT1 bonds’, recently in the news, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. These are secured bonds that have perpetual tenure.
2. The interest rate on these bonds is lower than fixed deposit rates
3. They have a call option, which can be used by the banks to buy these bonds back from investors.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Answer. C**

**Explanation**

**Statement 1 and 2 are not correct:** These are unsecured bonds that have perpetual tenure — or no maturity date. The interest rate on these bonds is higher than fixed deposit rates which make them an attractive investment option.

**Statement 3 is correct:** They have a call option, which can be used by the banks to buy these bonds back from investors.

**Q.100** Which of the following Tiger Reserve falls under the Ken-Betwa interlinking Project?

- (a) Kanha Tiger Reserve
- (b) Pench Tiger Reserve
- (c) Panna Tiger Reserve
- (d) Satpura Tiger Reserve

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

**In News:** The governments of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh signed a memorandum of agreement with the Union Jal Shakti Ministry to implement the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project.

**Option C is correct:** The Ken-Betwa river interlinking project has been mired in several hurdles like sharing of waters, deforesting & submergence of Panna Tiger Reserve. The Panna tiger reserve is situated in the Vindhya mountain range in the northern part of Madhya Pradesh. Ken river (a tributary of the Yamuna River) flows through the reserve.

**Q.101** Periodic Labour Force Surveys, recently in the news, are released by?

- (a) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- (b) Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
- (c) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- (d) Ministry of Labour and Employment

**Answer: B**

### Explanation

**Option B is correct.** Periodic Labour Force Surveys (PLFSs) are India's first computer-based surveys. These were launched by the National Statistical Office (NSO) in 2017 and are released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. These aim to estimate the key employment and unemployment indicators (Worker Population Ratio, Unemployment Rate, etc.) in the short time interval of three months for the urban areas only in the Current Weekly Status (CWS) and also in both usual status and CWS in both rural and urban areas annually.

**Q.102** With reference to the World Happiness Report, consider the following statements:

1. It is released by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.
  2. Healthy life expectancy at birth and perceptions of corruption are measured while calculating it.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Answer: C**

### Explanation

**Statement 1 is correct.** The World Happiness Report 2021 is released by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

**Statement 2 is correct.** Six dimensions are considered while calculating world happiness in the report. These are GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity), social support, healthy life expectancy at birth, freedom to make life choices, generosity and perceptions of corruption.

**Q.103** People with this medical condition experience distortions of the sense of smell. What is the condition called?

- (a) Sinusitis
- (b) Esotropia
- (c) Senopia
- (d) Parosmia

**Answer: D**

### Explanation

**Option D is correct.** Parosmia is a medical term used to describe a condition in which affected individuals experience "distortions of the sense of smell". A person with parosmia is able to detect certain odours, but they might experience the smell of certain things as different and often unpleasant.

**Sinusitis** is an inflammation of the lining inside the sinuses which can be acute or chronic. When the sinuses become blocked and fill with fluid, germs can grow and cause symptoms such as headache and nasal yellowish secretions.

**Esotropia** is a form of strabismus in which one or both eyes turn inward. The condition can be constantly present, or occur intermittently, and can give the affected individual a "cross-eyed" appearance.

**Senopia** is the improvement of near vision sometimes occurring in the aged because of swelling of the crystalline lens in incipient cataract.

**Q.104** Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to Ram Manohar Lohia during India's freedom struggle?

1. He was in favour of Indian participation on the side of Great Britain in World War II.
2. He mobilized support for the Quit India movement in 1942.

Choose the correct option using the codes given below:

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

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

[ANS] a

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, the Prime Minister paid tribute to Dr Ram Manohar Lohia on his birth anniversary.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** He was a strong advocate of rights and civil liberties and he considered civil liberties/rights as the foundation for fostering and strengthening democracy in the country and the world. He opposed Indian participation on the side of Great Britain in World War II and was arrested for anti-British remarks in 1939 and 1940.

**Statement 2 is correct:** In 1941, Lohia became one of the leading figures of the Central Directorate which clandestinely tried to organise the Quit India revolt, sparked by Gandhi in August 1942. He was jailed again in 1944–46 for such resistance activities.

**Q.105** With reference to Digital service tax (DST) in India, consider the following statements:

1. It applies only to non-resident companies with annual revenues in excess of ₹2 crores.
2. It is levied on revenues generated from digital services offered in both India and abroad.

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

[SOL] **In News:** In a bid to provide a level playing field, the government has decided not to levy a 2 per cent digital service tax if goods and services are sold through an Indian arm of foreign e-commerce players.

**Statement 1 is correct:** The DST taxes companies with no permanent establishment in India with annual revenues in excess of ₹2 crores.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** DST is levied on revenues generated from digital services offered in India, including digital platform services, digital content sales, and data-related services.

**Q.106** ‘Shigmo Festival’ is celebrated in which of the following states?

- (a) Goa
- (b) Assam
- (c) Mizoram
- (d) Tripura

[ANS] a

[SOL] **Option A is correct:** The Shigmo festival, also known as Shigmotsav is a spring festival celebrated in Goa. It is the celebration of a ‘rich, golden harvest of paddy’ by the tribal communities of Goa. Agricultural communities including the Kunbis, Gawdas and Velips celebrate the festival.

**Q.107** With reference to the Inter-State Tiger Relocation Project, consider the following statements:

1. It is the first-of-its-kind project initiated in the year 2018.
2. Under it, tigers were relocated from Panna Tiger Reserve to Satkosia Tiger Reserve.

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

[SOL] **In News:** The Inter-State Tiger Relocation Project has been put on hold after the first attempt failed.

**Statement 1 is correct:** Against the backdrop of the dwindling population of Tiger in Odisha, the Inter-State Tiger Relocation Project was initiated in 2018. It was India's first inter-state translocation project.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Under it, two big cats, a male (Mahavir) from Kanha Tiger Reserve and a female (Sundari) from Madhya Pradesh were relocated to Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Odisha, to shore up the tiger population in the state.

**Q.108** With reference to BRICS, consider the following statements:

1. BRICS nations have adopted the Brasilia Declaration.
2. New Development Bank (NDB) and Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) are the outcomes of the Johannesburg Declaration.
3. The first summit of BRICS took place in Brazil in 2009.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] a

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct:** The 11th BRICS Summit took place from 13th-14th November 2019 in Brasilia, Brazil. The theme of the 2019 BRICS summit is "Economic Growth for an Innovative Future." BRICS countries adopted the Brasilia Declaration. BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. In 2001, the British economist, Jim O'Neill, coined the term BRIC to describe the four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** BRICS's New Development Bank and BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement agreements signed in Fortaleza in 2014.

**Statement 3 is not correct:** The BRICS was officially formed in 2006, originally including Brazil, Russia, India and China. Its first summit took place in Russia in 2009.

**Q.109** With reference to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), consider the following statements:

1. It was established in 1945 along with the United Nations.
2. It is funded by the regular UN budget apart from voluntary contributions.

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

**[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct:** The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was established in 1963. It aims to provide innovative learning solutions to individuals, organizations and institutions for enhanced global decision-making and support country-level action for shaping a better future.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** UNITAR does not receive any funds from the regular UN budget and is financed entirely from voluntary contributions from the UN Member States, UN agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, foundations NGOs and the private sector.

**Q.110** The Suez Canal, recently seen in the news, connects?

- (a) Baltic Sea and North Sea
- (b) Mediterranean Sea and Red Sea
- (c) Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean
- (d) Sea of Azov and Black Sea

[ANS] b

**[SOL] Option B is correct:** The Suez Canal is a human-made waterway and is one of the world's most heavily used shipping lanes. It connects the Mediterranean and the Red Sea through Egypt and extends 193 km between Port Said in the north and Port Suez in the south. Built in 1869, it provides a major shortcut for ships moving between Europe and Asia, who before its construction had to sail around Africa to complete the same journey.

**Q.111** With reference to Special Purpose Acquisition Companies (SPACs), consider the following statements:

1. These are formed strictly to raise capital through an Initial Public Offering (IPO) for acquiring an existing company.
2. The general public cannot invest in SPACs.
3. Upon a failure in the acquisition, these are delisted and the money is returned to the investors.

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

**[SOL] Statement 1 is correct:** The Special Purpose Acquisition Companies (SPACs) are companies with no commercial operations and are formed strictly to raise capital through an Initial Public Offering (IPO) for the purpose of acquiring an existing company.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Investors in SPACs can range from well-known private equity funds to the general public.

**Statement 3 is correct:** If the acquisition is not made within two years of the IPO, the SPAC is delisted and the money is returned to the investors.

**Q.112** Which of the following countries are involved in the “Freedom Pineapple Campaign”, recently mentioned in the news?

- (a) China and Taiwan
- (b) Brazil and Thailand
- (c) Philippines and China
- (d) Costa Rica and Nigeria

**[ANS]** a

**[SOL] Option A is correct:** The “Freedom Pineapple Campaign” has been started by the President of Taiwan to counter China's ban on the import of Taiwanese pineapples. The objective of the campaign is to attract more consumers to buy and consume the fruit locally as well as globally. Taiwan exports almost 10% of pineapples it grows annually, with most of the exports going to China, which banned their import from Taiwan with the allegation of the risk of pests.

**Q.113** Consider the following statements:

1. Adjournment sine die is terminating both sitting and session of Parliament for an indefinite period.
2. The maximum gap between two sessions of Parliament cannot be more than six months.

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

**[SOL] In News:** Recently, Lok Sabha has been adjourned sine die, bringing the Budget session to an end.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Adjournment sine die means when the House is adjourned without naming a day for reassembly. Here, the sitting of Parliament is terminated for an indefinite period. It is the prorogation

in which the President dismisses the House, resulting in termination of the session itself. In the Adjournment, only sitting is terminated not the session of the House.

**Statement 2 is correct:** This statement is correct. In the Summoning process, it is the duty of the Indian President to summon each House of the Parliament from time to time. The maximum gap between two sessions of Parliament cannot be more than six months. In other words, the Parliament should meet at least twice a year.

**Q.114** With reference to Cape of Good Hope, consider the following statements:

1. It provides a shorter route from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean
  2. It was originally named the Cape of Storms in the 1480s by the Portuguese explorer Bartolomeu Dias.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **A statement is not correct and Statement 2 is correct:**

- The Cape of Good Hope is located at the southern tip of the Cape Peninsula, which is also home to Cape Town, the legislative capital of South Africa.
- The Cape eventually became a significant port and waypoint point for sailors travelling from Europe to Asia.
- However, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 provided a much shorter route from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean

**Q.115** With reference to Collegium System, consider the following statements:

1. It has evolved by an Act of Parliament.
  2. Supreme Court collegium is headed by the Chief Justice of India
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] **Statement 1 is not correct:** Collegium is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the Chief Justice of India and comprises four other senior-most judges of the court. A High Court collegium is led by its Chief Justice and four other senior-most judges of that court.

**Q.116** Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai Projects are mentioned in the news recently, they are located in:

- (a) Uttarakhand
- (b) Arunachal Pradesh
- (c) Jammu & Kashmir
- (d) Himachal Pradesh

[ANS] c

[SOL] **In News:** Recently, the Annual Meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) comprising Indus Commissioners of India and Pakistan was held in New Delhi.

**Option C is correct:** Pakal Dul (1000 MW) and Lower Kalnai (48 MW) are the Hydropower Projects located in the J&K UT (erstwhile state). The Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) deals with water rights on the Indus river. The Permanent Indus Commission was set up under the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960.

The Indus water treaty warrants the two commissioners to meet at least once a year but the last meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19. Pakistan has objected to the two India Projects - Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai.

**Q.117** With reference to African Forest Elephant, consider the following statements:

1. They are mainly found in the Congo basin in west Africa.
2. These are the biggest terrestrial animals on Earth, reaching up to 4 metres at the shoulder.
3. They are hunted for their pink ivory which is denser and more easily carved into intricate statues.

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**

**[SOL] In News:** Recently, Africa's forest and savanna elephants have been listed as 'critically endangered' and 'endangered' respectively by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

**Statement 1 is correct:** These are mainly found in the Congo basin in west Africa and live in dense tropical rainforest. These have a more restricted natural distribution. Gabon is home to the largest remaining population of forest elephants.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** They are smaller than their savanna relatives with the males rarely exceeding 2.5 metres at the shoulder. African Savanna Elephants are the biggest terrestrial animals on Earth, reaching up to 4 metres at the shoulder.

**Statement 3 is correct:** African Forest Elephants' pink ivory is denser and more easily carved into intricate statues so it is preferred by the hunters and poachers.

**Q.118** NISAR Satellite, recently seen in the news, is a collaborative effort of ISRO with?

- (a) French National Centre for Space Studies (CNES)
- (b) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)
- (c) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
- (d) European Space Agency (ESA)

**[ANS] c**

**[SOL] Option C is correct:** The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) are collaborating on the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) Satellite.

**Q.119** With reference to the Indus Waters Treaty, consider the statements:

1. It was brokered by the World Bank.
2. India governs Beas, Ravi, Jhelum and Pakistan governs Indus, Chenab, and Sutlej.
3. India is allowed to use 20 per cent of Indus water for irrigation, power generation, and transportation.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL]**

**In News:** Recently, the annual meeting (116th) of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) comprising Indus Commissioners of India and Pakistan has been held in New Delhi.

**Statement 1 is correct:** The distribution of waters of the Indus and its tributaries between India and Pakistan is governed by the Indus Water Treaty (IWT). The treaty brokered by the World Bank was signed

by the then-Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistani President Ayub Khan on 19th September 1960.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The three ‘western rivers’ (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) went to Pakistan and the three ‘eastern rivers’ (Sutlej, Ravi and Beas) were portioned to India.

**Statement 3 is correct:** India is allowed to use 20% water of the western rivers for irrigation, power generation and transport purposes.

**Q.120** With reference to the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), consider the following statements:

1. It is defined in Article 44 of the Indian Constitution.
2. Goa and Arunachal Pradesh are the only states to have it.
3. The Law Commission favoured its adoption throughout India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] b

[SOL]

**In News:** The Chief Justice of India (CJI) S A Bobde has lauded Goa’s Uniform Civil Code and encouraged “intellectuals” indulging in “academic talk” to visit the state to learn more about it.

**Statement 1 is correct:** Article 44 of the Indian Constitution defines a Uniform Civil Code. Article 44 says, ‘The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India.’ The article is a part of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

**Statement 2 and 3 are not correct:** Goa has a common family law, thus being the only Indian state to have a uniform civil code and the 1954 Special Marriage Act allows any citizen to marry outside the realm of any special religious personal law. The Law Commission (2018) was against the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, stating that it is neither necessary nor desirable at this stage.

**Q.121** The ‘Bhagoria festival’ seen in the news recently, is associated with which of the following states?

- (a) Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh
- (b) Rajasthan and Gujarat
- (c) Jharkhand and Bihar
- (d) Madhya Pradesh and Odisha

[ANS] a

[SOL]

**Option A is correct:** The Bhagoria festival, also known as the Bhagoria Haat festival, is celebrated by the tribal people (Bhil, Bhilala, Pateliya, etc.) of the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. It has an agricultural significance attached to it as it coincides with the end of harvesting of crops. People celebrate it to mark the completion of harvesting. Also, this festival provides an opportunity for thousands of tribal men and women to choose a life partner of their own choice.

**Q.122** With reference to the Pong Dam lake, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It is constructed on the river Ravi in the wetland of Shivalik Hills in Himachal Pradesh.
2. It is also known as the Maharana Pratap Sagar.
3. It was declared as a wildlife sanctuary and is one of the Ramsar sites in India.

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

[SOL]

**Statement 1 is not correct:** Pong Dam or reservoir was constructed in 1975 on the river Beas in the wetland of Shivalik hills of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.

**Statement 2 is correct:** The lake is also known as Maharana Pratap Sagar in honour of Maharana Pratap.

**Statement 3 is correct:** It was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1983 and is also a Ramsar site. In 1994, the Government of India declared it a “Wetland of National Importance”. It contains several deforested islands which attract a large number of waterbirds.

**Q.123** Hypnea Indica and Hypnea Bullata, recently seen in the news, are species of?

- (a) Rare Ants
- (b) Frog
- (c) Fleshy lichen
- (d) Red algae

[ANS] d

[SOL]

**Option D is correct:** Hypnea indica and Hypnea Bullata are recently found red algal seaweed species. Two varieties have been discovered along the coasts of Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu and in Gujarat and Daman Diu. The fine and hairy algae Hypnea indica was discovered in Shivrajpur and Somnath Pathan in Gujarat. Hypnea Bullata grew along the coastline of Daman and Diu. It is for the first time, that these have been discovered along Indian coasts. Hypnea contains Carrageenan, a biomolecule commonly used in the food industry that can be a potential raw material for those involved in jelly and ice cream production.

**Q.124** Exercise Vajra Prahar, recently seen in the news, is conducted between?

- (a) India and USA
- (b) India and Russia
- (c) India, US and Japan
- (d) India and Bangladesh

[ANS] a

[SOL]

**Option A is correct:** Exercise Vajra Prahar is a Special Forces joint training exercise conducted alternately in India and the US. It aims to share the best practices and experiences in areas such as joint mission planning and operational tactics as also to improve interoperability between the Special Forces of both nations. Its 11th edition was conducted recently at Special Forces Training School, at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.

**Q.125** Consider the following statements:

1. Enceladus is one of the geologically active moons of Saturn.
2. Under the cratered and rippled ice shell, Enceladus has an ocean which contains life supporting ingredients.
3. The Cassini space probe was sent to study Saturn and its moons.

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

[SOL]

**Statement 1 is correct:** Enceladus is an icy and the sixth-largest moon of Saturn. Saturn has a total of 82 moons. It is 500 kilometres in diameter and is about 1,400 million kilometres away from the Sun. It is also geologically active as its rocky core provides energy to that ocean largely because of the tug of Saturn’s gravity.

**Statement 2 is correct:** Under the pock-marked, cratered and rippled ice shell of Enceladus, there is an ocean which has many of the ingredients (water, organic compounds and energy) to support Earth-like life.

**Statement 3 is correct:** The Cassini space probe was the first dedicated spacecraft to look at Saturn and its moon. It also confirmed that the natural geysers of the Enceladus spray some of its ocean into space (a possible source for Saturn's E-ring) which contains life-supporting ingredients.

**Q.126** The 'Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process' is an initiative of:

- (a) Afghanistan and Russia
- (b) Afghanistan and the USA
- (c) United Nations
- (d) Afghanistan and Turkey

**[Ans] d**

**[SOL]**

**In News:** Recently, External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar has attended the 9th Ministerial Conference of Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process on Afghanistan in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

**Option D is correct:** Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process is an initiative of Afghanistan and Turkey, which was officially launched at a conference hosted by Turkey in Istanbul in 2011. Since then, Afghanistan has been supported by 14 Participating Countries of the Heart of Asia Region, 16 Supporting Countries beyond the region and 12 Regional and International Organizations are leading and coordinating this Process. The Directorate General for Regional Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan is the De facto Secretariat. The geographical area covering the 15 Participating Countries of the HoA-IP is defined as the Heart of Asia Region. It is one of the biggest regions in the world with a collective geographical area covering around 27% of the land area of the Earth.

**Q.127** With reference to the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), consider the following statements:

1. These are set of statutory norms laid under the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
2. The MCC is operational from the date the election schedule is announced until the last day of polling.
3. Certain provisions of MCC can be enforced by invoking certain corresponding provisions in other statutes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**[ANS] b**

**[SOL]**

**In News:** The TMC has written to the EC alleging that the Prime Minister's recent visit to Bangladesh violated the model code of conduct in place for the West Bengal Assembly polls.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The model code refers to a set of norms laid down by the Election Commission of India, with the consensus of political parties. It is not statutory. The purpose of these guidelines is to regulate political parties and candidates prior to elections, to ensure free and fair elections.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** The MCC is operational from the date that the election schedule is announced till the date that results are announced.

Statement 3 is correct: The MCC is not enforceable by law. However, certain provisions of the MCC may be enforced through invoking corresponding provisions in other statutes such as the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and Representation of the People Act, 1951.

**Q.128** Consider the following statements:

1. New Development Bank (NDB) is the outcome of the Johannesburg Declaration of BRICS nations.
2. Like Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the highest voting shares in NDB are held by China and India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

[ANS] d

[SOL]

**In News:** Recently, the Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister has urged the New Development Bank (NDB) to consider working closely with India's new development financing institution for funding infrastructure.

**Statement 1 is not correct:** The NDB is a multilateral development bank operated by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Its establishment was agreed upon by BRICS leaders at the 5th BRICS summit held in Durban, South Africa in 2013. In 2014, NDB was established at the 6th BRICS Summit at Fortaleza, Brazil.

**Statement 2 is not correct:** Unlike Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), voting power is based on the number of one's subscribed share in the capital stock of the Bank, and the share of the BRICS countries can never be below 55% of the total votes. Currently, each of the five NDB members has equal voting rights of 20%. None of the countries has the veto power.