

1. Consider the following statements:

1. In India, the Citizenship Act of 1955 defines 'refugee'.
2. All refugees can apply for citizenship in India.
3. India has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees of 1951.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Citizenship Act, 1955, defines an "illegal immigrant"; there is no definition of a "refugee".

- The Citizenship Act, 1955, defines an illegal immigrant as a foreigner who enters India without valid travel documents or who stays in India beyond the expiry of the documents. Such a person is ineligible to apply for citizenship of India.
- On a global level, the United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees (1951) defines refugees as people who have been forced to flee their country of origin and are unable or unwilling to return due to a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion". **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

There is no national refugee law in India, which means that India does not legally recognise refugees or distinguish between refugees and other foreign nationals entering Indian territory.

The Citizenship Act, 1955, defines an illegal immigrant as a foreigner who enters India without valid travel documents or who stays in India beyond the expiry of the documents. Such a person is ineligible to apply for citizenship of India.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019 excluded Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian persons from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan from the definition of "illegal migrants" if they entered India on or before December 31, 2014. Thus, all refugees can not apply for citizenship in India.

So, Statement 2 is not correct.

The United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees (1951) lays down the obligations of states to protect refugees and grant them a minimum standard of care. The convention has been signed and ratified by 149 UN member states. However, India is one of the 44 UN member states that is not a signatory to the UN Refugee Treaty. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

REFUGEES IN INDIA	
Recently in news	The Supreme Court decided on July 31, 2025, to hear in detail the question of whether the Rohingyas can be treated as 'refugees', or if they are illegal immigrants.
About	➤ India is not a signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, or its 1967 Protocol ➤ The government decides asylum pleas on an ad hoc and case-by-case basis ➤ Asylum-seekers whose plea is okayed are given a long-term visa (LTV) to be renewed annually. ➤ A long-term visa gives them the right to work in the private sector and access to education and banking
Rohingya	➤ The Rohingya, described by the United Nations as "the most persecuted minority in the world", belong to Myanmar's coastal Rakhine state, but are not recognised by that country's constitution. Sectarian violence and a crackdown by the military have driven out nearly all of the 1.4 million Rohingya, most of whom now live in refugee camps in Bangladesh. ➤ The UN has said the flight of the Rohingya following the Myanmar military crackdown in Rakhine state in 2017 had created the world's biggest refugee crisis. Myanmar maintains that the Rohingya, who are predominantly Muslim, are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh.

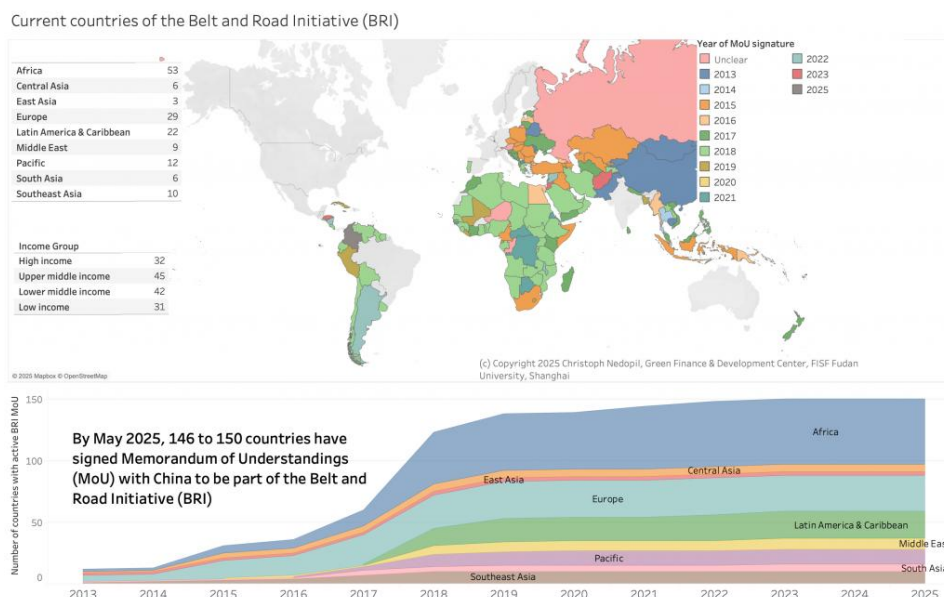
2. With reference to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), consider the following statements:
1. It is an investment project spread over Asia, Latin America, Europe, and Africa.
 2. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor of the BRI extends to Afghanistan.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese-led massive infrastructure investment project aimed at improving connectivity, trade, and communication across Eurasia, Latin America, and Africa. Among the infrastructure projects it has supported are airports, ports, power plants, bridges, railways, roads, and telecommunications networks. BRI sometimes referred to as the New Silk Road. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**



China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Recently, Pakistan and China have agreed to extend the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to Afghanistan in an effort to deepen the trilateral cooperation between the three nations. The move has been consistently opposed by India since it involves construction through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). **So, Statement 2 is correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE (BRI)	
Recently in news	At the Shanghai Cooperation Council (SCO) summit being held in Tianjin, Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a veiled swipe at China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), stressing that connectivity projects must respect national sovereignty to build trust and credibility.
Why is India against BRI?	<i>"Government's position on CPEC is clear and consistent."</i> ➤ Government has consistently protested to parties concerned over the inclusion of the so-called 'China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)', which passes through parts of the Indian Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir under illegal occupation of Pakistan, as a flagship project of 'OBOR/BRI' and asked them to cease these activities," the MoS of External Affairs said. ➤ The Indian government has been keeping a "constant watch" on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all necessary measures to safeguard it.

3. With reference to the Vizhinjam Port, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Greenfield port project.
2. It is a man-made harbour.
3. It can act as a transshipment hub.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

India's First deep-water container transshipment port in Vizhinjam, Kerala. Vizhinjam Port is the first Greenfield port project in India, initiated by a state Government with an investment exceeding ₹18,000 crores. Developed under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode, it stands as one of the largest initiatives in the country's port sector.

- Vizhinjam's strategic location near international shipping routes significantly reduces transit times for vessels, making it a pivotal point for maritime trade.
- As one of India's few natural deep-water ports, it can efficiently accommodate large cargo and container ships.
- Vizhinjam is set to become a key player in regional trade, potentially serving as a gateway for commerce between Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

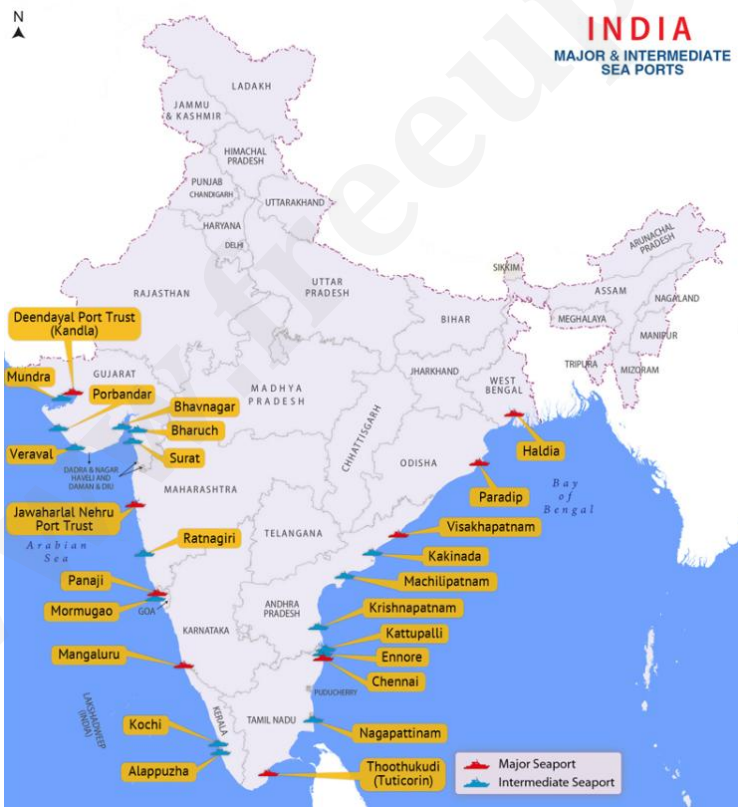
Vizhinjam is a natural port, endowed with a natural depth of 24 m (which is by far the best compared to other ports in the world), and is located as close as one Nautical Mile from the sea coast.

There is no littoral sedimentation, and due to natural depth availability, the site needs no dredging or minimal capital dredging requirements and thus low costs (as compared to any other port in India within a reasonable distance from the East-West Shipping axis). **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

Being the southern tip of India, Vizhinjam port is strategically poised to emerge as a transshipment hub that can consolidate and transfer Indian and regional origin cargo to mainline vessels at lower costs than routing them via Colombo.

By locating a world-class Indian transshipment port right on top of a core international shipping lane, Vizhinjam can unlock lasting maritime and economic advantages for the country. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

VIZHINJAM PORT			
Recently in news	The second phase of the Vizhinjam International Port project in Kerala is set to begin on November 5, with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurating the next stage of development. In a significant acceleration plan, phases two, three, and four will be executed simultaneously, with completion targeted for December 2028.		
About	The Vizhinjam International Transshipment Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport is an ambitious project taken up by the Government of Kerala. ➤ It is designed primarily to cater to container transshipment, besides multi-purpose and break-bulk cargo. ➤ The port is currently being developed in a landlord model with a Public Private Partnership component on a design, build, finance, operate and transfer ("DBFOT") basis. ➤ The private partner, the Concessionaire M/s Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited, commenced construction on December 5 2015.		
Mega Ports	India plans to develop six mega-port clusters by 2047 under the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision, 2047, out of which four port clusters, namely, ➤ Cochin – Vizhinjam Port cluster, ➤ Galathea South Bay Port, ➤ Chennai – Kamarajar – Cuddalore Port cluster, ➤ Paradip and other Non-Major Ports cluster with capacity of more than 300 Million Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA) and two port clusters, namely, Deendayal and Tuna Tekra Port cluster, Jawaharlal Nehru – Vadhavan Port cluster with capacity of more than 500 MTPA are being developed as Mega Ports by the year 2047. 		
Major Ports	West Coast ➤ Kandla (Gujarat) ➤ Mumbai (Maharashtra)	East Coast ➤ Tuticorin (Tamil Nadu) ➤ Chennai (Tamil Nadu) ➤ Ennore (Tamil Nadu)	

	➤ Jawaharlal Nehru (Maharashtra) ➤ Marmugao (Goa) ➤ New Mangalore (Karnataka) ➤ Cochin (Kerala)	➤ Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) ➤ Paradip (Orissa) ➤ Kolkata, Haldia (West Bengal) ➤ Sri Vijaya Puram, Haddo (Andaman and Nicobar Islands)	
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4. The Supreme Court of India, in a recent judgement, directed the Government of India to constitute the National Road Safety Board. In this context, consider the following statements about the National Road Safety Board:

1. It will be a statutory body.
2. It will comprise a chairperson and members appointed by the President.
3. It will be headquartered in Mumbai.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Supreme Court granted six months to the Union Government to constitute the National Road Safety Board to implement Section 215B of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, and refused further extension of this deadline.

The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, provides for the constitution of the National Road Safety Board to advise the Central Government or State Government.

The board aimed at promoting road safety, innovation, reducing road accidents, and adopting new technology. The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has notified the constitution of the National Road Safety Board.

The board will also conduct research to improve road safety, traffic management, and crash investigation, and provide technical advice and assistance to the central government, state governments and local authorities on road safety and traffic management.

➤ A statutory body is a statutorily created body set up either by an act of parliament or a state legislature.

➤ The National Road Safety Board (NRSB) is provided for in the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, under Section 215B. Since it is being set up under a law made by Parliament, it is classified as a statutory body. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The Head Office of the National Road Safety Board shall be in the National Capital Region (not in Mumbai), and the Board may establish offices at other places in India. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

The National Road Safety Board shall consist of the Chairman and not less than three, but not exceeding seven Members, to be appointed by the Central Government, not by the President. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

5. Which one of the following is correct about the 'orange economy'?

(a) It focuses on low-carbon and socially inclusive sustainable development by reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities.

(b) It focuses on the purchasing power and consumption needs of the ageing population.

(c) It focuses on the value of care work and advocates for an equal economic system for women.

(d) It involves the generation of employment and wealth using creative skills, culture, and intellectual property.

EXPLANATION:

A green economy is defined as low-carbon, resource-efficient, and socially inclusive. In a green economy, growth in employment and income is driven by public and private investment into such economic activities, infrastructure and assets that allow reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhanced energy and resource efficiency, and prevention of the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. This approach focuses on reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. **So, Option (a) is not correct.**

The silver economy includes all those economic activities, products and services designed to meet the needs of people over 50. This concept, derived from the so-called silver market that emerged in Japan, the country with the highest percentage of people over 65, during the 1970s to refer to the senior market, brings together sectors as diverse as health, banking, automotive, energy, housing, telecommunications, leisure and tourism, among others.

Thus, the Silver economy focuses on the purchasing power and consumption needs of the ageing population. **So, Option (b) is not correct.**

The Purple Economy is also sometimes referred to as the care economy. It represents a new vision of economics that recognises the importance of care work, empowerment and autonomy of women to the functioning of the economies, the well-being of societies and life sustainability.

- The care economy (the purple economy) is a crucial component of the welfare state. It encompasses activities aimed at improving the physical, social, mental, and emotional well-being of care-dependent groups, such as children, the elderly, the sick, disabled individuals, adolescents, and others.
- The purple economy plays a central role in ensuring the overall functionality and well-being of society as a whole.
- The Purple Economy envisions a world where accessibility and inclusivity aren't just ideals but fundamental economic drivers, a world where persons with disabilities (PWDs) are fully integrated into every aspect of society—as employees, entrepreneurs, consumers, and innovators.

Purple Economy advocates for an economic system that promotes equality and social justice. **So, Option (c) is not correct.**

The creative economy (also known as the orange economy) is an evolving concept based on the contribution and potential of creative assets to contribute to economic growth and development.

- It embraces economic, cultural and social aspects interacting with technology, intellectual property and tourism objectives: it is a set of knowledge-based, and thus more localised economic activities with a development dimension and cross-cutting linkages at macro and micro levels to the overall economy.
- At the heart of the creative economy are the creative industries, which can be defined as the cycles of creation, production and distribution of goods and services that use creativity and intellectual capital as primary inputs.
- These industries include advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, film, video, photography, music, performing arts, publishing, research and development, software, computer games, electronic publishing and TV/radio. **So, Option (d) is correct.**

6. Consider the following:

1. Kochi
2. Kolkata
3. Kozhikode
4. Jaipur

How many of the above is/are part of the World Health Organisation's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities?

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

EXPLANATION:

The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities was established in 2010 to connect cities, communities and organisations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in.

- Membership in the Network is not an accreditation for age-friendliness. Rather, it reflects cities' commitment to listen to the needs of their ageing population, assess and monitor their age-friendliness and work collaboratively with older people and across sectors to create age-friendly physical and social environments.
- Membership is also a commitment to share experience, achievements and lessons learnt with other cities and communities.
- In 2024, Kochi in Kerala became the first city in India to be a member of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC).
- Recently, in May 2025, Kozhikode city was honoured with another global recognition in the form of a membership in the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC).

Till now, only two cities (Kochi and Kozhikode) in India are members of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC). **So, Statements 1 and 3 are correct**

Kolkata and Jaipur is not a part of the World Health Organisation's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. **So, Statement 2 and 4 are not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

THE GLOBAL NETWORK FOR AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES (GNAFCC)	
Recently in the News	Kozhikode was honoured with membership of the WHO's Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.
About	➤ The Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) was established by the World Health Organisation in 2010 to connect cities, communities and organisations worldwide with the common vision of making their communities great places to grow older in. ➤ The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities currently include 1739 cities and communities in 57 countries, covering over 370 million people worldwide.
Mission	The mission of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities is to stimulate and enable cities and communities around the world to become increasingly age-friendly. The Network seeks to do this by: ➤ Inspiring change by showing what can be done and how it can be done; ➤ Connecting cities and communities worldwide to facilitate the exchange of Information, knowledge and experience; and ➤ Supporting cities and communities to find appropriate, innovative and evidence-based solutions.

7. Followers of which one of the following religions practice 'Santhara'?

- (a) Buddhism
- (b) Hinduism
- (c) Zoroastrianism
- (d) Jainism**

EXPLANATION:

Santhara, also known as Sallekhana, is a Jain religious practice in which an individual voluntarily chooses to end their life through fasting. The practice involves gradually abstaining from food and water, and is undertaken by Jains as a way to purify the soul and attain liberation.

The Jain scriptures say that Santhara should only be observed when death is near, or when a person is unable to follow religious duties due to old age, incurable illness, or extreme conditions like famine. For example, if someone's worsening eyesight leads them to harm living beings, violating the principle of ahimsa unknowingly, they may choose Santhara. **So, Option (d) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SANTHARA	
Recently in the News	Recently, A three-year-old girl suffering from a terminal illness died after being administered Santhara – a Jain ritual of voluntary fasting unto death – by a spiritual leader in Indore.
Practice	➤ An important Jain text from around the 4th century AD, Ratnakaranda Shravakachara by Samantabhadra, gives a clear explanation of the Santhara vow and how it should be followed. ➤ The text says that this vow should be taken to free the soul from the body, but only during extreme situations – like a natural disaster, old age, or an illness that cannot be cured. ➤ Anyone taking the vow must control their emotions, give up all their possessions, and mentally detach from loved ones. ➤ They should forgive everyone, ask for forgiveness, and feel sorry for their wrongdoings. ➤ Then, with a peaceful mind, they should focus on prayers and slowly stop eating and drinking and fast until death.
Is Santhara legal in India?	➤ While Santhara is an accepted and revered practice in Jainism, it has faced legal challenges in India. ➤ In 2015, the Rajasthan High Court ruled that Santhara should be considered illegal, equating it to suicide under Section 306 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). ➤ The court's reasoning was that the voluntary decision to end one's life was a form of self-harm and could not be justified as a religious practice. ➤ The ruling, however, was met with protests from the Jain community. ➤ A month later, the Supreme Court stayed the order, allowing Santhara to continue under religious freedom protections.

8. With reference to fire retardant Phos-Chek, recently seen in news, consider the following statements:
1. It is primarily composed of ammonium phosphate-based compounds.
 2. It evaporates rapidly like water and hence needs frequent application.
 3. It is considered environment friendly, as it does not contain heavy metals like chromium and cadmium.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Fire retardant is a mix of chemicals used to extinguish or slow down the spread of fires. Phos-Chek is a brand of fire retardant that mostly contains an ammonium phosphate-based slurry. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

- Typically, it is made of salts such as ammonium polyphosphate, which does not evaporate easily like water and stays for longer. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**
- Phos-Chek is pink in colour to be visible. Colour is usually added to the fire retardant to ensure that firefighters can see it against the landscape. This helps them create fire lines around the fire retardant, potentially saving lives and property.
- A 2024 study by researchers at the University of Southern California (USC) found that Phos-Chek "is laden with toxic metals, and estimates that retardant use has released 850,000 pounds of these chemicals into the environment since 2009 in the United States. These toxic metals include high levels of chromium (at 72 mg/L, or parts per million) and cadmium (14 ppm), which can cause many health problems, including cancer. If these levels were found in water, they would exceed the maximum contaminant level by a factor of 730 and 2,900, respectively and can kill aquatic life. Thus, fire retardant Phos-Chek is not environmentally friendly and contains heavy metals. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**



9. Consider the following countries:

1. India
2. Japan
3. Soviet Union
4. China
5. USA
6. Canada

How many of the above countries have demonstrated Space Docking capability as on January 30, 2025?

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

EXPLANATION:

Space Docking is a process by which two fast-moving spacecraft are brought to the same orbit, brought closer to each other manually or autonomously, and finally joined together. The capability is needed not only for setting up a space station, for which separate modules are joined in space but also for carrying crew and supplies to it.

Only four countries USA, Soviet Union, China, and India have demonstrated space docking capability as of January 30, 2025. **So, Option (b) is correct.**

➤ **UNITED STATES:**

- As the United States and the erstwhile Soviet Union competed fiercely during the space race of the Cold War decades, it was essential to demonstrate rendezvous and docking to achieve the objective of sending humans to the Moon.
- In 1966, NASA's Gemini VIII became the first spacecraft to dock with the target vehicle Agena. Gemini VIII was a crewed mission orbiting the Earth, commanded by Neil Armstrong, who in 1969 became the first human to set foot on the Moon.

➤ **USSR:** While the US mission had astronauts on board to steer the spacecraft, the Soviet Union in 1967 demonstrated the first uncrewed, automated docking of the Kosmos 186 and Kosmos 188 spacecraft.

➤ **CHINA:**

- China demonstrated its docking capability in 2011, when the unmanned Shenzhou 8 spacecraft docked with the Tiangong 1 space laboratory.
- A year later, China demonstrated its first crewed space docking, when the astronauts manually joined its Shenzhou 9 spacecraft to the same space laboratory.

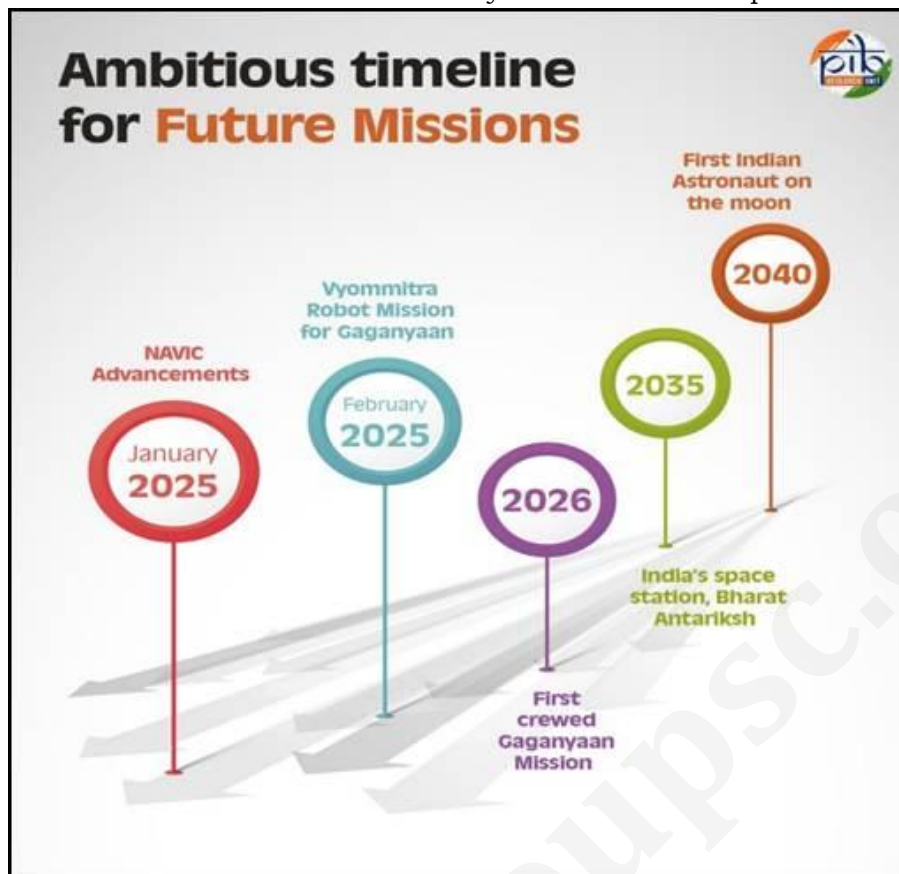
➤ **India:**

- In 2025, the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission's docking operation was successfully completed marking India's entry into the elite group of nations capable of executing space docking operations.
- India conducted its docking mission as part of ISRO's efforts to develop key technologies aimed at establishing a space station by 2035 and sending humans to the Moon by 2040.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SpaDeX MISSION	
About	➤ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully demonstrated space docking or the joining of two fast-moving satellites in space. ➤ Two small 220-kg satellites were brought within a distance of 3 metres from each other in orbit, their extended ring was joined with each other, retracted, and locked in space. ➤ ISRO also demonstrated giving commands to the two satellites as one composite object.
India carried out its docking mission	➤ The Bharatiya Antariksh Station: Besides a new heavy lift launch vehicle capable of carrying up to 30 tonnes to low earth orbit, the missions would require docking capability. The Bharatiya Antariksh Station, the space station that India envisages, will be built by bringing together five modules in space. The first of these robotic modules is slated to be launched in 2028. ➤ Chandrayaan: Docking capability will also be required for the next lunar mission — Chandrayaan-4 — which aims to bring back samples from the Moon. This mission will see five key modules being sent into orbit in two separate launches. • The first launch will have four of the five modules — the propulsion module will carry the spacecraft from Earth orbit to the Moon orbit, from where the lander and ascender modules will go to the lunar surface and collect the samples. The ascender module will then hop up with the samples, and dock with the transfer module in the lunar orbit. • This transfer module will carry back the samples to the Earth orbit where it will dock with a re-entry module that will be launched separately. The module will be designed to withstand the heat of entering the Earth's atmosphere.

- In preparation for this mission, ISRO carried out a "hop experiment" towards the end of the Chandrayaan-3 mission.
- A human mission to the Moon is likely to follow a similar plan.



10. With reference to the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), consider the following statements:

1. India was obligated to allow the natural flow of the Western Rivers to Pakistan.
2. India had unrestricted use of the waters of the Sutlej, Ravi and Beas.
3. IWT was brokered by the World Water Council.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

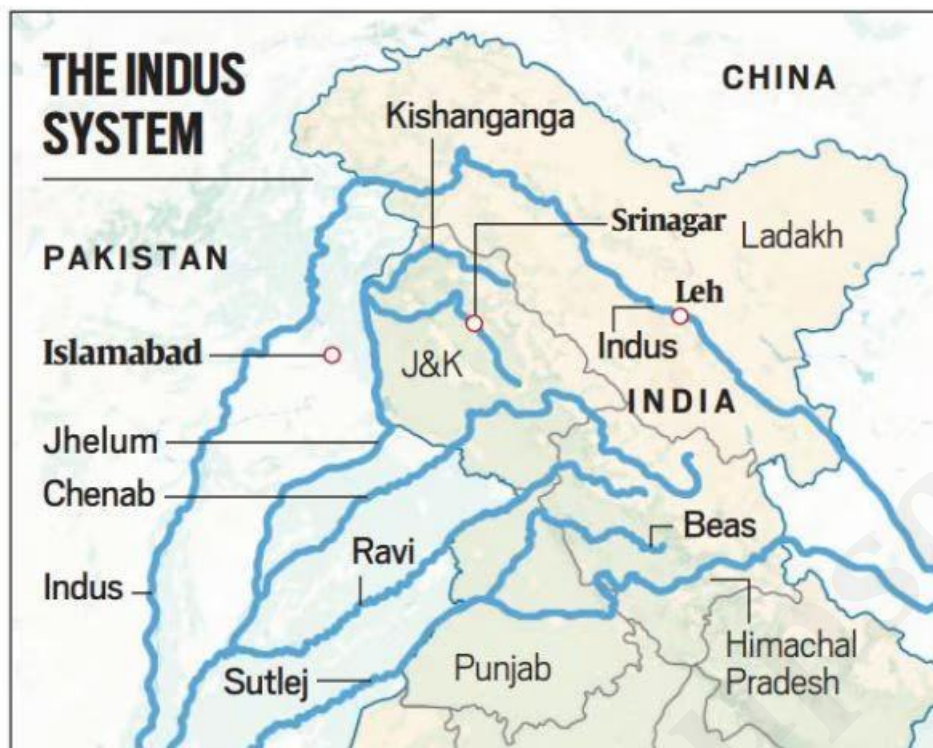
EXPLANATION:

The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) was signed by India and Pakistan in Sep 1960 to determine the distribution of the waters of the Indus and its tributaries.

It was signed in Karachi by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and then Pakistan President Ayub Khan after nine years of negotiations arranged and brokered by the World Bank (not by World Water Council). **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

- The agreement aimed to establish a framework for the cooperative and equitable sharing of the Indus River and its tributaries, which were vital for agriculture, drinking water, and industry in both nations.
- Under the IWT, India enjoys "unrestricted use" of the three "Eastern Rivers" (Beas, Ravi, Sutlej), whereas Pakistan controls the three "Western Rivers" (Indus, Chenab, Jhelum). **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

- This, in effect, gives India roughly 30% and Pakistan 70% of the water carried by the Indus River System.
- According to Article III (1) of the Treaty, "India is under obligation to let flow" all the waters of the Western Rivers to Pakistan. India, although controlling the eastern rivers, was allowed limited agricultural and non-consumptive uses (such as hydroelectric power generation) on the western rivers. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INDUS WATER TREATY	
Recently in the News	Recent developments, including India's notice to Pakistan for treaty modifications, have heightened tensions. India seeks to amend the Indus Water Treaty agreement due to Pakistan's non-cooperation and ongoing disputes over hydroelectric projects.
Commission & Mechanism	Permanent Indus Commission and Dispute Resolution Mechanism ➤ A crucial part of the treaty's success is the creation of the Permanent Indus Commission, which comprises representatives from both countries. ➤ The Commission is responsible for facilitating annual meetings, data exchange, and monitoring compliance with the treaty's provisions. It serves as the first level of dispute resolution, with issues being addressed through bilateral dialogue. ➤ For unresolved disputes, the treaty provides a three-tiered mechanism: • Permanent Indus Commission - A platform for direct negotiation. • Neutral Expert Appointed by the World Bank to address technical disagreements. • Court of Arbitration A higher level of resolution for issues that cannot be solved through earlier steps.
Hydroelectric Projects	Key Hydroelectric Projects and Pakistan's Objections ➤ India has the right to develop run-of-the-river hydroelectric projects on the western rivers, provided the flow is not significantly obstructed.

	➤ Over the years, India's projects, such as the Kishanganga and Ratle Hydroelectric projects in Jammu and Kashmir, have become contentious issues, with Pakistan frequently raising objections over their designs.
Water Tensions	The Changing Geopolitical Landscape and Water Tensions ➤ In January 2023, India formally notified Pakistan of its intention to amend the Indus Water Treaty, citing Pakistan's failure to cooperate on multiple fronts. ➤ This notice marks a significant shift, as it signals India's readiness to take a more assertive stance regarding its water rights, especially as Pakistan has refused to resolve disputes through existing mechanisms.
Indus Basin's Sustainability	Climate Change and the Indus Basin's Sustainability: ➤ The Indus River system, crucial for agriculture and sustenance in both countries, faces a growing threat from climate change. The Himalayan glaciers, which feed the river, are melting at an accelerated rate, impacting water availability. ➤ The variability in monsoon patterns adds another layer of unpredictability, with both countries facing the risk of water scarcity or excessive flooding. ➤ According to NASA, the Indus basin is one of the most over-stressed in the world, making future cooperation and management critical. ➤ The treaty lacks specific provisions for dealing with environmental challenges, leaving room for potential disputes over water usage as the effects of climate change become more pronounced.

11. With reference to the appointment of ad hoc judges in High Courts, consider the following statements:

1. A retired High Court judge can be appointed temporarily to a High Court only with the consent of both the judge and the President of India.
2. Such a judge enjoys all the powers and privileges of a regular High Court judge but is not considered a sitting judge.
3. The process for such an appointment is initiated by the Chief Justice of India.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently on Jan 2025, to address the growing backlog of criminal cases, the Supreme Court allowed High Courts to appoint retired judges on an ad-hoc basis, provided they hear only criminal appeals as part of a Bench led by a sitting judge.

Constitutional Provisions:

- Article 224-A, introduced by the Constitution (Fifteenth Amendment) Act, 1963, The Chief Justice of a High Court for any State may at any time with the previous consent of the President, request any person who has held the office of a Judge of that Court or of any other High Court to sit and act as a Judge of the High Court for that State".
- Here, the process for such an appointment is initiated by the Chief Justice of a High Court for any State not by the Chief Justice of India. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**
- It allows the appointment of retired judges to High Courts on an ad-hoc basis for a temporary period. Such appointments require the consent of both the retired judge and the President of India. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**
- These judges receive allowances as determined by the President's order and enjoy all the jurisdiction, powers, and privileges as a sitting High Court judge but shall not otherwise be deemed to be, a Judge of that High Court. In other words, they are not considered as a sitting judge. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

APPOINTING RETIRED HIGH COURT JUDGES	
About	The detailed procedure in the 1998 Memorandum of Procedure (MOP) for the appointment of High Court judges, prepared following the creation of the collegium system for appointing judges. ➤ The MOP states that after the retired judge has consented to the appointment, the Chief Justice must forward her name and details on the duration of the appointment to the state's Chief minister (CM). ➤ The CM will pass this recommendation to the Union Law Minister, who will consult the Chief Justice of India before forwarding the recommendation and the CJI's advice to the Prime Minister of India. The PM will advise the President on whether to give her approval. However, in the case of Lok Prahari Through Its General Secretary S.N. Shukla IAS (Retd.) v. Union of India (2021), the Supreme Court held that this recommendation "has to be routed through the collegium of the Supreme Court". This collegium includes the CJI and the two seniormost judges of the Supreme Court. The court also provided guidelines for when this appointment process can be initiated.
When can an ad hoc judge be appointed?	The Supreme Court, in Lok Prahari, was considering measures to address pending cases before the courts and the vacancies in posts for HC judges, stating that "A number of vacancies arising every year are barely filled in by fresh appointments". ➤ At the time, the SC was faced with nearly 40% vacancies across all High Courts. ➤ The court held ad hoc judges can only be appointed when recommendations have not been made for less than 20% of the vacancies, after considering both the number of active judges and pending proposals for judge appointments. ➤ This is so that Article 224A can be "resorted to only on the process having being initiated for filling up of the regular vacancies and awaiting their appointments." ➤ Trigger Point: for appointing judges under Article 224A, such as • If the HC has vacancies of more than 20% of the sanctioned strength (excluding any proposals for appointment) and if more than 10% of the backlog of pending cases is over 5 years.
Appointment in History	In 2021, the SC noted there have only been three recorded instances of ad hoc judges being appointed under Article 224A, calling it a "dormant provision". These include: ➤ In Madhya Pradesh HC (1972) for one year to hear election petitions; ➤ In Madras HC (1982). Also renewed for another year in August 1983; ➤ In Allahabad HC (2007) to hear the Ayodhya title suits. There are no recorded instances of ad-hoc judges being appointed since the 2021 decision.

12. The Lokur Committee, Renke Commission, and Idatte Commission, recently seen in the news, are related to:

- (a) Electoral reforms and delimitation of constituencies
- (b) Environmental regulation and pollution control
- (c) Classification and welfare of Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes**
- (d) Review of Centre-State financial relations

EXPLANATION:

There have been many Commissions and Committees which have expressed concern about the status of Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes in India. The Lokur Committee, Renke Commission, and Idatte Commission are related to Classification and welfare of Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

- **The Kalelkar Commission (1953-55):** It suggested that these erstwhile tribes should not be called as 'Criminals' or 'Ex-Criminals' tribes but as Denotified communities and was the first Commission to recommend measures for amelioration of Denotified and Nomadic communities, which included providing basic education to their children, training them in craft and arts, cottage industries, etc and also and to assimilate them into main-stream society.
- **Lokur Committee (1965):** It effectively puts light on the problems related to the names of the Denotified and Nomadic Tribes in various state lists. According to this report, the same tribe is listed as SC in some states and ST in some other states. The reason being, these tribes possess a complex combination of tribal characters, untouchability, nomadic traits, and an anti-social heritage.
- **The Renke Commission (2005):** aimed to improve the socio-economic conditions of Denotified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes through economic interventions, utilisation of existing development agencies, and identification of education, health, and development programs.
- **Idate Commission (2014):** National Commission for De-notified and Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (NCDNT) also known as Idate Commission submitted its report in 2018. Key recommendations include establishing a Permanent Commission, a dedicated National Finance Development Corporation, and a NITI Aayog working group to address policy issues for these communities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

DENOTIFIED, SEMI-NOMADIC, AND NOMADIC TRIBES	
Recently in News	The Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) and Tribal Research Institutes (TRI) across the country have for the first time comprehensively categorised 268 denotified, semi-nomadic, and nomadic tribes that were thought to have never been classified before.
About	➤ After a three-year study, the AnSI and TRIs have recommended the inclusion of 179 of these communities in the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes lists. ➤ At least 85 of these communities are being recommended for a classification for the first time ever. ➤ The study also found that 63 communities that had never been classified were "not traceable" anymore, meaning that they had likely assimilated into larger communities, changed their names, or migrated to other States.
Successive commissions	➤ Ever since the Criminal Tribes Act of 1924 was repealed in August 1949, after which communities notified as "criminal" had been denotified, successive commissions have tried to classify these communities, starting with the First Backward Classes Commission headed by Kaka Kalelkar. ➤ Since then, the Lokur Committee (1965), the Mandal Commission (1980), the Renke Commission (2008), and the Idate Commission (2017) have tried to classify such tribes across the country. However, they have fallen short of being able to identify all such communities.
Mandal Commission	➤ The Mandal Commission examined social and educational backwardness, with its 1980 report forming the basis for the introduction of 27% reservations for Other Backward Classes in higher education and public employment in 1991.

13. With reference to the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam initiative, which of the following statements is/are **not** correct?

1. It aims to create awareness about the cultural connections between the two centres of learning and culture in ancient India.
2. The event is organized by Ministry of Culture.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Kashi Tamil Sangamam (KTS) 3.0 is held on Feb 2025, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. The objective is to create awareness about the cultural connections between the two important centres of learning and culture in ancient India by facilitating people-to-people connections across different walks of life. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

- Ministry of Education in collaboration with various ministries and the Government of Uttar Pradesh is organised this prestigious cultural initiative, aims to celebrate and strengthen the ancient civilisational bond between Tamil Nadu and Kashi. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**
- The Kashi Tamil Sangamam seeks to provide an opportunity for scholars, students, philosophers, traders, artisans, artists and people from other walks of life from the two regions to come together, share their knowledge, culture and best practices and learn from each other's experience.
- It also aims to make the youth aware and experience cultural oneness.
- The endeavour is in sync with National Education Policy (NEP 2020's) emphasis on integrating the wealth of Indian Knowledge Systems with modern systems of knowledge.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

KASHI TAMIL SANGAMAM	
About	The Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0, set to take place in February 2025 continues the mission of fostering deeper cultural and intellectual ties between Tamil Nadu and Kashi. By highlighting the legacy of Sage Agasthyar and bringing together diverse delegates, this initiative strengthens the bonds of India's rich heritage and contributes to the spirit of Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat. This year, the government has decided to bring around 1000 delegates from Tamil Nadu under five categories/groups: ➤ Students, Teachers, and Writers ➤ Farmers and Artisans (Vishwakarma Categories) ➤ Professionals and Small Entrepreneurs ➤ Women Self Help Groups (SHG), Mudra Loan beneficiaries, Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha (DBHPS) Pracharaks) ➤ Start-up, Innovation, Edu-Tech, Research This year, an additional group of around 200 students of Tamil origin studying in various Central Universities will be a part of this event to enliven the bond between Kashi and Tamil Nadu. Participation of youth in all categories will be encouraged this year.
Sage Agasthyar	Honoring Sage Agasthyar's Legacy: ➤ The main theme in this year's event is highlighting the significant contributions of Sage Agasthyar to the Siddha System of Medicine (Bharatiya Chikitsa), Classical Tamil Literature, ➤ Unparalleled contributions to various fields, including Health, Philosophy, Science, Linguistics, Polity and Art, is revered as the first grammarian of the Tamil language in South India. ➤ His influence extends beyond India, as he is also worshipped in Java and Sumatra for his role in propagating Indian culture.

Kashi Tamil Sangamam	➤ KTS 1.0 (2022): Over 2500 people from Tamil Nadu, representing 12 different walks of life, had travelled to Varanasi, Prayagraj and Ayodhya on 8 day-tours, during which they had an immersive experience of different aspects of life in and around Varanasi. ➤ KTS 2.0 (2023): Strengthening Intellectual and Cultural Ties organised at Namo Ghat in Varanasi. First time ever real time, app-based translation of a part of Hon'ble PM's speech in Tamil for the benefit of visiting Tamil delegates.
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14. With reference to the SVAMITVA scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to provide a 'record of rights' to those having houses in villages and issue them a property card.
2. The property cards issued under the scheme cannot be used as collateral for availing loans.
3. The Survey of India (SoI) is responsible for preparing the National Topographic database to implement the scheme.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas), a Central Sector scheme of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, provides a 'Record of Rights' to village household owners with the issuance of legal ownership cards (Property cards/Title deeds) to the property owners by mapping land parcels using drone technology. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The SVAMITVA Scheme has transformed access to formal finance by providing recognised land ownership documents to rural households. With SVAMITVA property cards, residents can now use their residential land for credit and other financial services as collateral. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

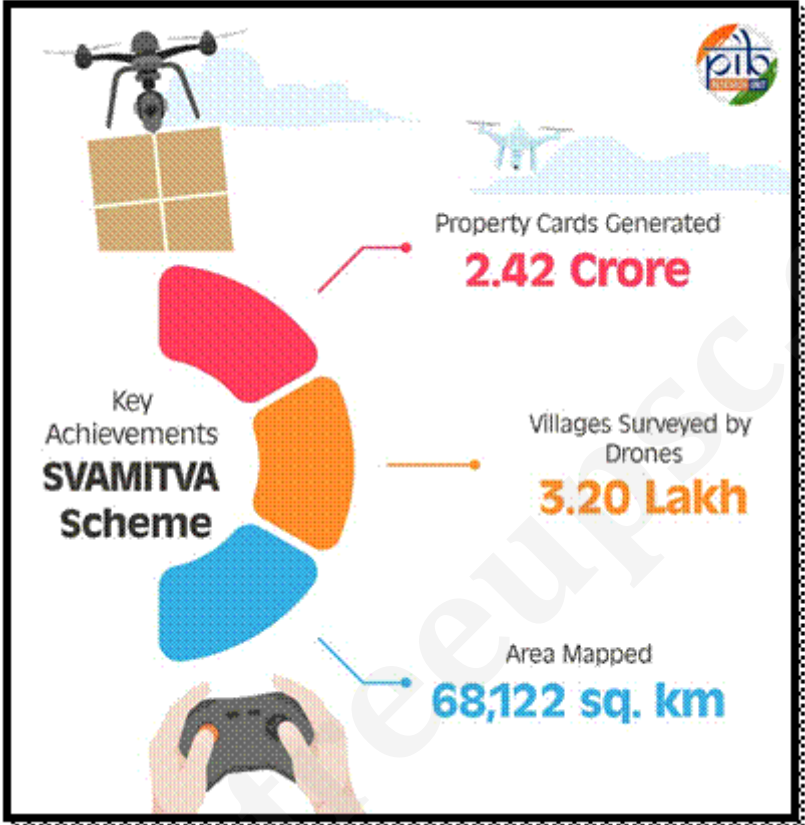
The Survey of India (SoI), which is the national mapping agency under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), is responsible for preparing the National Topographic Database to implement the SVAMITVA scheme.

The SoI prepares a National Topographic database on all scales, leveraging emerging technologies for topographical mapping at various scales using Airborne-Photography, Satellite Imageries (Stereo/Mono), Airborne-LIDAR, High Resolution Satellite Imageries (HRSI), Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAV) or Drone platform with Optical/Infra-Red/LIDAR sensors.

The high-resolution and accurate image-based maps have facilitated the creation of the most durable record of property holdings in these areas with no legacy revenue records. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SVAMITVA	
Recently in the News	The SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) Scheme was launched on National Panchayati Raj Day. This year, SVAMITVA is celebrating its 5th anniversary.
About	➤ SVAMITVA provides legal ownership of rural residential land using drone-based surveys. ➤ SVAMITVA was implemented by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj with support from the Survey of India and National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSII). ➤ It aims to empower rural citizens with property cards, enabling access to credit, dispute resolution, and better planning.

Objectives	➤ Creation of accurate land records for rural planning and reducing property-related disputes. ➤ To bring financial stability to the citizens in rural India by enabling them to use their property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits. ➤ Determination of property tax, which would accrue to the Gram Panchayats (GPs) directly in States where it is devolved or else, add to the State exchequer. ➤ Creation of survey infrastructure and GIS maps that can be leveraged by any department for their use. ➤ To support the preparation of a better-quality Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) by making use of GIS maps.
Achievements	 The infographic illustrates the key achievements of the SVAMITVA Scheme. It features a central graphic with three colored segments (red, orange, blue) and a drone at the top. The achievements listed are: - Property Cards Generated: 2.42 Crore - Villages Surveyed by Drones: 3.20 Lakh - Area Mapped: 68,122 sq. km

15. The Global Cyber Security Outlook report is released by which of the following organisations?

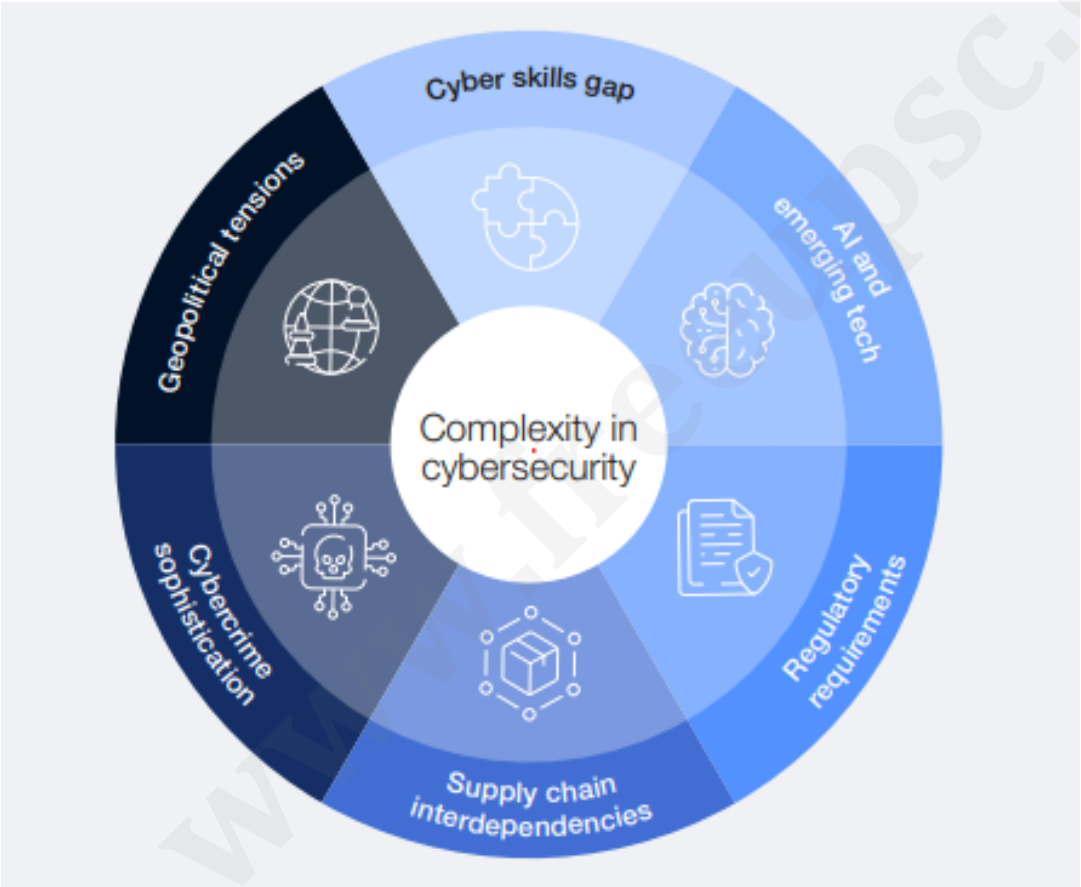
- (a) **World Economic Forum**
- (b) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- (c) Institute for Economics and Peace
- (d) International Atomic Energy Agency

EXPLANATION:

The World Economic Forum's Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2025, in collaboration with Accenture, examines the cybersecurity trends that will affect economies and societies in the year to come. The report explores major findings and puts a spotlight on the complexity of the cybersecurity landscape, which is intensified by geopolitical tensions, emerging technologies, supply chain interdependencies and cybercrime sophistication.

According to the report, cyber threats pose a significant risk to critical infrastructure, which depends on networks of interconnected devices and legacy systems. Such an infrastructure would include water facilities, biosecurity, communications infrastructure, climate and energy. **So, Option (a) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

GLOBAL CYBERSECURITY OUTLOOK	
Key findings	While the 2024 edition of the Global Cybersecurity Outlook highlighted the growing inequity in cyberspace, the 2025 report shines a light on the increasing complexity of the cyber landscape, which has profound and far-reaching implications for organisations and nations. A series of compounding factors drives this complexity: ➤ Escalating geopolitical tensions are contributing to a more uncertain environment. ➤ Increased integration of and dependence on more complex supply chains is leading to a more opaque and unpredictable risk landscape. ➤ The rapid adoption of emerging technologies is contributing to new vulnerabilities as cybercriminals harness them effectively to achieve greater sophistication and scale. ➤ Simultaneously, the proliferation of regulatory requirements around the world is adding a significant compliance burden for organisations. All of these challenges are exacerbated by a widening skills gap, making it extremely challenging to manage cyber risks effectively.
	

16. The Cape Town Convention, recently seen in the news, is associated with:
- (a) Protection of marine biodiversity in international waters
 - (b) Leasing and repossession of high-value mobile assets such as aircraft**
 - (c) Regulation of cyber weapons and digital warfare
 - (d) Safeguarding cultural heritage in conflict zones

EXPLANATION:

The Cape Town Convention (CTC) is a global treaty that guarantees the rights of lessors to repossess leased high-value equipment such as aircraft, engines, and helicopters in case of payment defaults.

- It was adopted at a conference in Cape Town in November 2001 under the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT).
- The convention aims to solve problems of obtaining certain rights to aviation assets such as aircraft engines, helicopters and airframes, which, by their nature, have no fixed location.
- Though India signed the CTC in 2008, it has not yet ratified it rendering the provisions not legally binding in the country. **So, Option (b) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

PROTECTION OF INTERESTS IN AIRCRAFT OBJECTS BILL, 2025	
Recently in news	Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2025, was recently introduced in Rajya Sabha.
About	➤ The Bill seeks to give legal effect to the following international agreements in their application to India. • Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment (also known as Cape town Convention of 2001), and • Protocol to the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment on Matters specific to Aircraft Equipment. ➤ India had acceded to these in 2008. ➤ The Convention and the Protocol aim to bring uniformity in securing rights for high-value assets such as aircrafts, helicopters, and engines. ➤ They aim to ensure predictability for creditors in the event of a financial default in • A lease – use for a specified period • Conditional purchase – transfer of ownership upon completion of certain terms and conditions, or • Security agreement – asset given as collateral for borrowing. ➤ Registry Authority- The Bill designates Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as the Registry Authority for the purposes of the Convention. The Registry Authority is responsible for registration and de-registration of aircrafts. ➤ Obligations of debtors - Debtors must submit records of dues to DGCA. ➤ Remedies in case of default - The Convention gives creditors certain remedies in case of default by a debtor. It includes the right to take back possession of the asset within a period of 2 calendar months or a mutually agreed upon period, whichever is earlier. The Bill states that before exercising any remedy, the creditor must notify DGCA about the occurrence of default. ➤ Detention of assets by government agencies - The following entities will continue to have the right to detain an asset if dues for services related to that asset remain unpaid • Central government, • Any other entity providing public services in India, or • An inter-governmental organisation of which India is a member. ➤ Overriding effect - In case of any inconsistency between the Bill and any other law, the provisions of the Bill will prevail. ➤ Jurisdiction of High Courts - The High Courts will have jurisdiction over any claim under the Convention. ➤ Power to make Rules - The Bill empowers the central government to make Rules to implement the provisions of the Convention and the Protocol.

17. Consider the following statements:

1. Metals like Cadmium and Zinc from industrial and vehicular emissions could pollute clouds.
2. Eastern Himalayan clouds tend to carry chromium which can cause both carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic diseases.
3. Toxic metal pollution tends to affect adults more than children.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

EXPLANATION:

The study conducted by the Bose Institute, an autonomous body under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), identified significant levels of toxic metals coming from vehicular and industrial emissions over foothill regions, such as cadmium (Cd), copper (Cu), and zinc (Zn) in non-precipitating clouds during the early monsoon season over the Western Ghats and Eastern Himalayas.

- When cadmium (Cd) and zinc (Zn) metals are released into the atmosphere through industrial activities (like metal smelting, electroplating, and coal burning) and vehicular emissions (from fuel combustion, tyre wear, and brake abrasion), they can enter the atmospheric environment as fine particulate matter or aerosols.
- These metallic particles, once suspended in the air, can serve as cloud condensation nuclei (CCN) or ice nuclei (IN) — tiny particles around which water vapour condenses to form cloud droplets or ice crystals.
- Over time, these processes can lead to the accumulation of heavy metals within clouds, contributing to cloud pollution and influencing both cloud chemistry and precipitation composition. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The Bose Institute study highlights that the Eastern Himalayas experience higher polluted clouds containing toxic metals like Cadmium (Cd), Chromium (Cr), Copper (Cu), and Zinc (Zn) coming from vehicular and industrial emissions over foothill regions.

Inhalation of such polluted clouds is the potential cause of carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic diseases through skin contact, inhalation, and consumption of precipitation-collected water in high-altitude regions in India. Thus, Eastern Himalayan clouds tend to carry chromium, which can cause both carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic diseases. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

The results from the study showed that children are at a 30% higher risk of exposure to such toxic metals than adults in India. Inhalation of polluted clouds over the Eastern Himalayas containing high concentrations of toxic metals is the most potential route for non-carcinogenic diseases. Thus, toxic metal pollution tends to affect children more than adults. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

18. With reference to the India Electric Mobility Index, consider the following statements:

1. It is published by NITI Aayog.
2. It assesses, evaluates, and scores all Indian States and UTs out of 100 across 16 indicators in e-mobility.
3. It tracks both the demand and supply sides of the electric vehicles industry 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

EXPLANATION:

NITI Aayog launched the India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI), a first-of-its-kind tool developed to comprehensively track and benchmark the progress of States and Union Territories (UTs) in achieving their Electric Mobility goals. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

This Index tracks, evaluates and scores all Indian States and UTs out of 100 across 16 indicators in e-mobility under three-core themes:

- Transport Electrification Progress to capture demand-side adoption.
- Charging Infrastructure Readiness to track allied charging infrastructure development
- EV Research and Innovation Status: Covers supply-side ecosystem R&D efforts.

Thus, it tracks both the demand and supply sides of the electric vehicles industry in India. **So, Statements 2 and 3 are correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INDIA ELECTRIC MOBILITY INDEX (IEMI)	
Recently in the News	Niti Ayog launches a Pioneering India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) to Track States/UTs' Progress in EV Transition.
Key features	➤ The IEMI is a dynamic platform that assesses the performance of the 28 states and 8 UTs in India, along with their ambition and progress in accelerating the e-mobility transition. ➤ The IEMI tracks and evaluates 16 indicators across three themes: Transport Electrification Progress, Charging Infrastructure Readiness, and EV Research and Innovation Status. ➤ The IEMI is designed as a simple and transparent index, allowing for adaptation and enabling the addition or modification of indicators to the evolving e-mobility environment. ➤ The Index provides a comparative analysis between Indian states so they can engage in peer learning and deploy policy and regulatory interventions with a demonstrated impact. This enables more private sector investments based on states' performance and increases the potential for future growth. ➤ The Index provides recommendations to states and UTs based on their initiatives and performance. These recommendations outline the critical actions they must take to advance e-mobility. ➤ The IEMI platform provides a library of external tools for analysis, including total cost of ownership, EV market insights, EV charging tools and other resources, all aimed at assisting users and investors in making informed decisions.

19. With reference to the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA), consider the following statements:

1. It works under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
2. It aids in the return of unclaimed shares to investors.
3. It addresses grievance claims of investors.
4. It works to promote financial literacy among investors.
5. Niveshak Didi is a flagship initiative of the authority.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA), under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, celebrated its 9th Foundation Day. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

- IEPFA is responsible for managing the Investor Education and Protection Fund, which focuses on safeguarding investor interests by facilitating the refund of shares, unclaimed dividends, and matured deposits/debentures. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**
- Through its initiatives, the IEPFA aims to ensure transparency, protect investors' rights, and promote financial literacy across the country. **So, Statement 4 is correct.**
- IEPFA is undertaking a comprehensive review of documentation requirements for low-value claims, with the aim of introducing a simplified and faster claim settlement approach. Additionally, to strengthen its grievance redressal system, IEPFA is launching an Integrated Call Centre that will offer more efficient, responsive, and stakeholder-friendly communication. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA), under the aegis of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, successfully launched Phase II of its flagship financial literacy initiative – Niveshak Didi.

- The initiative is aimed at deepening financial awareness and empowering rural communities, particularly women.
- It particularly focuses on women-led financial empowerment, savings, investment safety, prevention of fraud, and the use of digital platforms for secure transactions. **So, Statement 5 is correct.**

20. With reference to the Kolhapuri chappal, consider the following:

1. It is a GI-tagged product from the state of Maharashtra.
2. This vegan footwear uses vegetable dyes in its manufacture.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Spring/Summer 2026 show in Milan unveiled footwear inspired by India's Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged Kolhapuri chappals, sparking accusations of 'cultural misappropriation'.

- Kolhapuri chappal was registered under Geographical Indication (GI) in July 2019 by Sant Rohidas Leather Industries & Charmakar Development Corporation limited (LIDCOM), a Government of Maharashtra Undertaking and Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram Leather Industries Development Corporation Limited (LIDKAR), Bengaluru, Karnataka, facilitated by Central Leather Research Institute, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- Kolhapuri Chappal is a GI-tagged product from the state of Maharashtra. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**



In Maharashtra's Kolhapur, over 10,000 artisan families have been crafting these chappals by hand for generations.

- Kolhapuri chappals are traditionally made from leather, so they are not inherently vegan. The core material for Kolhapuri chappals is a flexible, durable product made by tanning animal hides. The tanning process not only preserves the leather but also enhances its strength and lifespan.
- Traditionally, vegetable tanning methods using natural agents like myrobalan nuts and babul bark are employed, making these chappals eco-friendly and even medicinally beneficial. Therefore, it cannot be called vegan. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

GEOGRAPHIC INDICATION TAG (GI TAG)	
About	A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place. Geographical indications are typically used for agricultural products, foodstuffs, wine and spirit drinks, handicrafts, and industrial products.
Rights/ Protection	A geographical indication right enables those who have the right to use the indication to prevent its use by a third party whose product does not conform to the applicable standards. ➤ For example, in the jurisdictions in which the Darjeeling geographical indication is protected, producers of Darjeeling tea can exclude the use of the term "Darjeeling" for tea not grown in their tea gardens or not produced according to the standards set out in the code of practice for the geographical indication. ➤ However, a protected geographical indication does not enable the holder to prevent someone from making a product using the same techniques as those set out in the standards for that indication. ➤ Protection for a geographical indication is usually obtained by acquiring a right over the sign that constitutes the indication.
Products that recently received GI Tag in India	➤ Kannadippaya, the first tribal handicraft product from Kerala, received a GI tag. Kannadippaya, a traditional tribal mat from Kerala, has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag  Kannadippaya, meaning "mirror mat," is a handwoven mat made from soft inner layers of reed bamboo.

- The famous Kumbakonam vetrilai (Kumbakonam betel leaf) and Thovalai maanikka maalai have been given the Geographical Indications (GI) tag.



21. With reference to the National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL), consider the following statements:

1. It has been established as per the provisions of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002.
2. It aims to enhance the export of surplus produce of cooperative societies.
3. Only Multi-State Cooperatives can become members of the NCEL.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Ministry of Cooperation has set up National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL) under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002, as an umbrella organisation to give thrust to exports from the cooperative sector. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL) will focus on exporting the surpluses available in the Indian cooperative sector by accessing wider markets beyond the geographical contours of the country, thereby increasing the demand for Indian Cooperative products/services across the globe and fetching the best possible prices for such products/services. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

- It will promote exports through various activities, including procurement, storage, processing, marketing, branding, labelling, packaging, certification, research and development, etc, and trading of all types of goods and services produced by cooperative societies.
- The society will also help in arranging finance, provide technical guidance, help in training and capacity building, develop and maintain a market intelligence system, implement related government schemes and undertake any other such activities which will increase exports from the cooperative sector and other related entities.

Any multi-State co-operative society or any co-operative society registered or deemed to be registered under any law relating to co-operative societies in force in any State or Union Territory is eligible for membership of this Society. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

NATIONAL COOPERATIVE EXPORTS LIMITED (NCEL)	
Recently in news	National Co-operative Exports Limited (NCEL) and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) on Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding to forge a strategic partnership aimed at elevating India's cooperative-led agricultural exports.

About 	NCEL was set up with the approval of the Union Government and registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Society Act, 2002, on the 25th of January, 2023. ➤ It is jointly promoted by some of the leading cooperative societies in the country, namely. Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), popularly known as AMUL, is an Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO). Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited (KRIBHCO) and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED). ➤ Besides, National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC), a Statutory Corporation under the Ministry of Co-operation, is one of its promoter members.
Three New National-Level Cooperative Societies	The Ministry of Cooperation has set up three new national-level cooperative societies under the MSCS Act 2002: ➤ National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL), ➤ National Cooperative Organics Limited (NCOL), ➤ Bharatiya Beej Sahkari Samiti Limited (BBSSL).
National Cooperative Organics Limited (NCOL),	➤ Ministry of Cooperation has set up National Cooperative Organics Limited (NCOL) under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002. The NCOL is promoted by NDDB, GCMMF, NAFED, National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF) and NCDC. ➤ The NCOL has been set up to provide institutional support for aggregation, certification, testing, procurement, storage, processing, branding, labelling, packaging, logistic facilities, marketing of organic products and facilitate in arranging financial assistance to the organic farmers through its member Cooperatives including PACS/FPOs alongwith promotional and developmental activities of organic products with the help of various schemes and agencies of the Government.
Bharatiya Beej Sahkari Samiti Limited (BBSSL)	Ministry of Cooperation has set up Bhartiya Beej Sahkari Samiti Limited (BBSSL) under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002. ➤ The BBSSL is promoted by IFFCO, KRIBHCO, NAFED, National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and NCDC. ➤ The BBSSL will undertake production, procurement & distribution of quality seeds under a single brand through a network of cooperatives to improve crop yield and develop a system for preservation and promotion of indigenous natural seeds. ➤ BBSSL will help in increasing the seed replacement rate and the varietal replacement rate by ensuring the role of farmers in the production of certified seeds.

22. eSAKSHI web portal facilitates the implementation of:

- (a) **Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme**
 (b) Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana
 (c) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
 (d) Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan

EXPLANATION:

The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation has launched the eSAKSHI portal in collaboration with the State Bank of India for implementing the Revised Fund Flow Procedures under the MPLAD (Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme) Scheme, launched on April 1, 2023.

The eSAKSHI web portal has brought in a seamless integration of MP recommendations, sanctioning by District Authority and execution by Implementing Agency; contributing to a well-coordinated and efficient workflow.

The portal also provides greater visibility of the progress of works on a real-time basis through customised login, progress reports and dashboards. This has increased the efficiency in the working of the MPLAD Scheme, while bringing in greater transparency and accountability in the system. **So, Option (a) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SCHEMES	
Recently in news	eSAKSHI web portal has brought in seamless integration of MP recommendations, sanctioning by District Authority and execution by Implementing Agency.
MPLADS	➤ MPLADS – Also known as MP Local Area Development Scheme, is a Central Sector Scheme through which each Member of Parliament (MP) in India receives Rs5 crore annually. ➤ The scheme was launched in 1993 and is fully funded by the central government. ➤ Ministry – Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation. ➤ Implementation – The funds are routed to the district authorities, who implement the work. ➤ Role of MPs – They identify the works for creating durable community assets for their respective constituencies.
Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana	➤ The Central Sector Scheme - SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) has now been renamed as the "Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY)", launched by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI). ➤ It is an umbrella scheme incorporating ongoing schemes of the Ministry like Mega Food Parks, Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, etc. and also new schemes like Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, Creation of Backwards and Forward Linkages, Creation / Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities. ➤ The objective of PMKSY is to supplement agriculture, modernise processing and decrease Agri-Waste.
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS)	The Government of India passed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, in September 2005, launched by the Ministry of Rural Development. ➤ The Act gives a legal guarantee of a hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to adult members of a rural household who demand employment and are willing to do unskilled manual work. The Act will be applicable to areas notified by the Central Government. ➤ Objective - Enhancement of livelihood security to the households in rural areas of the State by providing round the year employment with minimum guarantee of one hundred days of wage employment in a

	financial year to every household volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Secondary objective includes creation of assets for development of rural areas.
Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan	➤ Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan is a government scheme meant for old age protection and social security of unorganised workers, launched by Ministry of Labour & Employment. ➤ It is a voluntary and contributory pension scheme, under which the subscriber would receive a minimum assured pension of Rs 3000/- per month after attaining the age of 60 years and if the subscriber dies, the spouse of the beneficiary shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension as family pension. Family pension is applicable only to spouse.

23. With reference to DIGIPIN, consider the following statements:

1. It provides 'Address as a Service' across India.
2. It is a 20-digit alphanumeric code.
3. It can provide geospatial information on areas like forests and oceans.

How many of the above statements is/are **not** correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All three

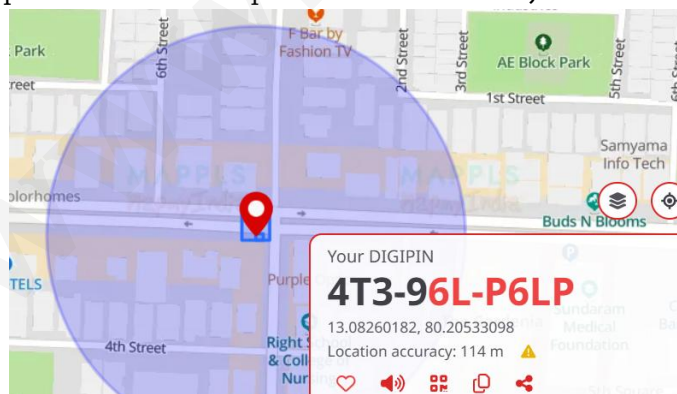
(d) None

EXPLANATION:

The Department of Posts has undertaken an initiative to establish a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for a standardised, geo-coded addressing system in India. As a part of this initiative, The Department has finalized DIGIPIN – the foundation layer of the DPI.

- This initiative seeks to provide simplified addressing solutions for seamless delivery of public and private services and to enable "Address as a Service" (AaaS) across the country. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**
- DIGIPIN is a nationwide geo-coded addressing system developed by the Department of Posts in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad. It divides India into approximately 4m x 4m grids and assigns each grid a unique 10-character alphanumeric code based on latitude and longitude coordinates. This system simplifies addressing for public and private services, improving logistics efficiency and emergency response capabilities.

Thus, DIGPIN is a unique 10-character alphanumeric code. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**



- DIGIPIN simplifies address management by providing precise location-based identification, especially in areas with unstructured or changing addresses. It also helps in areas where no clear address exists, such as rural regions, forests, and oceans. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

DIGIPIN	
Recently in news	Recently, the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, launched two transformative digital platforms: 'Know Your DIGIPIN' and 'Know Your PIN Code', marking a significant step towards the modernisation of India's addressing system and geospatial governance.
Know Your DIGIPIN	The 'Know Your DIGIPIN' portal enables users to: • Retrieve their DIGIPIN based on precise geolocation. • Input latitude and longitude coordinates to fetch corresponding DIGIPINs and vice versa. ➤ This initiative simplifies location mapping, enhances logistics and emergency response, and ensures last-mile delivery, especially in rural and underserved areas. ➤ Incorporating DIGIPIN as an additional address attribute enables the leveraging of GIS capabilities, laying the foundation for future GIS-based digitalisation of service delivery across various organisations in a cost-effective manner. ➤ DIGIPIN will enhance location accuracy across multiple sectors by providing precise geographic coordinates, ensuring accurate service delivery and reducing emergency response times. ➤ A complete repository of the DIGIPIN technical documentation and source code has been made available on GitHub, promoting open collaboration and nationwide adoption.

24. Consider the following statements:

1. People above the age of 30 years are screened for hypertension and diabetes under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD).
2. Accredited Social Health Activists are responsible for conducting risk assessments at the community level under the NP-NCD.
3. Health is a State subject under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease (NP-NCD) was launched by the Department of Health and Family Welfare with a focus on strengthening infrastructure, human resource development, health promotion, early diagnosis, management and referral to an appropriate level of healthcare facilities.

- A population-based initiative for prevention, control and screening for common NCDs, including hypertension and diabetes, has been rolled out in the country under the National Health Mission (NHM) as a part of Comprehensive Primary Health Care. Under the initiative, persons more than 30 years of age are targeted for their screening.
- The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare had launched the NCD Screening Campaign, including hypertension and diabetes (20th February 2025 to 31st March 2025), to achieve universal screening of individuals aged 30 years and above. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

At the community, the Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) does risk assessment of individuals in the age group of thirty years and above by using Community Based Assessment Checklist (CBAC)

forms and brings the individuals to AAM for screening of common NCDs, including hypertension and diabetes.

- Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) also makes the public aware of the significance of early detection through regular health check-ups and screenings.
- Community Health Officers (CHOs), ANMs, and ASHAs are trained to counsel patients on diet, physical activity, tobacco and alcohol cessation, and regular medication adherence.
- **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

- Public health and sanitation, hospitals and dispensaries come under the *State subject* under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.
- Article 246 deals with the subject matter of laws made by Parliament and by the Legislatures of States. List II – State subject has 63 items, including Public health and sanitation, hospitals, and dispensaries under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NP-NCD)	
Recently in news	Over 38.9 crore screened for Hypertension; 5.13 crore diagnosed; 4.74 crore under treatment across India under NP-NCD.
Objectives	➤ Health promotion through behaviour change with involvement of community, civil society, community-based organisations, media and development partners. ➤ Screening, early diagnosis, management, referral and follow-up at each level of healthcare delivery to ensure continuum of care. ➤ Build capacity of health care providers at various levels for prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, follow-up, rehabilitation, IEC/BCC, monitoring and evaluation, and research. ➤ Strengthen supply chain management for drugs, equipment and logistics for diagnosis and management at all health care levels. ➤ Monitoring, supervision and evaluation of the programme through proper implementation of a uniform ICT application across India.
Strategies of NP-NCD	➤ Health promotion for prevention of NCDs and reduction of risk factors. ➤ Screening, early diagnosis, management, referral and follow-up of common NCDs. ➤ Capacity building of health care providers. ➤ Evidence-based standard treatment protocols. ➤ Uninterrupted drug and logistics supply. ➤ Task sharing and people-centred care. ➤ Information system for data entry, longitudinal patient records. ➤ Monitoring, supervision, evaluation and surveillance, including technology-enabled interventions. ➤ Multi-sectoral coordination and linkages with other National Programmes. ➤ Implementation research and generation of evidences.

25. Consider the following statements:

Statement-I:

Underground coal mining is eco-friendlier than open-cast mining.

Statement II:

Underground coal mining causes less damage to surface vegetation.

Statement III:

Underground coal mining enables the extraction of higher-quality coal from deep-seated coal reserves.

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

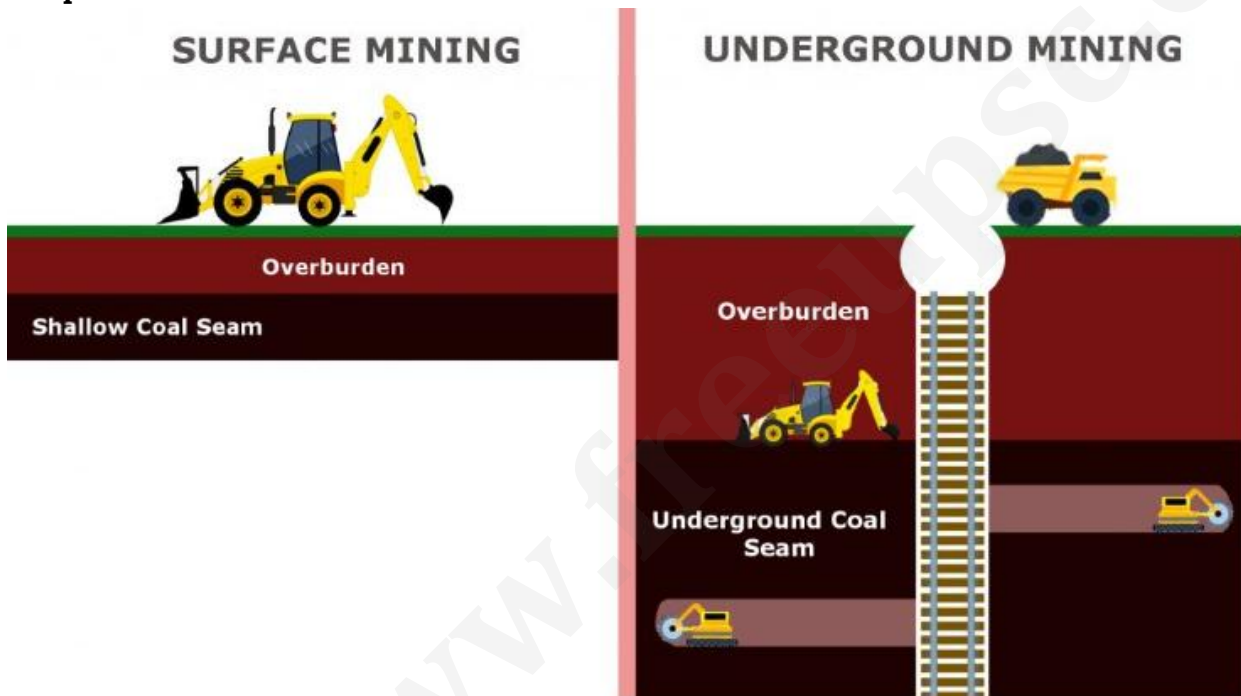
- (a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I.
(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I.
 (c) Only one of Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I.
 (d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct.

EXPLANATION:

In India, coal mining is conducted using two methods: underground and opencast methods. The underground method is suitable for the extraction of deeper coal seams, whereas the open-cast method is suitable for shallow coal seams.

- The impact on the environment from underground coal mines is minimized because in open cast mines we have to remove the entire forest cover. Lot of loss of the agricultural land is also involved.
- But in underground coal mines, because of the technologies available now the forest cover is not required to be removed. This shows that underground mining causes minimal disturbance to surface features, especially surface vegetation; it results in reduced damage to infrastructure, agricultural land, forests, and habitation areas. There is minimal displacement among people.

So, Underground coal mining is eco-friendly than open-cast mining. **So, Statement II is correct and that explains Statement I.**



The most significant advantage of underground mining is that it is well-suited for extracting deep-seated coal reserves, which are often of higher quality.

- Many of the world's richest mineral deposits, including gold, silver, platinum, and diamonds, are buried deep underground.
- Coal mining operations often rely on Underground mining when coal seams are covered by thick rock layers.
- Certain rare earth minerals, which are essential for electronics, batteries, and renewable energy technologies, can only be accessed through underground mining.

However, Statement III deals with the economic aspect of Underground coal mining. **So, Statement III is correct but does not explain Statement I.**

Both Statement II and Statement III are correct, but only one of them explains Statement I.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Underground mining	
About	➤ Underground mining occurs underground through the creation of tunnels. These tunnels go deep into the mineral seam. This can be in excess of hundreds of meters. Tunnels are necessary to move equipment into the mineral zone. ➤ Coal is the largest portion of underground mining. It represents 60 percent of global coal production. Besides coal, the underground can be used to mine gold or copper.
Methods	In underground mining, there are two methods: bord-and-pillar and longwall. ➤ Bord-and-pillar • Bord-and-pillar is the oldest mining method. A grid of tunnels is created in the areas of mineral content. The process chips away at the panels into the coal seam. Pillars of coal are left intact to support the mine. This method is not the most efficient. ➤ Longwall • Longwall made underground mining safer. It's also cost-effective and scalable. In longwall mining, mechanical shearers are used to cut coal away. Hydraulic powered support actually holds up the mine's roof. Supports move forward as coal is extracted. The roof collapses behind the roof. Longwall is much more efficient than bord-and-pillar because it collects more of the coal instead of using it for support.

26. Consider the following statements:

1. Census is a part of the concurrent list under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.
2. The Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner is empowered to implement the census in India.
3. The 16th census will be India's first digital census, and it will enable self-enumeration by the public.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Population Census is a Union List, and the Ministry of Home Affairs is in charge of this subject. It is listed at serial No. 69 in the seventh schedule of Article 256 of the Constitution of India.

- The Population Census is taken as per the provisions of the Census Act, 1948, which empowers the Central Government to conduct a Census of the population of the country after duly notifying it.
- Though the Census is a Union subject, the actual conduct of the Indian census has always been the joint endeavour of both Central and State Governments.
- The entire field operation, which includes house listing and population enumeration are organised through the general administrative machinery of the States at various levels. At the State and Union Territory level, the Director of Census Operations appointed under the Census Act is responsible for organizing and supervising the census operation within his State and UT.

Hence, the Census is in a Union list not listed on the Concurrent List under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The responsibility to conduct the decennial Population Census under the Census Act lies with the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India.

It is responsible for Housing & Population Census, National Population Register (NPR), Civil Registration System (CRS), Sample Registration System (SRS), Mother Tongue Survey and Linguistic Survey. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

The government has formally announced that the 16th Census of India will take place in two phases, with the reference dates set as March 1, 2027, for most of the country. The process is carried out in two broad phases: the House-listing and Housing Census, followed by the Population Enumeration. The 2027 Census will be the first digital census in India's history, with the use of mobile apps, online self-enumeration, and near-real-time monitoring. It is also the first since 1931 that will collect caste data for all communities. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

CENSUS 2027	
Recently in news	Population Census-2027 to be conducted in two phases along with the enumeration of castes.
About	The Census serves multiple critical functions. ➤ It is the basis on which electoral constituencies are drawn and seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Central grants to states and districts are often population-based, as are subsidies and ration allocations. Ministries ranging from Education to Rural Development use Census data to locate schools, primary health centres, and infrastructure projects. ➤ It helps the judiciary, planners, and scholars alike understand trends in migration, urbanisation, employment, and fertility. ➤ The Census is also crucial to the implementation of constitutional provisions. ➤ Article 82 of the Constitution mandates delimitation of constituencies based on the most recent Census. ➤ Articles 330 and 332 reserve seats for SCs and STs in legislatures based on their population proportions.
Process and Technology	Apart from the process being digital and allowing self-enumeration, Census 2027 will include: ➤ GPS integration: While 2011 used physical maps and area lists, 2027 introduces GPS tagging of households and geofencing to avoid coverage gaps. ➤ Mobile tracking and validation: Enumerators in 2027 will receive alerts for errors like inconsistent age or unrealistic household size, enabling real-time corrections. Such checks did not exist in 2011. ➤ Coding System: For the 2027 Census, the Registrar General of India has introduced a new coding system to make data collection more accurate and efficient. Earlier, in the 2011 Census, information like caste, occupation, or mother tongue was written by hand, often leading to spelling mistakes and confusion during data processing.

27. Which one of the following articles of the Constitution empowers the President to make regulations for the peace, progress and good government of the Union territory of Ladakh?

- (a) **Article 240**
(b) Article 123
(c) Article 239
(d) Article 143

EXPLANATION:

Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh:

- The Union territory of Ladakh will be administered by the President acting, to such extent as he thinks fit, through a Lieutenant Governor to be appointed by him under article 239.
- Any regulation so made may repeal or amend any Act made by Parliament or any other law which is for the time being applicable to the Union territory of Ladakh and, when promulgated by the President, shall have the same force and effect as an Act of Parliament which applies to the Union territory of Ladakh.
- The Lieutenant Governor shall be assisted by advisor(s) to be appointed by the Central Government.
- The President may make regulations for the peace, progress and good government of the Union territory of Ladakh under article 240 of the Constitution of India. **So, Option (a) is correct.**

Under Article 240 of the Constitution of India, Power of the President to make regulations for certain union territories. Other than Ladakh, certain other Union Territories are included,

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands;
- Lakshadweep;
- Dadra and Nagar Haveli;
- Daman and Diu;
- Pondicherry (now Puducherry) only when the Assembly is suspended or dissolved.

A regulation made has the same force and effect as an act of Parliament. It may also repeal or amend any act of Parliament in relation to these union territories.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

ARTICLES OF THE CONSTITUTION	
Article 123	Under Article 123 of the Constitution ("Power of President to promulgate Ordinances during recess of Parliament"), "if at any time, except when both Houses of Parliament are in session, the President is satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary for him to take immediate action, he may promulgate such Ordinances as the circumstances appear to him to require." An Ordinance "shall have the same force and effect as an Act of Parliament".
Article 239	Under Article 239 of the Constitution, the administration of Union territories is governed as follows: ➤ It is provided by Parliament by law that every Union territory shall be administered by the President, acting, to such extent as he thinks fit, through an administrator to be appointed by him with such designation as he may specify. ➤ The President may appoint the Governor of a State as the administrator of an adjoining Union territory, and where a Governor is so appointed, he shall exercise his functions as such administrator independently of his Council of Ministers.
Article 143	The Constitution (Article 143) authorizes the President to seek the opinion of the Supreme Court in the two categories of matters: ➤ On any question of law or fact of public importance which has arisen or which is likely to arise. ➤ Any dispute arising out of any pre-constitution treaty, agreement, covenant, engagement, sanad or other similar instrument, which is excluded from the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

28. With reference to the Committee on Estimates, consider the following statements:

1. The speaker of the Lok Sabha always serves as the Chairperson of the Committee.
2. The Committee examines efficiency in the administration of all Public Undertakings of the Government.
3. The Committee submits its reports to the President of India.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Committee on Estimates, constituted for the first time in 1950, is a Parliamentary Committee consisting of 30 members. The function of the committee is to examine the estimates included in the budget and suggest 'economies' in public expenditure. Hence, it has been described as a 'continuous economy committee'.

- All members are from Lok Sabha only. The Rajya Sabha has no representation in this committee. These members are elected by the Lok Sabha every year from amongst its own members, according to the principles of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote.
- A Minister cannot be elected as a member of the Committee, and if a member after selection to the Committee is appointed by a Minister, the member ceases to be a Member of the Committee from the date of such appointment.
- The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst its members. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha does not serve as the Chairperson of every committee. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The function of the committee is to examine the estimates included in the budget and suggest 'economies' in public expenditure. The Committee does not exercise its functions in relation to such Public Undertakings as are allotted to the Committee on Public Undertakings by the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of Lok Sabha or by the Speaker. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

The committee presents its report to the House or to the Speaker/Chairman. The term of the office shall not exceed one year. Rule 312 of the Lok Sabha provides that "the Committee may continue the examination of the estimates from time to time throughout the financial year and report to the House as its examination proceeds." It is not required that the committee examine the entire estimates of any one year. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE	
Recently in news	Speaker of the Lok Sabha inaugurated the national conference marking the platinum jubilee of the Parliamentary Estimates Committee in Mumbai's Vidhan Bhavan complex.
Functions	➤ To report what economies, improvements in organisation, efficiency and administrative reform consistent with the policy underlying the estimates, can be affected. ➤ To suggest alternative policies in order to bring about efficiency and economy in administration. ➤ To examine whether the money is well laid out within the limits of the policy implied in the estimates ➤ To suggest the form in which the estimates are to be presented to Parliament. The Committee shall not exercise its functions in relation to such public undertakings as are allotted to the Committee on Public Undertakings.
Limitations	The effectiveness of the role of the committee is limited by the following: ➤ It examines the budget estimates only after they have been voted by Parliament, and not before that. ➤ It cannot question the policy laid down by the Parliament. ➤ Its recommendations are advisory and not binding on the ministries.

	➤ It examines every year only certain selected ministries and departments. Thus, by rotation, it would cover all of them over a number of years. ➤ It lacks the expert assistance of the CAG, which is available from the Public Accounts Committee. ➤ Its work is in the nature of a postmortem.
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29. Consider the following statements:

1. In India, both citizens by birth as well as those by naturalisation can become the President while in the USA, only citizens by birth are eligible to become the President.
2. The Constitution provides for citizenship by birth before its commencement, while the Citizenship Act 1955 provides for citizenship by birth after the commencement of the Constitution.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

In India, both a citizen by birth as well as a naturalised citizen are eligible for the office of President, while in the USA, only a citizen by birth and not a naturalised citizen is eligible for the office of President. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The Indian Constitution, specifically Articles 5-11, outlines the conditions for citizenship at the commencement of the Constitution (January 26, 1950). The Citizenship Act, 1955, provides various ways in which citizenship may be acquired. It provides for citizenship by birth, descent, registration, naturalisation and by incorporation of territory into India. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

ARTICLES RELATED TO CITIZENSHIP AT A GLANCE	
About	➤ Article 5. Citizenship at the commencement of the Constitution ➤ Article 6. The rights of citizenship of certain persons who have migrated to India from Pakistan ➤ Article 7. The rights of citizenship of certain migrants to Pakistan ➤ Article 8. Rights of citizenship of certain persons of Indian origin residing outside India ➤ Article 9. Persons voluntarily acquiring citizenship of a foreign State are not to be citizens ➤ Article 10. Continuance of the rights of citizenship ➤ Article 11. Parliament to regulate the right of citizenship by law
Acquisition of Citizenship	The Citizenship Act of 1955 prescribes five ways of acquiring citizenship, viz, birth, descent, registration, naturalisation and incorporation of territory: ➤ By Birth • A person born in India on or after January 26, 1950 but before July 1, 1987 is a citizen of India by birth irrespective of the nationality of his parents. • A person born in India on or after July 1, 1987 is considered as a citizen of India only if either of his parents is a citizen of India at the time of his birth. ➤ By Descent • A person born outside India on or after January 26, 1950, but before December 10, 1992, is a citizen of India by descent, if his father was a citizen of India at the time of his birth.

	• A person born outside India on or after December 10, 1992, is considered as a citizen of India if either of his parents is a citizen of India at the time of his birth. ➤ By Registration: Citizenship can also be acquired by registration. Some of the mandatory rules are: • A person of Indian origin who has been a resident of India for 7 years before applying for registration. • A person of Indian origin who is a resident of any country outside undivided India. • A person who is married to an Indian citizen and is ordinarily resident for 7 years before applying for registration. • Minor children of persons who are citizens of India. ➤ By naturalisation: • A person can acquire citizenship by naturalisation if he/she is ordinarily resident of India for 12 years (throughout 12 months preceding the date of application and 11 years in the aggregate) and fulfils all qualifications in the third schedule of the Citizenship Act. ➤ By Incorporation of Territory: • If any foreign territory becomes a part of India, the Government of India specifies the persons who among the people of the territory shall be the citizens of India. Such persons become the citizens of India from the notified date. • For example, when Pondicherry became a part of India, the Government of India issued the Citizenship (Pondicherry) Order (1962), under the Citizenship Act (1955).
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30. Consider the following:

1. Access to well-maintained roads
2. Digital access to e-governance
3. Access to unhindered footpaths for pedestrians

How many of the above come under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution as per the Supreme Court of India?

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

EXPLANATION:

Article 21 declares that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. This right is available to both citizens and non-citizens.

According to the Supreme Court of India:

- **Access to well-maintained roads:** Since the right to access any part of the country, with certain exceptions and restrictions under certain circumstances, is a fundamental right guaranteed under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution, the right to safe, well-maintained, and motorable roads is recognised as a part of the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The Court said it is the responsibility of the State to develop and maintain the roads directly under its control.
- **Digital access to e-governance:** In the contemporary era, access to essential services, governance, education, healthcare and economic opportunities is increasingly mediated through digital platforms. Right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution has to be reinterpreted in light of these technological realities. Inclusive and meaningful digital access to e-governance and welfare delivery systems is a part of the fundamental right to life and liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- **Access to unhindered footpaths for pedestrians:** The court directed the States and Union Territories to frame guidelines to ensure proper footpaths for pedestrians, calling it their

constitutional right. And recognised that the right of pedestrians to use footpaths is guaranteed under Article 21 (right to life and dignity) of the Constitution.

According to the Supreme Court of India, all three are considered part of the fundamental right to life "Protection of Life and Personal Liberty" under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

31. The organisms "Barb, Gurnards and Labeo chekida" are:

- (a) Birds
- (b) Fish**
- (c) Insects
- (d) Reptiles

EXPLANATION:

All three organisms, "Barb, Gurnards, and Labeo chekida", are fish.

- **Barb:** Freshwater fishes belonging to the genus barbus in the carp family, Cyprinidae. The barbs are native to Europe, Africa, and Asia.
 - Recently, the newly discovered Pethia dibrugahensis belongs to the Cyprinidae family and is a type of barb fish. It is usually found in moderately flowing waters with a mixture of mud, sand, and stones as the riverbed.



- **Gurnards:** Gurnards belong to a family of fish called sea robins, or croakers due to the strange noises they make in the water.
 - Recently, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have discovered a new species of a vibrant orange coloured deep water marine fish from Digba Mohana in West Bengal. It is the fourth species of the Pterygotrigla genus reported in India so far.



- **Labeo chekida:** Recently, Researchers have discovered two new species of freshwater fish from the Western Ghats Labeo uru and Labeo chekida.
 - Labeo uru, discovered in the Chandragiri River, is named for its sail-like dorsal fin, and Labeo chekida, a small dark-bodied fish from the Chalakkudy River, is locally known as "kaka chekida."

- Both species, endemic to their respective river systems. And this recent discovery highlights the role of the Western Ghats as a biodiversity hotspot.

So, Option (b) is correct.

ICAR-NBFGR Discovers Two New Fish Species from the Western Ghats!



Labeo chekida, locally known as "kaka chekida," is a small, dark-bodied fish found in the Chalakkudy

Labeo uru, named for its unique sail-like dorsal fin, was discovered in the Chandragiri River.



32. Consider the following statements with reference to Contempt of Courts Act, 1971:

- I. Civil contempt refers to willful disobedience of a court's judgment, decree, or process.
- II. Criminal contempt includes acts or publications that scandalize or interfere with judicial proceedings.
- III. Consent from the Attorney-General of India or Solicitor General is required for criminal contempt proceedings against individuals outside the courtroom.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) I and II only
- (b) II and III only
- (c) I and III only
- (d) I, II and III**

EXPLANATION:

Article 19(2) permits the government to impose reasonable restrictions upon the freedom of speech and expression in relation to contempt of Courts.

According to the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, contempt of court can either be civil contempt or criminal contempt.

➤ Civil contempt means wilful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other process of a court or wilful breach of an undertaking given to a court. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

Criminal contempt is the publication of any matter which either Scandalises or lowers the authority of the court, or that such matter interferes or prejudices any judicial proceeding, Interferes or obstructs the administration of justice in any manner.

➤ Further, an act or publication will constitute contempt if it even tends to scandalise the authority of the court or tends to interfere with any judicial proceeding or administration of justice.

➤ The expression "scandalises the authority of the court" depends to a great degree on the discretion of the judge as no law in India has defined what constitutes scandalizing the court. Proceedings for criminal contempt have been initiated against citizens even for criticising the Judges of the Supreme court and high courts. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, lays down the law on contempt of court. Section 15 of the legislation describes the procedure for initiating a case for contempt of court.

- In the case of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General or the Solicitor General, and in the case of High Courts, the Advocate General, may bring in a motion before the court for initiating a case of criminal contempt.
 - **Outside the courtroom:** The Attorney General's consent is mandatory when a private citizen wants to initiate a case of contempt of court against a person. Before such a plea can be filed, the Attorney General must sign off on the complaint, determining if it requires the attention of the court at all. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**
 - **Inside the courtroom:** However, when the court itself initiates a contempt of court case, the Attorney General's consent is not required. This is because the court is exercising its inherent powers under the Constitution to punish for contempt and such Constitutional powers cannot be restricted because the AG declined to grant consent.
- **Constitutional provisions:** Article 129 of the Constitution gives the Supreme Court the power to initiate contempt cases on its own, independent of the motion brought before it by the Attorney General or with the consent of the Attorney General.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

CONTEMPT POWER	
Recently in news	The Supreme Court refused to initiate a contempt of court case against Advocate Rakesh Kishore for attempting to throw a shoe at Chief Justice of India, BR Gavai. However, the top court agreed that guidelines are required to deal with such instances.
About	The Court relied on two constitutional provisions to derive contempt power. ➤ First, Article 129 of the Constitution of India, 1950, which makes the Supreme Court 'a court of record' and confers power to punish for contempt of itself. ➤ Second, Article 142, which allows the Court to provide punishment for contempt, subject to any other law. • Among these two provisions, the Court further clarified that its primary source of contempt power is under Article 129, as the power under 142 is qualified by any law the Parliament makes. • Apart from the constitutional provisions, the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971 (Act) and The Rules to Regulate Proceedings for Contempt of the Supreme Court, 1975 (Rules) form the legal framework to govern contempt proceedings.

33. Consider the following statements with reference to the recent Supreme Court judgment regarding State Bills and the Governor's role:

1. Article 200 of the Indian Constitution explicitly set a specific time limit for a Governor to act on state bills.
2. The Governor must act without delay, preferably within one month, on the advice of the Council of Ministers while withholding assent to a Bill or reserving it for the President's consideration.
3. If a Governor withholds assent without ensuring the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers, then the Bill must be returned to the Assembly within three months.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

By the Article 200 in the Indian constitution, when a Bill has been passed by the Legislative Assembly of a State or, in the case of a State having a Legislative Council, has been passed by both Houses of the Legislature of the State, it shall be presented to the Governor and the Governor shall declare either that he assents to the Bill or that he withholds assent therefrom or that he reserves the Bill for the consideration of the President.

Article 200 of the Indian Constitution does not explicitly set a specific time limit for a Governor to act on state bills. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

Recently, the Supreme Court has mandated governors to act on state legislature-passed bills within one to three months, emphasising the urgency of Article 200.

- In case of either withholding of assent or reservation of the bills for the consideration of the president upon the aid and advice of the state council of ministers, the governor is expected to take such action forthwith, subject to a maximum period of one month. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**
- In case of withholding of assent, contrary to the advice of the state council of ministers, the governor must return the bills together with a message within a maximum period of three months. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**
- In case of reservation of bills for the consideration of the president, contrary to the advice of the state council of ministers, the governor shall make such reservation within a maximum period of three months.
- In case of presentation of bills after reconsideration in accordance with the first proviso (of Article 200), the governor must grant assent forthwith subject to a maximum period of one month.

Failure to adhere to the timeline will result in judicial review, ensuring the law-making process in states is not obstructed.

34. With reference to the Indian elections, consider the following statements:

- I. Section 53(2) of the RPA 1951 allows a sole candidate to be declared elected without a poll.
- II. Recently, the Supreme Court has not struck down Section 53(2), which considers amending or laying down a minimum-vote requirement.
- III. Under Article 327 of the Indian Constitution, Union Parliament holds the power to make provisions regarding elections to Parliament and State Legislatures.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) I and II only
- (b) II and III only
- (c) I and III only**
- (d) I, II and III

EXPLANATION:

Section 53 in The Representation of the People Act, 1951 states the Procedure in contested and uncontested elections. The following are the procedures:

- **Section 53 (1):** If the number of contesting candidates is more than the number of seats to be filled, a poll shall be taken.
- **Section 53 (2):** If the number of such candidates is equal to the number of seats to be filled, the returning officer shall forthwith declare all such candidates to be duly elected to fill those seats.
 - I.e., if there is only candidate contesting an election, then he/she can be declared elected unopposed without a poll. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**
- **Section 53 (3):** If there are fewer candidates than available seats, the election official will immediately announce that these candidates are elected. For the remaining seats, the Election Commission will ask the relevant voters or groups (like a constituency or assembly members) to choose someone to fill the remaining seats through a notification in the Official Gazette.

Recently, a legal think tank has filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the constitutionality of Section 53 (2) of the RPA 1951.

- It cites the 2013 order of the Supreme Court, which held that the right to cast a negative vote by choosing 'NOTA' was protected under Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution. It argues that this right is independent of how many candidates are contesting – therefore, not holding the election on the grounds that there is only one candidate deprives voters of this right.
- The Supreme Court, while hearing this petition, suggested that in cases where there is only one candidate, there could be a requirement that the candidate should win a prescribed minimum of vote share in order to be declared as elected. The Supreme Court does not strike down Section 53(2) of the RPA 1951. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

Article 327 of the Indian Constitution has the Power of Parliament to make provision with respect to elections to the Legislature.

It states that the Parliament may from time to time by law make provision with respect to all matters relating to, or in connection with, elections to either House of Parliament or to the House or either House of the Legislature of a State including the preparation of electoral rolls, the delimitation of constituencies and all other matters necessary for securing the due constitution of such House or Houses. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

35. With reference to the private members' bills in the Indian parliament which of the following statements are correct?

- Any member of Parliament can introduce a Private Member's Bill.
- A Private Member's Bill does not require the prior recommendation of the President.
- A Private Member's Bill cannot be introduced without any notice period.
- A Private Member's Bill lapses upon the dissolution of the Lok Sabha.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) I, II and III
- (b) I, II and IV
- (c) I, III and IV
- (d) II, III and IV**

EXPLANATION:

An MP, who is not a minister, is a private member, and while both private members and ministers take part in the lawmaking process, Bills introduced by private members are referred to as private members' Bills and those introduced by ministers are called government Bills. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

A private member's bill does not require the prior recommendation of the President. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

A Private Member's Bill cannot be introduced without any notice period. Before the Bill can be listed for introduction, the Private Member must give at least a month's notice for the House Secretariat to examine it for compliance with constitutional provisions and rules on legislation.

While a government Bill can be introduced and discussed on any day, a private member's bill can only be introduced and discussed on Fridays. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

A Private Member's Bill lapses upon the dissolution of the Lok Sabha if it is pending in that house. When the Lok Sabha is dissolved, all business, including bills (including Private Member's Bill), motions, resolutions, notices, petitions and so on pending before it or its committees lapses. They (to be pursued further) must be reintroduced in the newly constituted Lok Sabha.

The position with respect to lapsing of bills is as follows:

- A bill pending in the Lok Sabha lapses (whether originating in the Lok Sabha or transmitted to it by the Rajya Sabha).
- A bill passed by the Lok Sabha but pending in the Rajya Sabha lapses.

- A bill not passed by the two Houses due to disagreement, and if the president has notified the holding of a joint sitting before the dissolution of Lok Sabha, does not lapse.
- A bill pending in the Rajya Sabha but not passed by the Lok Sabha does not lapse.
- A bill passed by both Houses but pending assent of the president does not lapse.
- A bill passed by both Houses but returned by the president for reconsideration by the Houses does not lapse. **So, Statement 4 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

TYPES OF BILLS	
Recently in news	A private member bill proposed by senior Congress leader and city MP for fundamental reforms in the administrative system of Chandigarh could not be presented in the Parliament once again. The proceedings of the Parliament were adjourned at 3 pm, due to which this bill could not be presented despite being listed for the fifth time.
About	➤ Constitution Amendment Bills: These are Bills which seek to amend the Constitution. ➤ Money Bill: A Bill is said to be a Money Bill if it only contains provisions related to taxation, borrowing of money by the government, expenditure from or receipt to the Consolidated Fund of India. Bills that only contain provisions that are incidental to these matters would also be regarded as Money Bills. ➤ Financial Bills: A Bill that contains some provisions related to taxation and expenditure, and additionally contains provisions related to any other matter is called a Financial Bill. Therefore, if a Bill merely involves expenditure by the government, and addresses other issues, it will be a financial bill. ➤ Ordinary Bills: All other Bills are called ordinary bills.
How are these bills passed?	➤ Constitution Amendment Bills: A Constitution Amendment Bill must be passed by both Houses of Parliament. It would require a simple majority of the total membership of that House, and a two thirds majority of all members present and voting. Further, if the Bill relates to matters like the election of the President and Governor, executive and legislative powers of the centre and states, the judiciary, etc., it must be ratified by at least half of the state legislatures. ➤ A Money Bill may only be introduced in Lok Sabha, on the recommendation of the President. It must be passed in Lok Sabha by a simple majority of all members present and voting. Following this, it may be sent to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations, which Lok Sabha may reject if it chooses to. If such recommendations are not given within 14 days, it will be deemed to be passed by Parliament. ➤ Financial Bills: A Financial Bill may only be introduced in Lok Sabha, on the recommendation of the President. The Bill must be passed by both Houses of Parliament, after the President has recommended that it be taken up for consideration in each House. ➤ Ordinary Bills: An Ordinary Bill may be introduced in either House of Parliament. It must be passed by both Houses by a simple majority of all members present and voting.
How is a Money Bill different from a financial bill?	While all Money Bills are Financial Bills, all Financial Bills are not Money Bills. For example, the Finance Bill, which only contains provisions related to tax proposals, would be a Money Bill. However, a Bill that contains some provisions related to taxation or expenditure, but also covers other matters, would be considered as a Financial Bill.

- The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Bill, 2015, which establishes funds under the Public Account of India and states, was introduced as a Financial Bill.
- Secondly, as highlighted above, the procedure for the passage of the two bills varies significantly. The Rajya Sabha has no power to reject or amend a Money Bill.

However, a Financial Bill must be passed by both Houses of Parliament.

Who decides if a Bill is a Money Bill?

The Speaker certifies a Bill as a Money Bill, and the Speaker's decision is final. Also, the Constitution states that parliamentary proceedings as well as officers responsible for the conduct of business (such as the Speaker) may not be questioned by any Court.

36. Recently, the Levant Region was in news, the region comprises of:

- (a) **Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.**
- (b) Turkey, Cyprus, Jordan, Egypt, and Syria.
- (c) Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey.
- (d) Turkey, Palestine, Cyprus, Egypt and Lebanon.

EXPLANATION:

The Levant is a geopolitically, culturally, and historically rich region that has long been at the heart of the Eastern Mediterranean. The term "Levant" originates from the French word meaning "where the sun rises," symbolising the East as seen from Europe.

- Historically, the Levant has served as a crossroads for civilisations, religions, and cultures—a region notable for its trade routes, religious centres, and cosmopolitan character.
- In recent years, however, it has also become associated with deepening crises, political instability, and ongoing transformation.
 - The Syrian civil war, which began in 2011, and the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly since 2023, have positioned the Levant not only as a focal point in regional affairs but also as a significant concern in global politics.
- Today, the Levant generally refers to the region encompassing Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, and Israel and certain adjacent areas. **So, Option (a) is correct.**
- A broader definition of the Levant roughly refers to the territory from Greece to Egypt. Sometimes extended to part of Iraq, Cyprus and Turkey (Hatay Province).



37. Consider the following statements with reference to the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB):
1. It is a statutory and autonomous investigative body under the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
 2. It investigates accidents and serious incidents involving aircraft with a total weight of more than 2,250 kg only.
 3. Investigations of AAIB are currently carried out under the amended Aircraft Investigation Rules, 2017 and 2021.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is a statutory and autonomous investigative body. The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau is an office attached to the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

- It investigates accidents and serious incidents involving aircraft weighing more than 2,250 kg.
- In accordance with ICAO, Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents) Rules 2012 were amended in 2017, and AAIB was designated as an "Attached Office" of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- Presently, Investigation work is being carried out as per the amended Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents) Rules 2017, read with the Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents) Amendment Rules, 2021.
- AAIB has been mandated for immediate and unrestricted access to all relevant evidence from any agency/organisation without seeking prior consent from judicial bodies or other Government authorities. **So, Statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION	
About	The Directorate General of Civil Aviation is the regulatory body in the field of Civil Aviation, primarily dealing with safety issues. ➤ It is responsible for the regulation of air transport services to/from/within India and for the enforcement of civil air regulations, air safety and airworthiness standards. ➤ It also coordinates all regulatory functions with the International Civil Aviation Organisation. ➤ The headquarters is in New Delhi with regional offices in various parts of India.

38. Consider the following statements with reference to Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY):
1. The scheme provides collateral-free loans up to ₹10 lakh for non-corporate and farm income-generating activities.
 2. Recently, a new loan category, Tarun Plus, has been designed only for those who have previously availed and successfully repaid loans under the Tarun category.
 3. The loans under the MUDRA scheme can be availed only through scheduled commercial banks.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only**
 - (c) 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3

EXPLANATION:

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) is a flagship scheme of Government of India launched on April 2015. Aimed at fostering financial inclusion, PMMY provides easy collateral-free loans up to ₹10 lakh for non-corporate and non-farm income-generating activities.

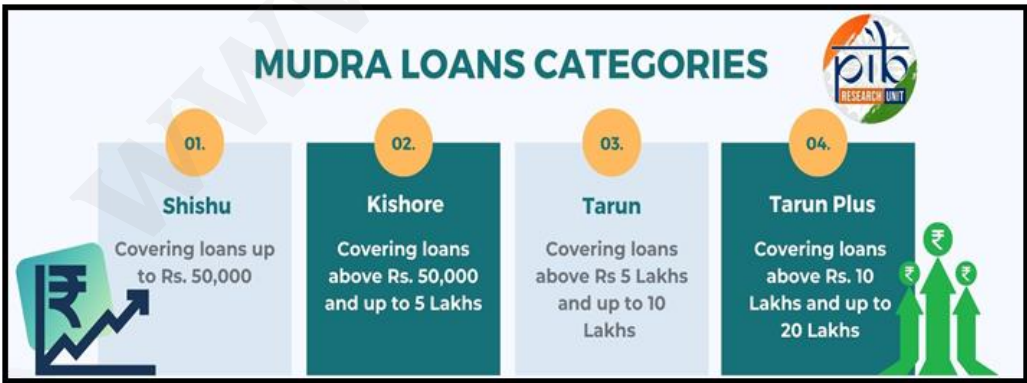
To strengthen support for aspiring entrepreneurs, the Government announced an increase in the loan limit to ₹20 lakh during the Union Budget 2024-25 on July 2024. This new limit took effect on October 24, 2024. These loans are extended through Banks, NBFCs, MFIs, and other financial institutions. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The newly announced loan category, Tarun Plus, is designed specifically for those who have previously availed and successfully repaid loans under the Tarun category, allowing them to access funding between ₹10 lakh and ₹20 lakh.

Additionally, the Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU) will now provide guarantee coverage for these enhanced loans, further reinforcing the government's commitment to nurturing a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem in India. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) loans will be extended by all public sector Banks such as PSU banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Cooperative Banks, Private Sector Banks, Foreign Banks, Micro Finance Institutions and Non-Banking Finance Companies. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

MUDRA	
About	MUDRA, which stands for Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd, is a financial institution set up by the Government of India under PMMY for development and refinancing micro unit enterprises. PMMY aims to provide financial inclusiveness and support to the marginalized and hitherto socio-economically neglected classes. PMMY has given wings to the dreams and aspirations of millions, along with a feeling of self-worth and independence. The loans are given for income generating activities in manufacturing, trading and services sectors and for activities allied to agriculture.
Categories	MUDRA loans now will be offered in four categories namely, 'Shishu', 'Kishore' and 'Tarun' and newly added category 'Tarun Plus' which signifies the stage of growth or development and funding needs of the borrowers: - ➤ Shishu: covering loans upto Rs. 50,000/- ➤ Kishore: covering loans above Rs. 50,000/- and up to Rs. 5 lakhs ➤ Tarun: covering loans above Rs. 5 lakh and up to Rs. 10 lakhs ➤ Tarun Plus: Rs. 10 lakh and up to Rs. 20 lakhs 

MUDRA Card	➤ MUDRA Card is an innovative credit product wherein the borrower can avail of credit in a hassle free and flexible manner. It provides a facility of working capital arrangement in the form of an overdraft facility to the borrower. ➤ Since MUDRA Card is a RuPay debit card, it can be used for drawing cash from ATM or Business Correspondent or make purchase using Point of Sale (POS) machine. ➤ Facility is also there to repay the amount, as and when, surplus cash is available, thereby reducing the interest cost.
MUDRA MITRA	➤ MUDRA MITRA is a mobile phone application available in Google Play Store and Apple App Store, providing information regarding 'Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA)' and its various products/ schemes. ➤ It will guide a loan seeker to approach a Banker in availing MUDRA loan under PMMY. ➤ Users can also access useful loan related material including sample loan application forms in this app.

39. Consider the following schemes:

1. Anganwadi Services Scheme
2. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
3. PM POSHAN
4. Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)
5. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

Which of the above schemes comes under the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS)?

(a) 1, 2, and 3 only

(b) 2, 3 and 4 only

(c) 3, 4 and 5 only

(d) 1, 2 and 5 only

EXPLANATION:

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, launched in 1975, is one of the world's largest programmes for child development. It provides children with supplementary nutrition, immunization, and pre-school education. This centrally sponsored scheme is implemented by state governments and covers all districts across India. Under umbrella Integrated Child Development Services Scheme program (ICDS) inclusive of the following sub schemes.

- Anganwadi Services
- Scheme for Adolescent Girls
- Child Protection Services
- National Crèche Scheme
- POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)
- Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

So, Statement 1, 2 and 3 are correct.

The Ministry of Rural Development launched the Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) in 2011 as a sub-component of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).

The scheme is implemented through State Rural Livelihoods Missions, which act as Project Implementation Agencies.

The primary objective of MKSP is to empower women by making systematic investments to enhance their participation in agriculture and promote sustainable livelihoods for rural women.

MKSP does not fall under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, as it is focused on rural livelihood and women's empowerment, not child welfare. **So, Statement 4 is not correct.**

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme, launched in 2015. This flagship initiative by the Government of India aims to address the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR), prevent gender-biased sex-selective elimination and promote the survival, protection and education of the girl child.

The scheme has evolved to become one of the most impactful social initiatives by the Indian government.

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme does not come under the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS). **So, Statement 5 is not correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES SCHEME (ICDS)	
Objectives Of ICDS	➤ To improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years. ➤ To lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child. ➤ To reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout. ➤ To achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development.
Beneficiaries	➤ Children in the age group of 0-6 years ➤ Pregnant women and ➤ Lactating mothers ➤ Adolescent Girls (14-18 years) in Aspirational Districts and Northeastern States This Scheme is open to all eligible beneficiaries on demand, irrespective of caste, religion and income criteria.
Anganwadi Services	Anganwadi is a type of rural childcare centre in India. They were started by the Indian government in 1975 as part of the Integrated Child Development Services scheme to combat child hunger and malnutrition. Anganwadi means "courtyard shelter" in Indian languages.
Integrated Child Protection Scheme	The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at building a protective environment for children in difficult circumstances, as well as other vulnerable children, through Government-Civil Society Partnership.
Scheme for Adolescent Girls	The Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG) was devised in 2010 as a special intervention for adolescent girls of the age group 11 – 14 years to break the intergenerational life-cycle of nutritional and gender disadvantage and offer a supportive environment for the self-development of adolescent girls in the country.

National Creche Scheme	National Creche Scheme (earlier named as Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme) is being implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme through States/UTs with effect from 2017 to provide day care facilities to children (age group of 6 months to 6 years) of working mothers. The salient features of the National Creche Scheme are as follows: ➤ Daycare Facilities including Sleeping Facilities. ➤ Early Stimulation for children below 3 years and pre-school Education for 3 to 6 years old children. ➤ Supplementary Nutrition (to be locally sourced) ➤ Growth Monitoring ➤ Health Check-up and Immunization
Poshan Abhiyaan	The focus of Abhiyaan is to lay emphasis on nutritional status of adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 0-6 years age. ➤ Prevent and reduce Stunting in children (0- 6 years) ➤ Prevent and reduce under-nutrition (underweight prevalence) in children (0-6 years) ➤ Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among young Children (6-59 months) ➤ Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among Women and Adolescent Girls in the age group of 15-49 years ➤ Reduce Low Birth Weight (LBW)
Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana	The PMMVY Scheme is for financial support for pregnant and lactating mothers is to improve the health and nutrition for mother and child as well as compensation for wage loss, if any. ➤ To provide cash incentive for partial compensation for the wage loss so that the woman can take adequate rest before and after delivery of the first child; ➤ To improve health seeking behavioural amongst the Pregnant Women & Lactating Mothers (PW&LM). ➤ To promote positive behavioural change towards girl child by providing additional cash incentive for the second child, if that is a girl child.

40. Consider the following statements:

1. The scheme provides quality crèche facility in a safe and secure environment for children, nutritional support, health and cognitive development of children, growth monitoring & immunisation.
2. This scheme comes under Mission Shakthi.
3. The scheme comes under the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Which of the following scheme is described above?

- (a) Poshan Abhiyan
- (b) Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- (c) **Palna scheme**
- (d) Swayamsiddha Scheme

EXPLANATION:

POSHAN Abhiyaan (erstwhile National Nutrition Mission) was launched in March 2018 to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children from 0-6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner and to achieve reduction in stunting and wasting in children (0-6 years) as well as reduction in anemia in women, children and adolescent girls. POSHAN Abhiyaan comes under the umbrella scheme Integrated Child Development Services Scheme program (ICDS) implemented under the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). **So, Option (a) is not correct.**

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) providing compensation to working women to compensate for their loss of wages and ensuring their proper rest and nutrition. Improving the health of pregnant women and lactating mothers and reducing the impact of under-nutrition through cash incentives.

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) comes under the umbrella scheme Integrated Child Development Services Scheme program (ICDS) implemented under the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). **So, Option (b) is not correct.**

In 2022, erstwhile National Creche Scheme was reorganized and renamed as Palna Scheme under the sub scheme 'Samarthya' of 'Mission Shakti'. Palna is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

The objective of the Palna scheme is to provide quality crèche facility in safe and secure environment for children (from ages 6 months – 6 years), nutritional support, health and cognitive development of children, growth monitoring & immunization. Crèche facilities under Palna are provided to all mothers, irrespective of their employment status. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

Swayamsiddha Scheme is under the Ministry of Women and Child Development to empower rural women by enhancing their self-reliance, improving their economic status, and increasing their social and decision-making power. Focus on:

- Skill Development and Capacity Building;
- Financial Inclusion by Providing access to micro-credit and financial services;
- Promoting health education, nutritional support and Legal Awareness;
- Community Empowerment
- Integrating women into social security programs and other government welfare schemes

So, Option (d) is not correct.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

PALNA SCHEME	
Objective	➤ It involves monitoring compliance of the stipulations laid down in Section 11A of the Maternity Benefit Act regarding setting up of crèche facilities by the establishments. ➤ For this purpose, the States/UTs would explore the possibility of hosting an application/portal in convergence with the Labour & Employment Departments of their respective States/UTs for facilitating establishments to register on the portal and furnish details in respect of the crèches set up in accordance with the Act.
Services under Palna	The Palna component under the Mission Shakti scheme aims to deliver a comprehensive set of services to children aged 6 months to 6 years. These services are designed to support early childhood care, development, and nutrition in convergence with Mission Poshan 2.0. Key services include: ➤ Day care facilities, including sleeping arrangements ➤ Early stimulation activities for children below 3 years ➤ Pre-school education for children aged 3 to 6 years ➤ Supplementary nutrition, sourced locally ➤ Growth monitoring, health check-ups, and immunization support As part of enhancing access to childcare facilities, the Ministry of Labour & Employment has amended the Maternity Benefit Act to mandate all establishments with 50 or more employees to provide a crèche facility.
Creche Operation under Palna Scheme	The Mission Shakti Guidelines state that the crèche timings need to be flexible depending on the local requirements.

	➤ Crèches (daycare centre for children) shall be open for 26 days in a month and for seven and half (7.5) hours per day as per the work schedule of majority of the mothers in the area. ➤ The Creche Workers and Creche Helpers under Palna are honorary workers. There is no provision of salary or wages to the Creche Workers or Creche Helpers. ➤ However, the scheme guidelines have provision for grant of honorarium to Creche Workers and Creche Helpers. ➤ To maintain quality care and individualized attention, each crèche is ideally limited to a maximum of 25 children. ➤ To ensure ease of access and continued breastfeeding for infants, crèches must be situated close to either the: • Residential areas of the children • Workplaces of the mothers (preferably within 0.5–1 km walking distance) This proximity supports parental engagement and provides convenience in emergencies or regular pick-up and drop-off.
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41. Consider the following statements with reference to the Index of Industrial Production:

1. The National Statistical Organisation (NSO) compiles and publishes the Index.
2. The Index covers mining, manufacturing and electricity sectors only.
3. The Index is published quarterly.

How many of the statements given above is/are **not** correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Index Of Industrial Production is used as a short-term indicator of Industrial growth for the organized sector. The Index of Industrial Production is calculated using the quantity of goods produced in the current month and the average monthly production for the base year 2011-12.

The National Statistical Organisation (NSO) is responsible for the compilation and publication of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) since 1950. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an index for India which details out the growth of various sectors in an economy such as mining, electricity and manufacturing. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**
- It is compiled and published monthly by the National Statistical Organisation (NSO) six weeks after the reference month ends. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**
- This indicator is of paramount importance to the Government for policy planning and analysis purposes.
- The level of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an abstract number, the magnitude of which represents the status of production in the industrial sector for a given year as compared to a reference Base year.
- The growth rates of the three sectors, Mining, Manufacturing and Electricity for the month of June 2025 are (-)8.7 percent, 3.9 percent and (-)2.6 percent respectively.

42. With reference to the PM-VIKAS SCHEME, consider the following statements:

1. It is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
2. The scheme focuses on the upliftment of six notified minority communities through skill development, leadership of minority women, and education support for school dropouts.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS), is a skilling initiative since 2015 from Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) focusing on the skilling, entrepreneurship and leadership training requirements of the minority and artisan communities across the country.

The scheme is intended to be implemented in convergence with the 'Skill India Mission' of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and through integration with the Skill India Portal (SIP). **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The Scheme converges five erstwhile schemes viz. 'Seekho Aur Kamao', 'Nai Manzil', 'Nai Roshni' and 'USTTAD' & 'Hamari Dharohar' and focuses on upliftment of six notified minority communities through skill development; entrepreneurship and leadership of minority women; and education support for school dropouts. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

PRADHAN MANTRI VIRASAT KA SAMVARDHAN (PM VIKAS)	
Objectives	➤ Offer skill training based on local needs to help people find jobs or start their own work. ➤ Preserve and promote traditional art, crafts, and cultural heritage, including old books and manuscripts. ➤ Provide education up to Class 8, 10, or 12 for school dropouts from minority and artisan families through open schooling. ➤ Empower women by building leadership and entrepreneurship skills. ➤ Improve job opportunities and income for communities by helping them connect with markets and access loans. ➤ Develop model villages focused on art and craft, creating local jobs and businesses
Components	➤ Skilling and Training • Traditional Training (earlier USTTAD & Hamari Dharohar): Provides training to 1 lakh artisans in traditional and dying arts and crafts. Focuses on improving livelihoods, market and credit linkages, and preserving cultural heritage. • Non-traditional Skilling (earlier Seekho aur Kamao): Trains 5 lakh youth from minority and artisan families in job roles linked to arts, crafts, and related sectors, with a focus on employment. ➤ Leadership and Entrepreneurship (earlier Nai Roshni): • Provides leadership training to 2 lakh women. • Of them, 1 lakh will get entrepreneurship training. • 10,000 women will be further trained as "Biz Sakhis" (business mentors or correspondents). ➤ Education (earlier Nai Manzil): • Offers school dropout youth from minority and artisan communities a chance to complete Classes 8, 10, or 12 through open schooling (NIOS or MoMA-approved bodies). • Targets 1 lakh beneficiaries.

Other schemes that are merged into PM-VIDYAN SCHEME	➤ Seekho Aur Kamao : A skill development scheme for youth from minority communities, aimed at improving employability through job-oriented training. ➤ Nai Manzil: A scheme to provide education and skill training to school dropouts from minority communities, helping them complete formal education and gain skills for employment. ➤ Nai Roshni: A leadership development program for minority women, aiming to empower them socially and economically by raising awareness and building confidence. ➤ USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development): Promotes and preserves traditional arts and crafts of minority communities by upskilling artisans and improving their market linkages. ➤ Hamari Dharohar: Focused on preserving the rich cultural heritage of minority communities, including documentation, research, and promotion of their art, culture, and traditions.
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43. With reference to Exercise Tiger Triumph 2025, recently seen in the news, which one of the following statements is correct?

- (a) India's first military exercise with Cambodia
- (b) India's bilateral air exercise with Japan
- (c) **India's Bilateral Tri-service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise with the United States**
- (d) India- Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise

EXPLANATION:

The 1st edition of Joint Tabletop Exercise, CINBAX, between the Indian Army and the Cambodian Army commenced at Foreign Training Node, Pune, in Dec 2024.

- Exercise CINBAX is a planning exercise aimed to wargame conduct of joint Counter Terrorism (CT) operations.
- The exercise will focus on discussions pertaining to establishment of Joint Training Task Force for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance besides planning of operations in CT environment.
- Various contingencies will be war gamed and employment of force multipliers in the sub conventional operations will also be discussed.
- The exercise will also involve discussion on information operations, cyber warfare, hybrid warfare, logistics and casualty management, HADR operations etc.

So, Option (a) is not correct.

To promote air defence cooperation between the two countries, India and Japan are set to hold their first joint Air Exercise, 'Veer Guardian-2023'.

Exercise 'Veer Guardian' will fortify the long-standing bond of friendship and enhance the avenues of defence cooperation between the two Air Forces. **So, Option (b) is not correct.**

The fourth edition of bilateral tri-service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) amphibious Exercise Tiger Triumph 2025 between India and the United States culminated with a Distinguished Visitors' (DV) Day at Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, in Apr 2025. The harbour phase of the exercise was conducted at Visakhapatnam. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

The 3rd edition of Joint Special Forces Exercise CYCLONE commenced at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan. Exercise CYCLONE is an annual event conducted alternatively in India and Egypt.

The aim of Exercise CYCLONE is to promote military to military relationship between the two countries through enhancement of interoperability, jointness and mutual exchange of special operations tactics. The exercise will focus on high degree of physical fitness, joint planning and joint tactical drills. **So, Option (d) is not correct.**

44. Consider the following statements:

1. PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana aims to increase the share of solar rooftop capacity and empower residential households to generate their own electricity.
2. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan aims to promote the use of solar energy among farmers and ensure energy security while increasing their income through renewable energy sources.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

PM-Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, launched in February 2024, aims to provide 1 crore households with free electricity through rooftop solar systems.

The scheme seeks to increase the share of rooftop solar capacity and empower residential households to generate their own electricity.

It provides a subsidy of 60% of the solar unit cost for systems up to 2 kW capacity, and 40% of the additional cost for systems between 2 kW and 3 kW. The subsidy is capped at 3 kW capacity.

At current benchmark prices, this translates to a subsidy of:

- ₹30,000 for a 1 kW system
- ₹60,000 for a 2 kW system
- ₹78,000 for a 3 kW system or higher, **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

PM-KUSUM Scheme launched in March 2019 supports farmers by offering financial assistance for installing solar-powered irrigation systems, including solar pumps and grid-connected solar power plants.

The scheme ensures increasing use of renewable energy helps to mitigate pollution in farms and opens a gateway to eco-friendly cultivation.

Objective:

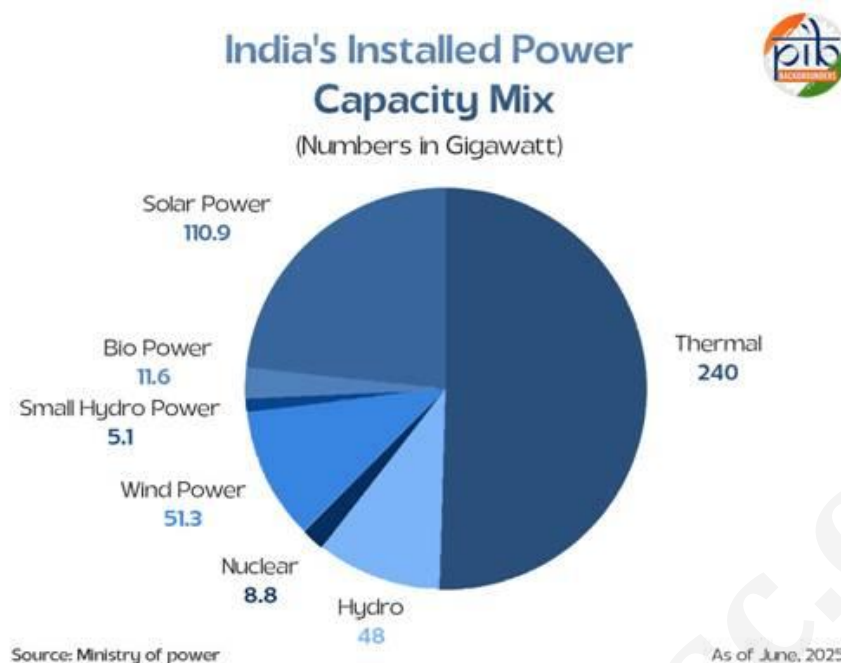
- Promote solar energy adoption among farmers by subsidizing solar-powered irrigation.
- Reduce dependency on diesel pumps, leading to lower fuel costs and improve energy access in rural agricultural areas.
- Enhance income generation through surplus solar energy sales.

So, Statement 2 is correct.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INDIA's ENERGY LANDSCAPE	
About	India has made strong progress in strengthening its energy sector in recent years, successfully balancing the growing electricity demand with sustainability goals. ➤ According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), 85% of the global increase in electricity demand over the next three years will come from emerging and developing economies, including India. ➤ As a result, India's share in global primary energy consumption is expected to double by 2035. ➤ India achieved 100% village electrification by April 2018 and has since connected over 2.8 crore households to the power grid. ➤ India's power sector is one of the most diversified in the world, generating electricity from both conventional sources (coal, gas, hydro, nuclear) and renewables (solar, wind, biomass, small hydro).

- With rising demand, India continues to expand its energy capacity to drive economic growth while advancing its sustainability goals.



Flagship Schemes & Programmes

Solar Parks Scheme:

- This scheme facilitates large-scale grid-connected solar power projects with required infrastructure like land, power evacuation facilities, road connectivity, water facility etc. along with all statutory clearances.

PLI Scheme for High Efficiency Solar PV Modules:

- It aims to boost domestic manufacturing. It also reduces import dependence.

PM JANMAN (Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan):

- To address the development needs of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) through 11 critical interventions across 9 Ministries.
- A key initiative under this mission and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA JGUA) is the New Solar Power Scheme.
- Aimed at electrifying one lakh un-electrified households in Tribal and PVTG habitations across 18 states, promoting inclusive growth and sustainable energy access in remote tribal areas.

45. Consider the following:

1. Chabahar
2. Gwadar
3. Jebel Ali
4. Piraeus
5. Haifa
6. Bandar Abbas

How many ports given above are part of the India-Middle East-Europe corridor (IMEC)?

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

EXPLANATION:

The India-Middle East-Europe corridor (IMEC) is a landmark project announced during the G20 Leaders' event in New Delhi in 2023. It was aimed at stimulating economic development through enhanced connectivity and economic integration between Asia, the Middle East, and Europe.

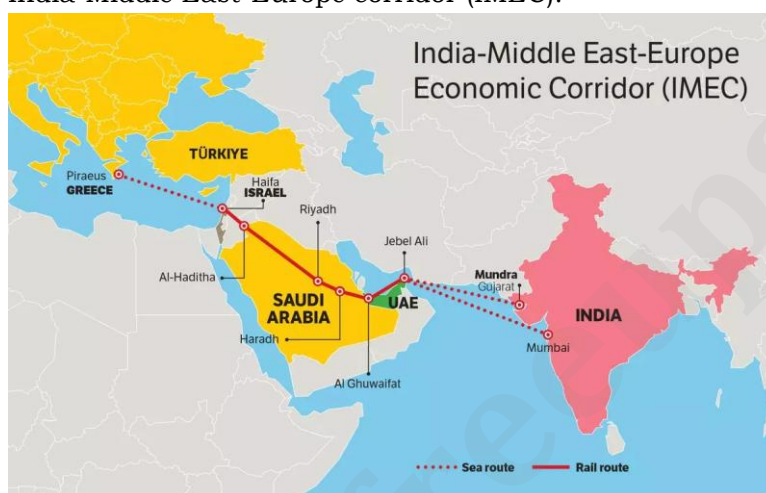
IMEC is a proposed corridor spanning ship, ship-rail, and road networks to connect India to the Gulf region and the Gulf region to Europe.

The transit points in Mumbai, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Greece.

- Among the ports that could be connected on the west coast of India are Mundra (Gujarat), Kandla (Gujarat), and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (Navi Mumbai).
- In the Middle East, at least five ports have been shortlisted to be connected to the Indian ports which include Fujairah, Jebel Ali, and Abu Dhabi in the UAE as well as Dammam and Ras Al Khair ports in Saudi Arabia.
- Haifa in Israel, and various European ports like Piraeus (Greece), Messina (Italy), and Marseille (France).

Here, Jebel Ali, Haifa and Piraeus ports given above are part of the India-Middle East-Europe corridor (IMEC). **So, Option (a) is correct.**

Chabahar port in Iran, Gwadar port deep-sea port in Pakistan, and Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas are not a part of the India-Middle East-Europe corridor (IMEC).



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INTERNATIONAL NORTH-SOUTH TRANSPORT CORRIDOR (INSTC)

About	The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is a multi-modal transportation route linking the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea via Iran and onward to northern Europe via St. Petersburg in Russia.
	➤ This corridor aims to reduce transit times to about 25 days — 20 days fewer than the Suez Canal route — and cut freight costs by 30 per cent. ➤ The INSTC envisages the movement of goods • from Mumbai to Bandar Abbas in Iran by sea; • from Bandar Abbas to Bandar-e-Anzali, an Iranian port on the Caspian Sea, by road; • from Bandar-e-Anzali to Astrakhan, a Caspian port in the Russian Federation by ship across the Caspian Sea; and • onward to other parts of the Russian Federation and Europe by rail.



46. With reference to the rivers joining the Yamuna upstream of Prayagraj from West to East, which one of the following sequences is correct?

- (a) Chambal – Sind – Betwa – Ken
- (b) Sind – Chambal – Betwa – Ken
- (c) Sind – Chambal – Ken – Betwa
- (d) Ken – Betwa – Chambal – Sind

EXPLANATION:

Yamunotri, which is north of Haridwar in the Himalayan Mountains, is the source of the River Yamuna (a major tributary of river Ganges).

The important tributaries of the Yamuna River are Tons, Chambal, Hindon, Betwa and Ken. Other small tributaries of the Yamuna River include the Giri, Sind, Uttangan, Sengar and the Rind.

- The Chambal River, called Charmanvati in ancient times, is the largest of the rivers flowing through Rajasthan state.
- River Sind is one of the second largest right bank tributaries of Yamuna. It rises in Vidisha District of Madhya Pradesh.
- The Betwa river originates in the Bhopal District in Madhya Pradesh.
- Ken is an inter-state river, flowing through the state of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh originates in Jabalpur District of Madhya Pradesh.

The rivers joining the Yamuna upstream of Prayagraj from West to East are Chambal – Sind – Betwa – Ken. **So, Option (a) is correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

TRIBUTARIES OF RIVER YAMUNA	
Recently in News	PM chairs meeting on cleaning and rejuvenating the Yamuna.
About	The main Yamuna and Tons are fed by glaciers, viz., the Bandar Punch Glacier and its branches and originates from the Great Himalayan range. Tons River: - The Tons is the longest tributary of the Yamuna River and its flows through Garhwal, the western part of the Himalayan state of Uttaranchal. - Join the Yamuna below Kalsi near Dehradun, Uttarakhand. It is one of the most major perennial Indian Himalayan rivers. Giri River: - It is the main source of water in the South-Eastern Himachal Pradesh. Hindon River: - This river is sand-witch between two major rivers: Ganga on the left and Yamuna on the right. Hindon originates from upper Shiwalik (Lower Himalayas). Dhasan River: - It is a right bank tributary of the Betwa River. originates in Begumganj tehsil of Raisen district in Madhya Pradesh state in central India.
River Chambal	River Chambal, the biggest tributary of Yamuna rises in Vindhyan range near Mhow in Indore District of Madhya Pradesh. The tributaries of chambal river are Kali Sindh, Parwan River, Parwati River, Banas River (major tributary of Chambal) and Sipra River.

47. Consider the following statements with reference to UNESCO's Memory of the World (MOW) Register:

- UNESCO launched this Programme in 1992 with the aim of preserving the valuable archive holdings and library collections worldwide.
- Recently, manuscripts of the Bhagavad Gita, Bharata's Natyashastra, and the Shaiva Siddhanta have been added to the registry.
- India has a total of 14 inscriptions in the Register.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 3 only

EXPLANATION:

UNESCO launched the Memory of the World (MoW) Programme in 1992 to guard against collective amnesia, calling upon the preservation of the valuable archive holdings and library collections all over the world and ensuring their wide dissemination. The Programme's vision is that the world's documentary heritage belongs to all, should be fully preserved and protected for all and, with due recognition of cultural mores and practicalities, should be permanently accessible to all without hindrance. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

Recently, manuscripts of the Bhagavad Gita and Bharat Muni's Natyashastra were among 74 new documentary heritage collections added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

The Natyashastra is an ancient Sanskrit treatise on performing arts. Comprising 36,000 verses, it provides a comprehensive guide to nāṭya (drama), abhinaya (performance), rasa (aesthetic experience), bhāva (emotion), and saṅgīta (music).

The Bhagavad Gita, a Sanskrit scripture of 700 verses in 18 chapters, is embedded in the Bhishma Parva of the Mahabharata. It represents a rich synthesis of Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, and Charvaka

traditions. The Gita is a spiritual and philosophical dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, set on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

The Shaiva Siddhanta manuscripts were already included in the Memory of the World Register in 2005, and not a part of the recent (2024) additions.

So, Statement 2 is not correct.

With the inclusion of the Bhagavad Gita and Natyashastra, India now has 14 documentary heritages listed on the Memory of the World Register.

Other notable Indian entries include:

30 Rig Veda manuscripts from the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI), Pune – listed in 2007

Shaiva Manuscripts from Pondicherry – listed in 2005

Gilgit Manuscripts – listed in 2017

Maitreyavyakarana – listed in 2023. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

48. Consider the following statements with reference to the MacGregor memorial medals:

1. This medal has been awarded since 1888.
2. The award recognise the acts of military reconnaissance and exploratory journeys only.
3. The medal is open to all ranks (serving and retired) of the Armed Forces, Territorial Army, Reserve Forces, and Paramilitary forces.

Which of the statements mentioned above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The MacGregor Memorial Medal was instituted in 1888 in memory of the late Major General Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, KCB, CBI, CIE, founder of the United Service Institution of India. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

- The award was originally intended to recognize the acts of military reconnaissance and exploratory journeys, the medal's scope was expanded in 1986, post-Independence, to include military expeditions and adventure activities. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**
- While military reconnaissance and exploration remain the foremost criteria, the medal is open to all ranks (serving and retired) of the Armed Forces, Territorial Army, Reserve Forces, Rashtriya Rifles and Assam Rifles (paramilitary forces)." **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

49. With reference to the red-crowned roofed turtles, recently seen in the news, which one of the following statements is **not** correct?

- (a) It is a freshwater Turtle species.
- (b) It is listed as vulnerable in the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) list.**
- (c) This turtle survives only in the Chambal River, with no evidence of their presence elsewhere in the world for the past 30 years.
- (d) This turtle is native to India, Bangladesh and Nepal only.

EXPLANATION:

The red-crowned roofed turtle or batagur kachuga, which was almost on the verge of extinction in the Ganga River, has made a comeback after 30 years. These turtles were once found in the Ganges River and its tributaries. But in the past 30 years, their numbers have decreased due to excessive hunting, illegal trade, loss of habitat and change in the flow of the river.

- The red-crowned roofed turtle or Bengal roof turtle (*Batagur kachuga*) is a species of freshwater turtle endemic to South Asia. **So, Option (a) is correct.**
- The red-crowned roofed turtle is marked critically endangered in the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) list and is one of the 50 species in the list of Asia's most-endangered tortoises and freshwater turtles. **So, Option (b) is not correct.**
- Now, the only place in the country where a good number of these turtles are left is the National Chambal Sanctuary. In India, red-crowned roofed turtles survive only in the Chambal River, with no evidence of their presence elsewhere in the world for the past 30 years. **So, Option (c) is correct.**
- The turtle is endemic to India, Bangladesh and Nepal. It is also found in the Brahmaputra River region. **So, Option (d) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

THE RED-CROWNED ROOFED TURTLE	
About	➤ The red-crowned roofed turtle can weigh up to 25 kilograms (55 lb) and have shells as long as 56 centimeters (22 in). Males reach only half the length of females. ➤ The diet of red-crowned roofed turtles consists entirely of aquatic plants. ➤ The large <i>Batagur</i> turtles are probably the most threatened freshwater turtles in India. ➤ Their populations have now been drastically reduced due to poaching for their meat and shells, accidental drowning in fishing gear, water pollution, hydroelectric infrastructure projects, habitat destruction by sand mining, and egg predation by jackals. ➤ Adult females lay eggs in March and April. Clutch size varies from 11 to 30 eggs.
	

50. Which of the following statements is correct regarding Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)?
- (a) The Scheme focuses on the empowerment of minority communities through skill development for minority women and educational support for school dropouts.
 - (b) The Scheme is designed to address the development deficits of the identified Minority Concentration Areas.**
 - (c) It is a skill training and placement program for the rural poor youth
 - (d) The Scheme aims to provide end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople who work with their hands and tools.

EXPLANATION:

Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA), launched by converging five earlier schemes, including Seekho aur Kamao (SAK) and Nai Roshni.

The scheme focuses on the empowerment of minority communities through skill development; entrepreneurship; leadership training for minority women; and educational support for school dropouts. **So, Option (a) is not correct.**

Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) is a centrally funded scheme that comes under Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) aims at addressing development deficits in identified Minority Concentration Areas (MCAs).

It is implemented by State Governments/UT Administrations on a fund-sharing basis. The infrastructure built under the scheme is for the benefit of all people living in the area. It continues to support States/UTs in improving quality of life and reducing regional imbalances. **So, Option (b) is correct.**

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) is a skill training and placement initiative of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD). It targets rural poor youth, focusing on high-quality training, sustainable employment, and career progression. The program emphasizes post-placement tracking and supports beneficiaries in achieving long-term livelihoods with regular monthly wages at or above minimum wage. **So, Option (c) is not correct.**

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme aims to provide end-to-end support to artisans and craftspeople who work with their hands and tools.

The Scheme components include recognition through PM Vishwakarma Certificate and ID Card, Skill Upgradation, Toolkit Incentive, Credit Support, Incentive for Digital Transactions and Marketing Support. **So, Option (d) is not correct.**

51. Consider the following with reference to the Measles and Rubella infections:

1. Both infections are caused by a virus.
2. Both infections cause Encephalitis.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Measles is a highly contagious viral disease and remains a significant cause of death among young children worldwide, despite the availability of a safe and effective vaccine.

Rubella is also a contagious viral infection, primarily affecting children and young adults. It is the leading vaccine-preventable cause of birth defects. Rubella infection during pregnancy can lead to fetal death or serious congenital defects, known as Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS). So, Both Measles and Rubella infections are caused by virus. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

Encephalitis can occur in children and unimmunized adults either during or after a measles infection. This can happen because of the brain becoming infected with the virus during the rash phase of the illness or by an immune-mediated brain inflammation after measles infection.

Rubella causes encephalitis. One of the rare but devastating complications associated with rubella is progressive rubella panencephalitis (PRP). PRP is a progressive neurological disorder that occurs years after the initial rubella infection.

So, Both Measles and Rubella infections cause encephalitis. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

MEASLES AND RUBELLA	
Measles	➤ Measles virus (genus Morbillivirus) causes measles. It's an airborne disease, which means it spreads through the air when an infected person breathes, coughs, sneezes or talks. ➤ The airborne droplets can remain in a room for two hours even after the person with measles is gone. Droplets can also land on surfaces you touch. ➤ Complications of measles can be mild to life-threatening. ➤ They include ear infections, dehydration from severe diarrhea, bronchitis, laryngitis, pneumonia, blindness, brain swelling (encephalitis), etc. ➤ The MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) Vaccine is extremely effective at preventing measles.
Rubella	➤ Rubella, also known as German measles or three-day measles, is a contagious viral illness caused by the rubella virus (RuV). ➤ Although it causes a rash similar to measles, rubella is caused by a different virus and is generally milder in nature. ➤ Rubella typically leads to a rash, low-grade fever, and other mild symptoms. ➤ It spreads easily from person to person through respiratory droplets. ➤ Rubella is preventable through vaccination, usually given as part of the MMR vaccine.

52. Consider the following information:

National Waterways	River	Connecting Places
NW - 1	Ganga	Varanasi - Haldia
NW - 2	Brahmaputra	Dhubri - Sadiya
NW - 3	Krishna	Vijayawada - Muktyala
NW - 4	West Coast Canal	Kottapuram - Kollam

How many of the above rows are correctly matched?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system from Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad) to Haldia spans 1,620 km and was declared as National Waterway-1 (NW-1) in 1986. It traverses the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and West Bengal. This waterway is being developed under the Jal Marg Vikas Project with assistance from the World Bank. The tidal stretch of the Hooghly River from Haldia to Nabadwip allows sea-going vessels to navigate up to Kolkata, and this portion is maintained by the Kolkata Port Trust. **So, Pair 1 is correct.**

The Dhubri to Sadiya stretch of the Brahmaputra River, covering 891 km, was designated as National Waterway-2 (NW-2) under the National Waterway Act of 1988. Flowing through the Assam Valley, the Brahmaputra receives many tributaries such as Subansiri, Dihing, Jia Bharali, and Kopili. This route connects Assam with Kolkata and Haldia using inland water transport (IWT) routes via Bangladesh, under a bilateral agreement. **So, Pair 2 is correct.**

National Waterway-3 (NW-3) does not correspond to the Krishna River. Instead, NW-3 refers to the West Coast Canal in Kerala, which stretches from Kottapuram to Kollam and includes the Champakara and Udyogmandal canals.

The entire navigable length is about 205 km. It consists of a mix of natural backwaters, rivers, and man-made canals, and it plays a key role in linking industrial hubs to Kochi Port. **So, Pair 3 is not correct.**

National Waterway- 4 does not include the West Coast Canal. Instead. It comprises the Kakinada-Puducherry canal stretch (767 km), the Godavari River stretch (171 km), and the Krishna River stretch (157 km), making up a total length of 1,095 km. This waterway passes through Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry and links major ports such as Kakinada, Chennai, Ennore, and Puducherry. **So, Pair 4 is not correct.**

53. Which of the following is **not** a feature of 'Gyan Post', a new postal service for affordable delivery of books in India?

- (a) **It delivers commercial and non-commercial printed educational content.**
- (b) Books without promotional content are only accepted.
- (c) Tracking facility available for transparency and reliability.
- (d) It is operational through all Departmental post offices.

EXPLANATION:

The Department of Posts under the Ministry of Communications has launched 'Gyan Post', a dedicated postal service for the affordable delivery of educational, cultural, social and religious books. This initiative aligns with the objectives of the New Education Policy (NEP). It aims to bridge the educational divide by making printed educational material more accessible and affordable across India, including remote and rural areas.

Salient Features of 'Gyan Post':

- Delivery of non-commercial printed educational content only (Does not include commercial printed content). **So, Option (a) is not correct.**
- Minimum rate: ₹20 for packets up to 300 grams.
- Maximum rate: ₹100 for packets up to 5 kilograms (excluding applicable taxes).
- Strict eligibility: Only books without commercial ads or promotional content are accepted. Each item must bear the name of the printer or publisher. **So, Option (b) is correct.**
- Tracking facility available for transparency and reliability. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

Gyan Post is operational through all Departmental post offices and is offering a traceable surface mail service for eligible book packets.

This service is part of India Post's continuous efforts to support education for all by ensuring that learning materials are not just available but reachable. **So, Option (d) is correct.**

54. Consider the following statements regarding the UN80 initiative:

1. This initiative helps to rationalize the UN expenses.
2. It reviews the implementation of mandates received from Member States.
3. As a non-permanent member with a two-year term beginning in January 2026, India is part of this initiative.

How many of the above statements is/are **not** correct ?

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

EXPLANATION:

The UN80 Initiative was launched by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in March 2025, ahead of the United Nations' 80th anniversary.

- It reflects a renewed commitment to strengthen the UN and make it more effective, responsive, and relevant in addressing today's global challenges.

- The initiative aims to build a stronger and more efficient United Nations that can deliver better results for people, especially amid increasing global needs and limited resources.
- It seeks to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and support the implementation of the Pact for the Future, while demonstrating the continued effectiveness of multilateralism through timely reforms and improved coordination across the UN system.

The goals of the UN80 initiative are to create a UN that is:

- More efficient and cost-effective
- More responsive to crises and countries' needs
- More effective in the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals
- More accountable to taxpayers and the people it serves
- More supportive of UN staff and their mission-critical work

The Initiative aims to use the finite resources as effectively as possible, and with fewer bureaucratic burdens. In this way, the initiative helps rationalise the UN expense. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The UN80 Initiative is structured around three main workstreams designed to make the United Nations more efficient, accountable, and fit for purpose in today's global context. These workstreams focus on strengthening how the UN operates and delivers on its mandates:

- Identifying efficiency and improvements in the way the UN works.
- Reviewing the implementation of mandates received from Member States to ensure alignment with current priorities.
- Examining potential structural changes and programme realignments across the UN system to enhance coherence and impact.

Work in all three areas is being carried out in parallel rather than in sequence, ensuring a comprehensive and coordinated approach to reform. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

Bahrain, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Latvia, and Liberia were elected as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for a two-year term starting in January 2026.

- They will serve until the end of 2027, helping the Council carry out its primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security.
- These newly elected members will join the current non-permanent members — Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama, and Somalia — who will serve through 2026.
- The incoming members will replace Algeria, Guyana, the Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, and Slovenia, whose terms conclude in December 2025
- India has been elected as a non-permanent member of the Council (eight times) for the years 1950-1951, 1967-1968, 1972-1973, 1977-1978, 1984-1985, 1991-1992, 2011-2012, and 2021-2022. (At present, India is not serving as a non-permanent member)

So, Statement 3 is not correct.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

UN80 INITIATIVE	
Recently in news	UN chief announces new 'UN80 Initiative' to improve efficiencies amid shrinking resources, uncertainty.
About	➤ The UN80 Initiative aims to make the United Nations more agile, integrated, and better equipped to address contemporary global challenges. ➤ These include ongoing conflicts — such as the devastating wars in Gaza and Ukraine that have heightened geopolitical tensions — as well as the intensifying impacts of climate change, rising inequality, and emerging threats from rapid technological advancement.
Goals	To create a UN that is: ➤ More efficient and cost-effective ➤ More responsive to crises and countries' needs ➤ More effective in delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals

	➤ More accountable to taxpayers and the people it serves ➤ More supportive of UN staff and their mission-critical work
UNSC Members	➤ Five permanent members of UNSC: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States. ➤ According to the UN Charter, the 15-member Security Council (ten non-permanent and five permanent) is primarily responsible for ensuring international peace and security, and all Member States are required to comply with its decisions. ➤ The ten non-permanent seats on the Security Council are divided into four regional groups: Africa and Asia; Eastern Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean; and Western European and other States.

55. With reference to the Navigating Global Financial System Fragmentation report, consider the following:

1. The report estimates that up to 5% of global GDP decreases in a very high fragmentation scenario due to reduced trade and cross-border capital flows.
2. Emerging markets like India are facing GDP losses of over 10% due to their dependence on an integrated global financial system.
3. The inflation rates and GDP growth in a fragmented economy heavily depend on the policies adopted by global leaders.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The World Economic Forum's (WEF) "Navigating Global Financial System Fragmentation" report is about the growing trend of a fragmented global financial system, driven by geopolitical actions, and its significant economic costs. The report showed that the economic impact of rising geo-economic fragmentation could surpass the disruptions caused by the 2008 financial crisis or the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The Report estimated that fragmentation resulting from statecraft policies could cost the global economy USD 0.6 trillion to USD 5.7 trillion - up to 5 per cent of global GDP due to reduced trade and cross-border capital flows as well as lost economic efficiencies.
- It could also increase global inflation by more than 5 per cent in a very high fragmentation scenario.

So, Statement 1 is correct.

The report explains that the effects of financial fragmentation on inflation and GDP depend on the policies chosen by global leaders. With careful planning, governments can protect their economies while reducing negative impacts on living costs and growth.

In the most extreme scenario, a complete economic split between Eastern and Western blocs would force neutral countries to trade mainly with one side. Emerging economies like India, Brazil, Türkiye, and nations in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia could see GDP growth fall by over 10%, about twice the global average. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

The World Economic Forum's report notes that countries are increasingly using the global financial system to pursue geopolitical objectives, as seen in a 370% rise in sanctions since 2017 and efforts to build parallel financial networks.

- It urges policymakers to adopt economic strategies that promote cooperation, sustainable growth, and resilience.
- The impact of financial fragmentation on inflation and GDP growth depends largely on the policies adopted by global leaders.

- With a principled approach, policymakers can design measures suited to their economies and societies while minimizing unintended effects on living costs and economic growth. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

NAVIGATING GLOBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM FRAGMENTATION REPORT	
Recently in news	The Navigating Global Financial System Fragmentation report estimated that fragmentation resulting from statecraft policies could cost the global economy \$0.6 trillion to \$5.7 trillion up to 5% of global GDP.
About	➤ The World Economic Forum's report introduces the Principles to Safeguard the Global Financial System from Fragmentation, created by over 25 global financial leaders and experts. ➤ These principles aim to keep the global financial system stable and reduce the negative effects of fragmentation. ➤ They highlight eight key conditions for a strong financial system, including respect for the rule of law, property rights, system interoperability, and avoiding unilateral seizure of sovereign assets. ➤ The report notes that tools like sanctions, export controls, and tariffs are being used more often for political purposes, making it important to create clear rules that prevent shocks to the global economy. ➤ It also serves as a call for governments to consider market stability and global prosperity when making economic decisions. ➤ The report suggests ways to use economic policies that protect national security while still supporting global growth — such as designing smarter sanctions, finding areas of mutual benefit, cutting unintended costs, and updating the financial system for today's geopolitical realities.

56. Consider the following South Atlantic islands, sometimes seen in the news:

1. Falkland island
2. South Sandwich Islands
3. South Georgia
4. Tristan da Cunha island

The correct sequence of these islands from west to east is

- (a) 1-4-2-3
- (b) 2-3-1-4
- (c) 4-3-2-1
- (d) **1-3-2-4**

EXPLANATION:

The correct sequence of the South Atlantic islands from west to east is- Falkland Islands, South Georgia, South Sandwich Islands and Tristan da Cunha. **(1-3-2-4)**

Falkland Islands: Recently, the Falkland Islands expressed surprise after being hit with a 42% US tariff under President Trump's list of "worst offenders."

- The Falkland Islands are an archipelago and an overseas territory of the United Kingdom located in the southwest Atlantic Ocean at the southernmost point of South America.
- The islands are positioned both in the southern and western hemispheres of the Earth.
- The Falkland Islands are situated about 300 miles (483km) east of the Argentine coastline. **(1)**

South Georgia Island: Recently, Iceberg A23a, the world's largest iceberg, is on a course towards South Georgia Island off Antarctica, potentially impacting local wildlife.

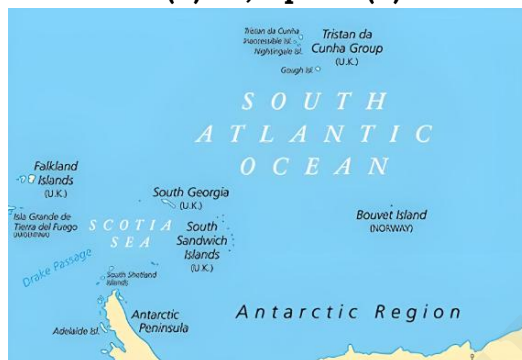
- South Georgia, a mountainous, barren island in the South Atlantic Ocean, (1,300 km) east-southeast of the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas).
- It is part of the British overseas territory of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, although Argentina also claims the territory. **(3)**

South Sandwich Islands: It is a group of actively volcanic islets in the South Atlantic Ocean, north of the Weddell Sea and (760 km) southeast of the island of South Georgia. They extend for 305 km, occupy 310 square km, and are covered with glaciers.

- Until 1985, they were included within the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) as a British dependency; thereafter, they formed (with South Georgia) a British overseas territory, though their administration was still based in the Falklands. **(2)**

Tristan da Cunha, is a group of islands in the South Atlantic Ocean, is about midway between southern Africa and South America.

- The island group is a constituent part of the British overseas territory of St. Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha.
- It is the largest and northernmost of the group, roughly circular, with a coastline of 34 km, and a central volcanic cone of 2,060 metres. **(4) So, Option (d) is correct.**



57. With reference to Lokmata Devi Ahilya Bai, consider the following statements:

1. She was a ruler of Indore in the 18th Century.
2. The capital of her kingdom was Maheshwar.
3. She renovated the Kashi Vishwanath Temple.
4. She also formed and trained a women's army.

How many of the above statements is/are correct ?

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

EXPLANATION:



Lokmata Devi Ahilya Bai

Rajmata Ahilyabai Holkar, born on May 31, 1725, in Chondi village of Maharashtra, was one of the most capable and visionary rulers of 18th-century India.

- Her simplicity and strength impressed Malhar Rao Holkar, who arranged her marriage to his son Khanderao Holkar in 1733.
- After her husband's death in the Siege of Kumher Fort (1754), she wished to commit sati, but Malhar Rao stopped her and trained her in administration and warfare.
- Following the deaths of Malhar Rao (1766) and her son Male Rao (1767), she took responsibility for the kingdom and sought permission from the Peshwa to rule Malwa.
- Despite opposition, she had the army's full support and was granted permission to rule.
- She became the ruler of Indore on December 11, 1767. **So, Statement 1 is correct**

After her husband's death in the Battle of Kumher (1754), Ahilyabai Holkar took charge of Malwa, strengthened the Holkar army, and became known for her bravery and archery skills. She ruled wisely and justly, bringing peace and prosperity to her kingdom.

Her capital, Maheshwar, flourished as a centre of art, music, literature, and industry. She held daily public meetings to address people's concerns and was known as a compassionate and farsighted ruler dedicated to her people's welfare. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

The most notable contribution of Ahilyabai was the renovation and repair of the famous Kashi Vishwanath Temple in 1780.

- Recognizing this contribution of hers, a statue of Devi Ahilyabai Holkar has been installed in Kashi Vishwanath temple.
- Devi Ahilyabai is also credited for the construction of Old (Juna) Somnath temple in Gujarat.
- With a keen interest in religion and charity, she built numerous temples including two of the twelve Jyotirlingas. Her charity extended beyond her territory to the rest of India. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

In a revolutionary move for her time, she formed a women's army and trained them in warfare, self-defense, and administrative security. This force came to symbolize state defense, law and order, and women's empowerment. **So, Statement 4 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

LOKMATA DEVI AHILYABAI HOLKAR	
Recently in news	Recently, on May 31, 2025, marking the 300th birth anniversary of Lokmata Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for several development projects in Bhopal.
Contributions of Ahilyabai Holkar	➤ Ahilyabai Holkar established a textile industry in Maheshwar, which became famous for Maheshwari sarees. ➤ She undertook numerous philanthropic works, including building temples, ghats, wells, tanks, and rest houses across India. ➤ She supported farmers, trade, and education, establishing gurukuls and schools to promote learning. ➤ Her vision combined spiritual devotion with social welfare, making her rule one of prosperity and cultural revival. ➤ Known as the 'Philosopher Queen', she passed away on August 13, 1795, at the age of 70.

- Her legacy endures through the temples, dharamshalas, and public works she built, especially the transformation of Indore and Maheshwar into centres of culture and progress.

58. 'EnviStats India 2025: Environment Statistics' is published by:

- (a) India Meteorological Department
- (b) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- (c) NITI Aayog
- (d) Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation**

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, released the 8th issue of the publication titled "EnviStats India 2025: Environment Statistics" during the National Workshop on Using Alternate Data Sources and Frontier Technologies for Policy Making on 5th June 2025 in New Delhi.

"EnviStats India 2025: Environment Statistics" serves as a key resource for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders, providing a comprehensive overview of the country's environmental landscape.

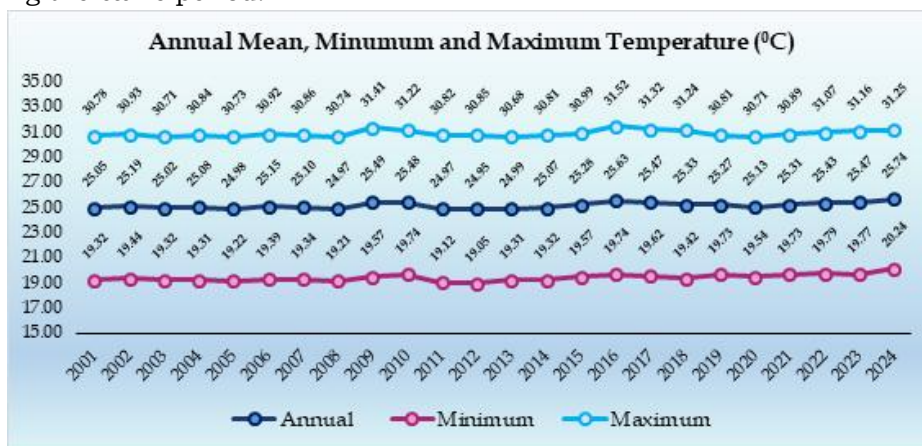
By analysing key environmental indicators, the publication highlights emerging trends, identifies critical challenges, and supports the formulation of evidence-based policies aimed at achieving environmental sustainability and resilience. **So, Option (d) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

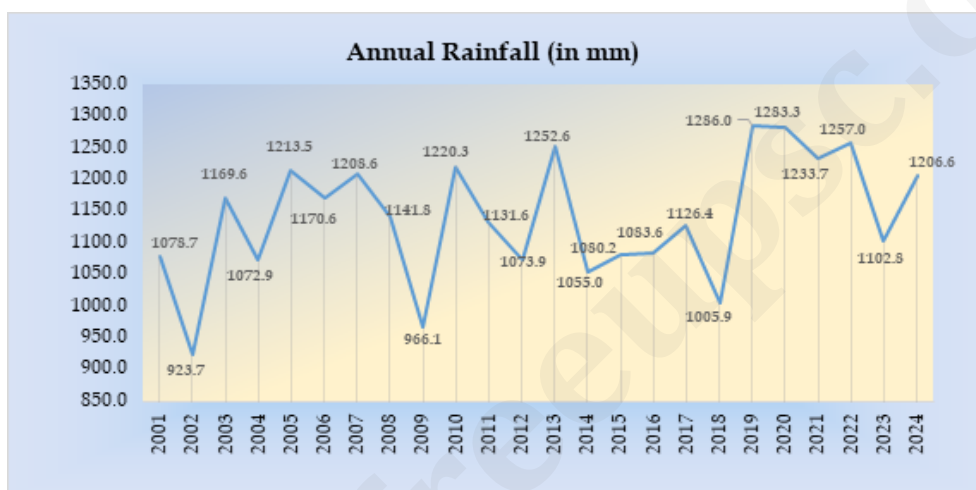
ENVISTATS INDIA 2025: ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS	
About	Since 2018, the National Statistics Office (NSO) has been publishing "EnviStats India" in alignment with the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) 2013. The data presented in the publication are compiled from various Ministries, Departments, and Organizations of the Government of India. Following the structure of FDES 2013, the data in "EnviStats India 2025: Environment Statistics" are organized into six components, each corresponding to those of the FDES framework.
FDES	To maintain consistency in environmental statistics across countries, the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) introduced the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) in 1984. The FDES 2013 organizes environmental statistics into six main components: ➤ Component 1: Environmental Conditions and Quality – Focuses on the state, quality, and changes in the natural environment; forms the core of the framework. ➤ Component 2: Environmental Resources and Their Use – Covers the availability and use of natural resources such as land, ecosystems, and minerals. ➤ Component 3: Residuals – Deals with waste and emissions released into the environment from production and consumption. ➤ Component 4: Extreme Events and Disasters – Includes data on the occurrence and impacts of natural and technological disasters. ➤ Component 5: Human Settlements and Environmental Health – Links environmental factors with living conditions and public health. ➤ Component 6: Environmental Protection, Management, and Engagement – Focuses on policies, economic measures, and actions taken for environmental protection and sustainable management.
Key Highlights	➤ Temperature Trends (2001–2024): India's annual mean temperature rose from 25.05°C in 2001 to 25.74°C in 2024. The minimum temperature increased from

**of
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India 2025**

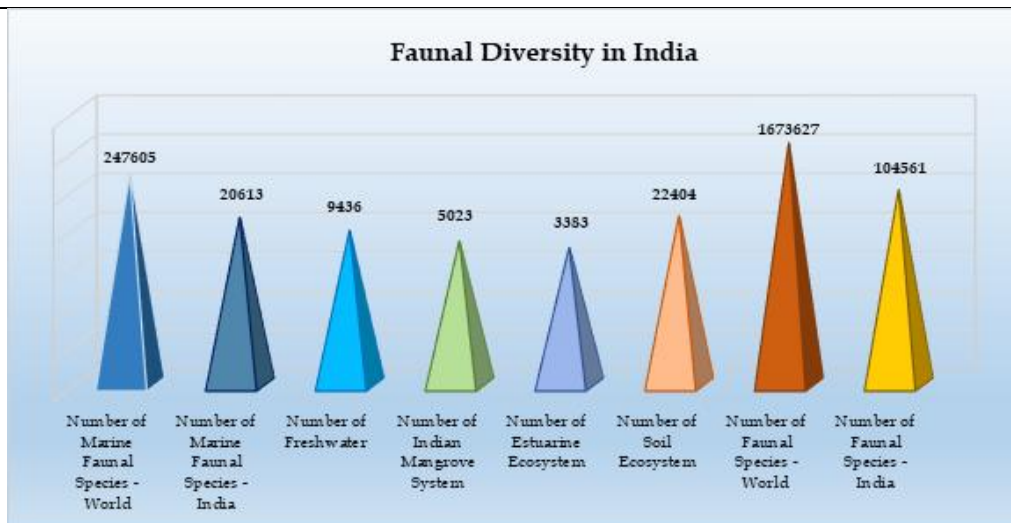
19.32°C to 20.24°C, while the maximum temperature rose from 30.78°C to 31.25°C during the same period.



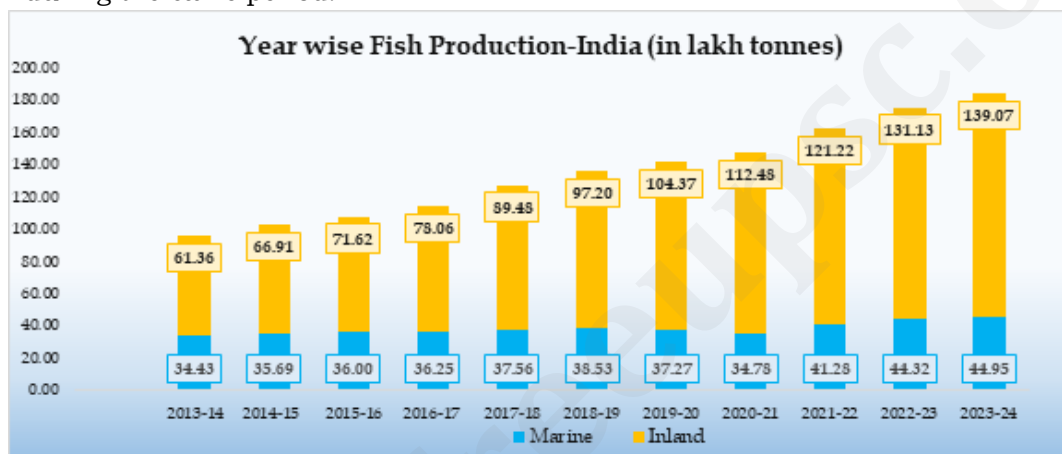
- **Rainfall Trends (2001–2024):** The annual rainfall between 2001 and 2024 showed significant year-to-year variation due to changing monsoon patterns, but there was no clear long-term trend indicating an overall increase or decrease.



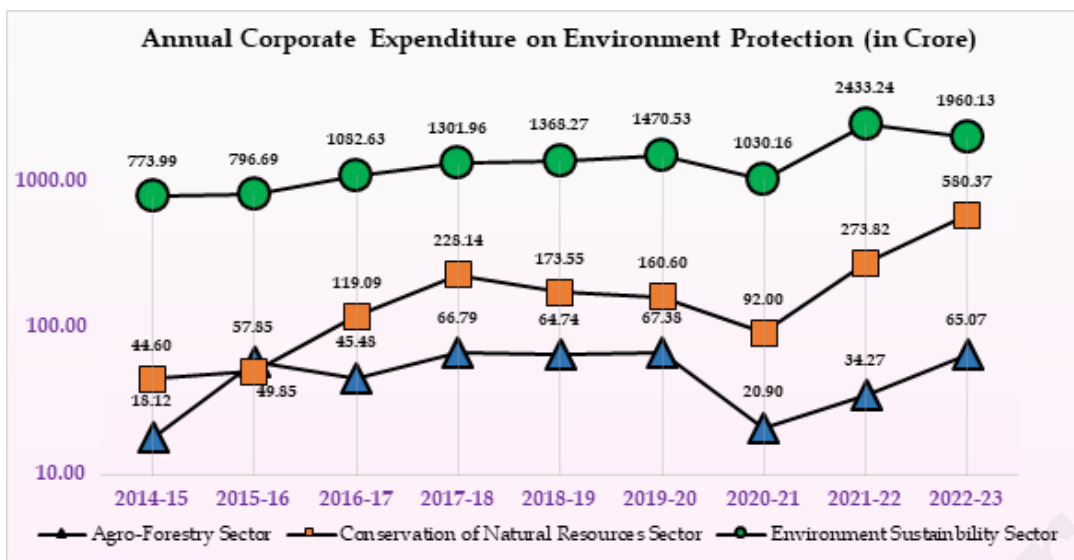
- **Biodiversity (Faunal Species):** Globally, there are about 2,47,605 marine faunal species, with India contributing 20,613. India also has 9,436 freshwater, 5,023 mangrove, 3,383 estuarine, and 22,404 soil species. Out of 16,73,627 faunal species worldwide, 1,04,561 are found in India, reflecting the country's rich biodiversity, especially in soil ecosystems.



- **Fish Production:** Inland fish production rose from 61.36 lakh tonnes in 2013-14 to 139.07 lakh tonnes in 2023-24, showing rapid growth in inland aquaculture. Marine fish production also increased from 34.43 lakh tonnes to 44.95 lakh tonnes during the same period.



- **Environmental Expenditure (2021-22):** In environmental expenditure (2021-22), the Environment Sustainability Sector recorded the highest spending (₹2,433.24 crore), followed by the Conservation of Natural Resources Sector, while Agro-Forestry had the lowest expenditure.



59. With reference to the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame, consider the following statements:

1. It is presented only to living players.
2. So far, hundred Indians have been presented with the honour.
3. Diana Edulji is the only inducted female Indian cricketer.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The ICC Cricket Hall of Fame was launched on January 2, 2009, by the International Cricket Council (ICC) in association with the Federation of International Cricketers Associations (FICA), as part of the ICC's centenary year celebrations. It was created to honour and recognise the achievements of cricket's greatest legends from the sport's long and illustrious history.

Induction ceremonies are held throughout the cricket calendar, where inductees (or their relatives, if deceased) receive a commemorative Hall of Fame cap. Living members of the Hall of Fame also participate in selecting new inductees each year. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

Recently, seven distinguished cricketers were voted by the ICC Hall of Famers, senior executives, and members of the media and inducted during 'A Day with the Legends' event. So far, 11 Indian players (not 100) have been inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, with MS Dhoni being the latest one.

- Bishan Singh Bedi (2009)
- Sunil Gavaskar (2009)
- Kapil Dev (2010)
- Anil Kumble (2015)
- Rahul Dravid (2018)
- Sachin Tendulkar (2019)
- Vinoo Mankad (2021)
- Diana Edulji (2023)
- Virender Sehwag (2023)
- Neetu David (2024)
- MS Dhoni (2025) **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

Diana Edulji became the first Indian woman cricketer to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame in 2023. In the same year, Neetu David, India's leading left-arm spinner known for her record 8/53 against England in 1995, was also inducted, marking a historic moment for Indian women's cricket. Therefore, Diana Edulji is not the only inducted female Indian cricketer. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

60. Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority works under

- (a) NITI Aayog
- (b) The Ministry of Corporate Affairs**
- (c) Reserve Bank of India
- (d) None of the above

EXPLANATION:

The Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) was established on September 7, 2016, under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India. It manages the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF), which is used to promote investor awareness and refund unclaimed amounts such as dividends, matured deposits, debentures, and shares.

Any amount that remains unclaimed for seven years is transferred to this fund. The IEPFA oversees the refund process, ensuring transparency, protection of investor interests, and the promotion of financial literacy across the country. **So, Option (b) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INVESTOR EDUCATION AND PROTECTION FUND AUTHORITY (IEPFA)	
Recently in news	Recently, the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA), under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, formed a committee to review procedures and suggest reforms to simplify documentation for low-value claims. This initiative aims to reduce processing time, increase transparency, and make services more convenient for investors.
About	➤ The Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF) was established under Section 205C of the Companies Act, 1956 (via the Companies Amendment Act, 1999) to promote investor awareness and safeguard investor interests. ➤ The rules require that amounts such as unpaid dividends, matured deposits or debentures that remain unclaimed for seven years from the date they become due must be transferred to the Fund. ➤ The IEPF Authority (IEPFA) administers this Fund: it handles refunds of unclaimed shares, dividends, matured deposits and debentures, and carries out investor-education and awareness activities to protect investors' rights.
Functions of IEPF	The IEPF is utilized for the following purposes: ➤ Refunds of unclaimed dividends, matured deposits/debentures, application money, and related interest. ➤ Promoting investor education, awareness, and protection. ➤ Distributing disgorged amounts (money recovered from wrongdoers) among eligible investors, as directed by court orders. ➤ Reimbursing legal expenses for class action suits filed by members, debenture-holders, or depositors under Sections 37 and 245 of the Companies Act ➤ Other related purposes, as prescribed by the rules.
Eligibility	Investors whose unclaimed amounts were transferred to the IEPF after seven years under the Companies Act, 1956, are eligible to claim refunds from the Fund as per the applicable rules.

61. Consider the following pairs:

Global Conflict region – Country

I. Tripoli: Algeria

II. Aleppo: Iraq

III. Northern triangle: Mexico

In how many of the above rows is the given information correctly matched?

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently, Clash broke out between armed groups in the Libyan capital on May 2025 following the killing of Abdelghani “Ghneiwa” al-Kikli, commander of the Tripoli-based armed group Stability Support Apparatus (SSA).

Tripoli, capital city of Libya (not Algeria). Situated in northwestern Libya along the Mediterranean coast, it is the country’s largest city and chief seaport.

- Tripoli is a major coastal oasis serving a region growing olives, vegetables, citrus fruit, tobacco, and grains.
- Fishing is important, and several canneries in the city process the catch.
- Tripoli’s industries include tanning and the manufacture of cigarettes and carpets.
- An oil depot, motor vehicle assembly plants, and gas-bottling plant are also located there.
- With its port, nearby international airport, and road connections, Tripoli is a busy transshipment Centre. **So, Pair 1 is not correct.**



Recently, The United States of America constructed a new military base in Syria’s Aleppo province. Aleppo the principal city of northern Syria (not Iraq) is situated in the northwestern part of the country, about 30 miles (50 km) south of the Turkish border.

Aleppo is located at the crossroads of great commercial routes and lies some 60 miles (100 km) from both the Mediterranean Sea (west) and the Euphrates River (east). **So, Pair 2 is not correct.**



More than two million people have left Central America's Northern Triangle—which includes El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—since 2019, fleeing violence, insecurity, poverty, environmental disasters, and other hardships.

The Northern Triangle, located in the heart of Central America, consists of:

- El Salvador to the south, along the Pacific Ocean,
- Guatemala to the west, with coasts on both the Pacific and Caribbean, and
- Honduras to the east, with coastlines on the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean.

This region holds a strategic geopolitical position, serving as a bridge for trade and migration between North and South America. Therefore, the Northern triangle does not include Mexico. **So, Pair 3 is not correct.**



62. Consider the following pairs:

- I. The International Year of Cooperatives: 2025
- II. International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists: 2026
- III. International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development: 2027
- IV. International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism: 2028

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

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

EXPLANATION:

The UN General Assembly declared 2025 the International Year of Cooperatives under the theme “Cooperatives Build a Better World”, recognising their role in driving sustainable development and advancing the UN SDGs.

- The International Year of Cooperatives 2025, themed “Cooperatives Build a Better World,” aims to raise awareness, promote growth, and inspire leadership in the cooperative movement.
- The year is hosted by the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC), a global multi-stakeholder partnership uniting UN agencies and the co-op movement.
- The theme underscores the enduring global impact of cooperatives, positioning them as essential solutions to today’s global challenges.
- It highlights their contributions to sustainable development across social, economic, and environmental dimensions, showing how cooperatives are key drivers in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.
- The theme also emphasizes the unique ability of cooperatives to foster inclusive growth and strengthen community resilience. **So, Pair 1 is correct.**

The United Nations has declared 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists to highlight the vital role of healthy rangelands in supporting the environment, economic growth, and community livelihoods.

The year aims to raise awareness about the importance of sustainable pastoralism and to promote investment in the pastoral livestock sector. It focuses on:

- Sustainable land management,
- Restoring ecosystems,
- Improving livestock health and breeding, and
- Ensuring fair access to markets.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) will lead the implementation of this global initiative. **So, Pair 2 is correct.**

The International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026) is a UN-designated year to recognize the vital role of volunteers in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Declared by the UN General Assembly in 2023, it serves as a global call to action to expand and celebrate volunteer contributions, focusing on inclusivity, leadership, and community building.
- The year is coordinated by the UN Volunteers (UNV) programme with the support of member states, civil society, and other organizations through various national and international activities.
- A key message for IVY 2026 is that volunteers can significantly contribute to sustainable development, but only if provided with an enabling environment. **So, Pair 3 is not correct.**

The United Nations has declared 2027 (not 2028) as the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism, following a resolution adopted on February 26, 2024, at the initiative of Uzbekistan.

- The year aims to promote tourism practices that are sustainable and resilient, helping to accelerate global sustainable development.
- It encouraged all states, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the International Year to promote actions at all levels, including through international cooperation, and to support sustainable and resilient tourism as a means of promoting and accelerating sustainable development. **So, Pair 4 is not correct.**

63. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY), consider the following statements:

1. The scheme was launched in 2017 under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
2. The objective of PMKSY is to supplement agriculture, modernise processing and decrease Agri-Waste.
3. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by the finance minister, recently approved an additional budgetary allocation of ₹1,920 crore for the scheme.

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

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

EXPLANATION:

The Central Sector Scheme – SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) was approved in May 2017 for the period 2016–20, coinciding with the 14th Finance Commission cycle. The scheme has since been renamed as the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY).

- The PM Kisan SAMPADA Yojana is a comprehensive programme aimed at developing modern infrastructure and ensuring efficient supply chain management from the farm gate to the retail outlet.
- The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, (not by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare). **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) is an umbrella scheme that combines several ongoing and new initiatives of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

- The scheme aims to supplement agriculture, modernize food processing, and reduce agricultural waste.
- It seeks to boost the growth of the food processing sector, ensure better returns to farmers, create employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas, reduce post-harvest losses, increase processing levels, and enhance exports of processed foods. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister (not the finance minister), has approved a total outlay of ₹6,520 crore for the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana (PMKSY) during the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021–22 to 2025–26).

This includes an additional ₹1,920 crore, with

- ₹1,000 crore for setting up 50 Multi-Product Food Irradiation Units and 100 NABL-accredited Food Testing Labs under PMKSY components – Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure (ICCVAI) and Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure (FSQAI).
- ₹920 crore for projects under various component schemes of PMKSY during the same period. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

PRADHAN MANTRI KISAN SAMPADA YOJANA (PMKSY)	
Components of PMKSY	The PMKSY had seven component schemes viz; ➤ Mega Food Parks, ➤ Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, ➤ Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Clusters, ➤ Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages, ➤ Creation/Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities, ➤ Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure and ➤ Human Resources and Institutions.
Impacts of PMKSY	➤ The implementation of PMKSY will result in the creation of modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlet. ➤ It will provide a big boost to the growth of the food processing sector in the country. ➤ It will help in providing better prices to farmers and is a big step towards doubling farmers' income.

- It will create huge employment opportunities, especially in rural areas.
- It will also help in reducing wastage of agricultural produce, increasing the processing level, availability of safe and convenient processed foods at an affordable price to consumers, and enhancing the export of processed foods.

64. Consider the following:

1. Five Eyes Alliance
2. Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)
3. International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes

India is a member of which of the above?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) **None**

EXPLANATION:

The Five Eyes (FVEY) is an intelligence-sharing alliance comprising the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

- Established in 1946 under the UKUSA Agreement, it facilitates the exchange of signals intelligence (SIGINT) and cooperation on global security challenges such as terrorism and cybersecurity.
- What makes the Five Eyes alliance unique is that all member countries are diverse democracies governed by the rule of law, committed to human rights, and united by a common language.
- These shared values foster deep trust and enable seamless information sharing to safeguard their collective national interests.
- India is not a member of the Five Eyes Alliance. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is a military alliance of six post-Soviet states: Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Belarus.

- Established in 2002 for the purpose of collective defense, the CSTO offers protection to members from threats to their security, territory, or sovereignty.
- Headquartered in Moscow, the organization is often positioned as the Eurasian equivalent of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).
- The CSTO is one of several alliances formed between former Soviet republics following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

India is not a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) is an autonomous international institution and a World Bank Group affiliate that provides an independent forum for conciliation and arbitration of international investment disputes.

- By providing an impartial system for dispute settlement, it facilitates foreign investment.
- Member states are Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Italy, Indonesia, United Kingdom, United states of America, etc.,
- India is not a member of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) primarily due to concerns that its arbitration rules favor developed countries and that ICSID awards cannot be challenged in national courts, potentially infringing on India's judicial sovereignty and public policy. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

65. Consider the following:

	Places in news	Country
1.	Hotan prefecture	China

2.	Suriname	South America
3.	Mount Kanlaon	Philippines
4.	Lonza valley	Switzerland

How many of the above pairs is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently China has formed two new counties in Hotan Prefecture that incorporates territory of Ladakh. India has lodged a “solemn protest” with China over the formation of two counties in the Hotan Prefecture that incorporates territory of India’s Ladakh.

The Hotan Prefecture, also known as Khotan in India, contains parts of Aksai Chin that India accuses China of occupying and formation of the two new counties appears like Beijing firming up administrative measures in the region. Hotan prefecture is located in China. **So, Pair (1) is correct.**



Recently, India has dispatched the second and final batch of machinery for Passion Fruit Processing to Suriname under the SEEDS (Supply of Equipment for Efficient Development of SMES) initiative.

- Suriname is a small country on the northern coast of South America and one of the most ethnically diverse in the region. Its economy mainly depends on natural resources, especially bauxite, and about 80% of the country is covered by tropical rainforests.
- Formerly known as Dutch Guiana, Suriname was a Dutch colony until it gained independence on November 25, 1975.
- It was ruled by military regimes from 1980 to 1987, and though another coup occurred in 1990, the country returned to civilian rule in 1991.
- The capital city, Paramaribo, lies on the Suriname River, about 15 km from the Atlantic Ocean. **So, Pair (2) is correct.**



Recently, Mount Kanlaon, an active volcano located on Negros Island in the central Philippines, erupted, sending a massive ash plume high into the sky and prompting immediate safety precautions.

- Mount Kanlaon is a part of the volcanic Cordillera Central.
- It is, at 8,086 feet (2,465 meters), the highest point in the Visayan Islands.
- Mount Canlaon National Park (1934) encompasses 95 square miles (245 square km) of rugged, forested terrain that includes craters, hot springs, and a variety of wildlife (monkeys, deer, and boars).
- Thus, Mount Kanlaon is located in Philippines. **So, Pair (3) is correct.**



Recently, a massive glacier collapse in the Swiss Alps triggered a catastrophic landslide that buried most of the Alpine village of Blatten in the Lotschental valley. The collapse, caused by the disintegration of the Birch Glacier above the village, sent a deluge of ice, mud, and rock cascading through homes, infrastructure, and the Lonza River.

The Loetschental (Lonza) Valley is nestled in the canton of Valais, southern Switzerland, within the Alpine region. **So, Pair (4) is correct.**



66. With reference to Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD), consider the following:

1. It is an initiative launched by the Ministry of Culture under the National Mission on Cultural Mapping.
2. The project aims to culturally map 6.5 lakh villages across all States and Union Territories in India.
3. The MGMD portal provides only demographic data of villages.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD) is a pan-India initiative of Ministry of Culture under National Mission on Cultural Mapping.

- The main objective the project is to culturally map India's 6.5 lakh villages, spanning all States and Union Territories, on a comprehensive virtual platform.
- Through MGMD, people will get an opportunity to immerse themselves in the diverse and vibrant cultural heritage of India.
- The core idea behind this project is to encourage appreciation for India's culture and traditions, paving way for economic growth, social harmony, and artistic development in rural communities.

So, Statements 1 and 2 are correct.

The cultural mapping of India's 6.5 lakh villages is being made available through the MGDM (Mera Gaon, Meri Dharohar) portal, a unique virtual platform designed to digitally showcase the rich cultural and traditional heritage of rural India.

- This comprehensive online repository provides detailed information about each village, including its geographical location, demographic profile, traditional attire and ornaments, local arts and crafts, temples, fairs, festivals, and other cultural practices.
- The platform enables users to explore, discover, and research the diverse traditions and lifestyles that define India's villages.

- Serving as a one-stop destination, the MGDM portal allows people to virtually visit villages across the country and gain insights into their unique heritage.
- In addition, users are encouraged to engage with the platform through incentives and digital rewards, making their journey of cultural exploration both informative and interactive.
- Therefore, MGMD portal does not provides only demographic data of villages. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

NATIONAL MISSION ON CULTURAL MAPPING	
About	➤ The National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM) was launched by the Ministry of Culture to preserve and promote India's rich cultural heritage. ➤ It is being implemented by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and focuses on documenting India's diverse cultural traditions while also helping to revitalize rural economies. ➤ The NMCM plays a key role in preserving India's cultural diversity and empowering rural communities. ➤ As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, NMCM launched the Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD) portal in June 2023. ➤ Under the MGMD, information is being collected under seven broad categories. • Arts and Crafts Village • Ecologically Oriented Village • Scholastic Village linked with Textual and Scriptural Traditions of India • Epic Village linked with Ramayana, Mahabharata and/or Puranic legends and oral epics • Historical Village linked with Local and National History • Architectural Heritage Village • Any other characteristic that may need highlighting such as fishing village, horticulture village, shepherding village etc.

67. Consider the following statements regarding Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) :

1. Membership in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is open only to states whose shores are directly washed by the Indian Ocean.
2. India is currently the Vice-Chair of IORA and part of the Troika.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is an inter-governmental organization established in 1997 to promote regional economic cooperation among countries bordering the Indian Ocean. Over the years, it has evolved into the leading regional group spanning the Indian Ocean region. The IORA Secretariat, located in Mauritius, is headed by a Secretary-General appointed for a fixed term.

- The Indian Ocean Rim Association has 23 Member States and 12 Dialogue Partners, for regional cooperation in Indian Ocean region across six Priority Areas and two Cross-Cutting Issues.
- All sovereign States of the Indian Ocean Rim, the shores of which are directly washed by the Indian Ocean, are eligible for membership of the Association.

- To become members, States must adhere to the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter of the Association. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The TROIKA is a key body of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) made up of the current Chair, the Vice-Chair (who will be the next Chair), and the past Chair.

It helps guide the organization on important issues such as reviewing existing systems, creating new mechanisms, and making policy decisions, which are then shared with IORA Member States.

The TROIKA also gives regular advice on institutional matters and the strategic direction of the Association and can meet between the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and Council of Ministers (COM) sessions.

In addition, the TROIKA plays an important role in the appointment and terms of the IORA Secretary-General.

India is currently the Vice-Chair of IORA and part of the Troika. India will assume the Chairship of IORA for 2025-2027. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION (IORA)	
Recently in news	The 24th Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM), hosted by the IORA Chair Sri Lanka, was held virtually on 21 May 2025 under the theme: "Sustainable Indian Ocean for future Generation".
About	➤ The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is a regional group of 23 member countries from Africa, West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Australia — all bordering the Indian Ocean. ➤ Its Council of Foreign Ministers is the main decision-making body and meets once a year, with the chair rotating every two years among members. ➤ Currently, Sri Lanka is the Chair, India is the Vice-Chair, and Bangladesh was the previous Chair, meaning the IORA Troika is entirely within South Asia. ➤ The 23 members include: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, France, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, UAE, and Yemen. ➤ IORA also has 11 dialogue partners: China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Türkiye, the UK, and the US. Founded in 1997 in Mauritius, the idea for IORA originated from a 1995 speech by Nelson Mandela in Delhi, where he proposed cooperation among Indian Ocean countries to promote socioeconomic growth and peace, especially for developing nations within multilateral institutions like the UN, Commonwealth, and Non-Aligned Movement.
Six Priority areas & two cross cutting Issues	IORA is dedicated to promoting regional cooperation in the Indian Ocean region across six Priority Areas and two Cross-Cutting Issues.: • Maritime safety and security; • Trade and investment facilitation; • Fisheries management; • Disaster risk management; • Academic, science and technology cooperation; and • Tourism and cultural exchange. The blue economy and women's economic empowerment are two further cross-cutting priority areas.

- IORA is governed by its Charter, which sets out the main principles for promoting regional cooperation and operates through a consensus-based approach among its Member States.
- Its work is guided by institutional mechanisms such as the Council of Ministers (COM) and the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO).

68. The Digital Payments Index (DPI), which measures the extent of digitisation of payments across the country, is released by which of the following?

- (a) Ministry of Finance
- (b) National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)
- (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**
- (d) Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

EXPLANATION:

The Reserve Bank of India has developed the Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) to measure the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.

The index is published semi-annually and is based on March 2018 as the base period (Index = 100). As per the latest release, the RBI-DPI stood at 465.33 for September 2024, reflecting continued growth in digital payment adoption, infrastructure, and performance across the country. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

DIGITAL PAYMENTS INDEX	
Recently in news	The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently released a composite Reserve Bank of India – Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI). The index for March 2025 stands at 493.22 as against 465.33 for September 2024, which was announced on January 29, 2025.
Five Broad Parameters Of DPI	The RBI-DPI comprises of 5 broad parameters that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods. These parameters are – ➤ Payment Enablers, ➤ Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors, ➤ Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors, ➤ Payment Performance and ➤ Consumer Centricity Out of all the indicators, Payment Performance has the highest weight of 45%, followed by Payment Enablers with a weight of 25%. Payment Infrastructure – supply side and demand side have weights of 15% and 10%, respectively. Lastly, the indicator Consumer Centricity carries a weight of 5%. This index serves as an important measure to track progress across all aspects of digital payments development.

69. The Darién Gap, often seen in news, which is related to :

- (a) A trade corridor between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea.
- (b) A narrow water channel between the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean.
- (c) A thick forest that creates a natural barrier between Panama and Colombia.**
- (d) A land link from the border of Costa Rica to the border of Colombia.

EXPLANATION:

The United States recently deported 104 Indian migrants who had entered the country illegally. Their journey to the US often involves dangerous routes through several countries, including the Darién Gap — a vast, roadless jungle between Colombia and Panama.

- The Darién Gap is an expanse of thick rainforest which creates a natural barrier between South and Central America.
- The gap is in the thickly vegetated marshland and jungle of the Darién region, which spans the easternmost part of Panama and northwestern Colombia.
- The Darién Gap is infamously difficult to traverse, but, as the only overland route connecting North and South America, it has become a crucial path for migrants traveling northward to the United States and Canada in the 21st century. **So, Option (c) is correct.**



70. Consider the following statements with reference to Green Bonds:

1. It is a debt instrument, issued by governments, corporations, and multilateral banks
2. Higher Greenium allows issuers to raise funds at higher costs, making green investments more attractive.
3. It constitutes a major part of the debt market and overall climate financing.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Green bonds are debt instruments issued by governments, corporations, and multilateral banks to raise funds for projects that reduce emissions or enhance climate resilience. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

Issuers typically offer green bonds at lower yields than conventional bonds, assuring investors that the proceeds will be used exclusively for green investments.

The difference in yield known as the green premium, or greenium determines the cost advantage of green bonds.

A higher greenium allows issuers to raise funds at lower costs, making green investments more attractive. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

Investors in green bonds often seek stable, long-term returns, and may also have internal or external mandates to allocate a portion of their funds to green financing.

Despite their potential, green bonds constitute a small part of the debt market and overall climate financing, as governments strengthen reporting practices and introduce incentives to attract investors.

So, Statement 3 is not correct.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

GREEN BONDS	
Recently in News	India's green bonds are struggling to stand out from plain-vanilla government securities. With no clear pricing edge or incentive, most investors see little reason to buy them.
About	Green bonds are a good source for safe investment. For corporates, it is one of the best tools to raise funds to support environment or climate-related projects. The following are different types of green bonds. Organization-guaranteed Bonds: • It is also known as general obligation bonds. • The bonds credit-worthiness is based on the organization issuing the bond. • The Organization-guaranteed bonds can be corporates, government, or public institutions. Asset-backed bonds: • The creditworthiness in asset-backed bonds is tied only to the expected revenue from the solar farm and not the other cash flows of the issuer. • The solar farm asset is transferred into a separate entity, known as a special purpose entity (SPE) or special purpose vehicle (SPV). This entity holds just this asset. • The lenders are repaid only from the earned revenue from the farm. Hybrid bond: Hybrid bonds are also popular as covered bonds. • It can be a two-way structure – in the first method, if there is the condition of payment default, the lender will have the right over the farm. • The farm is in an SPE in the second method. In the condition of default, the SPE assets are transferred to the lender. If the farm value is not enough to pay the lender, the hybrid bond holder can claim other assets as well. Sovereign Green Bonds: • It is issued for an average tenure of 14 years or more. Sovereign Green Bonds are allocated to fund projects associated with climate adaptation and climate mitigation. • The green bondholders also enjoy tax benefits. Sovereign green bonds are suitable for investors having an interest in environmental and climate conservation projects. • Sovereign green bonds are also a secure source of fixed income.

71. With reference to the UN Global Principles for Information Integrity, consider the following statements:

1. The UN Global principles aim to enhance information integrity by guiding governments, digital platforms, and others tackle misinformation and hate speech.
2. The five core principles outlined in the initiative are Trust, Transparency, Independence, Empowerment and Incentives.
3. The principles are legally binding on all UN member states.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The United Nations Global Principles for Information Integrity were launched in 2024 after wide consultations with governments, civil society, academics, the tech sector, and UN bodies, including UNHCR.

- The United Nations Global Principles aim to combat misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech while protecting human rights and freedom of expression. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**
- Their goal is to build a healthier digital information space that promotes truth, transparency, and trust.
- They provide guidelines and standards for working with different stakeholders to manage information risks responsibly.
- Although not legally binding or negotiated by Member States, the principles serve as a global reference and advocacy tool. They are available in all six official UN languages. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

The five core principles outlined in the UN Global Principles for Information Integrity initiative are:

- **Societal Trust and Resilience:** Trust refers to the confidence people have in the reliability and accuracy of the information they access, and resilience to the ability of societies to handle disruption or manipulation of the information ecosystem.
- **Transparency and Research:** Greater transparency and data access is vital to improve understanding of information environments worldwide and provide evidence-based solutions to promote information integrity.
- **Independent, Free and Pluralistic Media:** Information integrity is only achievable with an independent, free and pluralistic media. Robust and urgent responses are needed to support public interest journalism around the world.
- **Public Empowerment:** Shifts in tech company policies and increased media literacy can empower users with greater control over their online experience and the use of their own data.
- **Healthy Incentives:** Advertisers and tech companies can adopt business models that simultaneously uphold human rights and strengthen information integrity and make good business sense. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

72. Consider the following statements with reference to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) :

1. It is an independent agency of the United States federal government
2. It was setup to administer humanitarian aid programmes on behalf of the United Nations.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct ?

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

EXPLANATION:

The recent reduction in USAID funding for the Rohingya refugee crisis has led to the suspension or downsizing of vital health, nutrition, and protection services for Rohingya communities in Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is an independent agency of the United States federal government, responsible for administering civilian foreign aid and development assistance.

- USAID's programs include practically all areas of development cooperation.
- It supports programs that address food insecurity, climate change, health, education, good governance, human rights, and the empowerment of women and girls.
- In each country, USAID operates through a country-specific development program managed by a resident mission, partnering with local governments and organizations.
- It uses science, technology, and innovation to achieve sustainable results and improve lives.
- Ultimately, USAID's mission is to create conditions where U.S. assistance is no longer needed, building a world where nations can thrive independently. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was set up in the early 1960s to administer humanitarian aid programmes on behalf of the US government not the United Nations.

- Its goal is to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies around the world.
- It also plays a major global role in improving public health, working in areas such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, family planning, maternal and child health, water, sanitation, and hygiene. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

73. Consider the following statements with reference to the National Mission on Natural Farming:

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme under Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW).
 2. It aims to create and promote a single national brand for naturally grown chemical-free produce.
- Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) is a standalone Centrally Sponsored Scheme (not a central sector scheme) under Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW), Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (MoA&FW) to promote chemical-free, ecosystem-based natural farming rooted in traditional knowledge.

The Mission is a shift to strengthen agriculture practices with scientifically backed approaches towards sustainability, climate resilience and safe food. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The following are the key objectives of National mission on Natural Farming

- To promote nature based sustainable systems of farming, enhancing usage of on-farm made natural farming bio-inputs to reduce dependency on externally purchased inputs and input cost reduction.
- To improve soil health and have sustainable agriculture practices.
- To popularize livestock (preferably local breed of cow) integrated agriculture-animal husbandry models.
- To strengthen on-farm agroecological research and knowledge-based extension capacities of ICAR institutions, KVKs, Agricultural Universities, etc
- To build upon the on-field experience of practicing NF farmers and scientific expertise to thereby evolve & improvise location specific NF package of practices for increased spread of NF.
- To establish scientifically supported common standards and easy farmer friendly certification procedures for naturally grown chemical-free produce.
- To create and promote a single national brand for naturally grown chemical-free produce. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

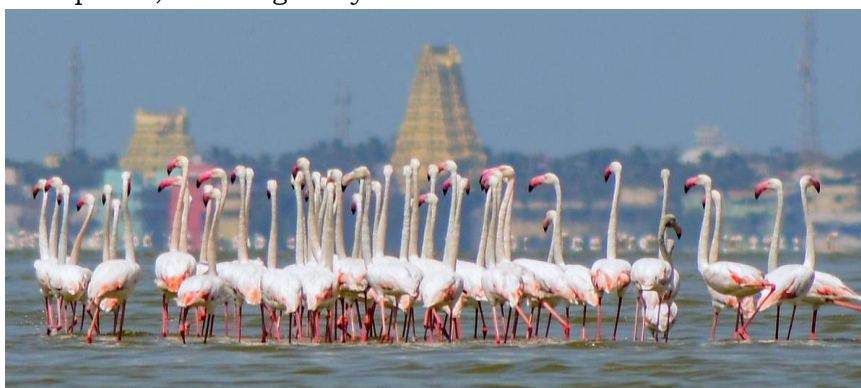
NATURAL FARMING	
About	Natural Farming (NF) is a chemical-free farming method that uses livestock (especially local cow breeds), natural inputs, and traditional Indian farming practices. ➤ It focuses on improving soil health, restoring ecosystems, reducing farming costs, and building climate resilience. ➤ It recognizes the close link between soil, water, plants, animals, climate, and humans. ➤ Natural Farming uses on-farm inputs like Beejamrut, Jeevamrut, Ghan Jeevamrut, Neemastra, and Dashparni, along with multi-cropping, mulching, traditional seed varieties, and tree integration on farm boundaries. ➤ These practices improve soil fertility, organic carbon, moisture retention, and biodiversity, while promoting sustainable and diverse cropping systems suited to local conditions.
Aim of NMNF	The knowledge of Natural Farming has long existed within farming communities. The National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) aims to create a decentralized learning system that combines traditional farmer knowledge with modern scientific research from Agricultural Universities (AUs), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), and ICAR institutions to strengthen and spread Natural Farming practices across the country
States following Natural farming	Many states are already following natural farming and have developed successful models. States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala are among the leading states.
Outcomes of NMNF	The following are the expected outcomes of National Mission on Natural Farming: ➤ Rejuvenation and sustainability of Mother Earth for future generations. ➤ Builds climate resilience in agriculture across Gram Panchayat against droughts, floods, cyclones, etc. ➤ Reduction in chemical input usage ➤ Improvement in soil health and fertility through in situ generation of organic matter from multi crop systems. ➤ Invites a wide range of biodiversity such as beneficial insects, birds, etc. which are beneficial for farm pollination, natural pest and disease management, etc. ➤ Provides safe, nutritious and chemical-free food to farmer family and local consumers ➤ Reduced burden of diseases to farmer families due to reduction in exposure to chemicals ➤ Higher carbon sequestration, enabling farmers to access Carbon Credit markets. ➤ Savings for Government on account of fertilizer subsidy.

74. Which one of the following statements is **not** correct about the Greater Flamingo Sanctuary at Dhanushkodi?
- It is situated within the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve.
 - It is an essential stopover along the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.**
 - It comprises ecosystems like sand dunes, marshes, and mangrove forests.
 - None of the above.

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Tamil Nadu government notified the establishment of the Greater Flamingo Sanctuary at Dhanushkodi in Ramanathapuram on 524.78 hectares of land on the occasion of World Environment Day.

- The Greater Flamingo Sanctuary, located within the ecologically sensitive Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve, is a critical stopover along the Central Asian Flyway (Not the East Asian-Australian Flyway). **So, Option (a) is correct, and Option (b) is not correct.**
- This region supports 128 bird species, including large populations of herons, egrets, sandpipers, terns, Kentish plovers, Hanuman plovers, and both Greater and Lesser Flamingos.
- Located at the southern tip of Rameswaram Island, the Sanctuary region is known for its unique landscape and diverse ecosystems, including sand dunes, marshes, and mangrove forests like Avicennia and Rhizophora, which stabilise the coastline and provide habitats for marine life, including fish, crustaceans, molluscs, and nesting sea turtles. **So, Option (c) is correct.**
- The notification of the Greater Flamingo Sanctuary aims to safeguard this biodiversity hotspot and promote responsible tourism, benefiting local communities in Ramanathapuram.
- During the recent wetland bird census, 10,761 birds were recorded in the Sanctuary area. Representing 128 species, both migratory and resident.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INDIA'S FLAMINGO HABITATS	
About	India is home to two primary species of flamingos: the Greater Flamingo (<i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>) and the Lesser Flamingo (<i>Phoeniconaias minor</i>). ➤ Greater Flamingo: This species is characterized by its long legs, neck, and a distinctive downward-bending bill. Greater flamingos are often seen in large colonies, particularly during migration. ➤ Lesser Flamingo: Slightly smaller than the greater flamingo, lesser flamingos are known for their vibrant pink color and are primarily found in the salt flats of Gujarat.
Flamingo habitats in India	India's flamingo habitats range from salt deserts and lagoons to mudflats and reservoirs, illustrating the country's diverse wetland ecosystems. These sites play a vital role in supporting migratory bird populations and contribute significantly to wetland conservation, eco-tourism, and biodiversity awareness. ➤ Thol Lake, Gujarat: Located about 25 km from Ahmedabad, Thol Lake is a freshwater lake surrounded by marshlands and agricultural fields. It provides ideal nesting and feeding conditions for both greater and lesser flamingos. ➤ Rann of Kutch, Gujarat: The Rann of Kutch, known for its vast white desert, is also the only known breeding ground of the greater flamingo in South Asia. The

	birds congregate in large numbers at a site popularly known as 'Flamingo City', situated within the Rann's mudflats. ➤ Sewri Mudflats, Mumbai: Situated along Mumbai's eastern waterfront, the Sewri Mudflats host thousands of flamingos between January and May. Despite being located near industrial areas and docks, this site becomes a seasonal refuge for migratory birds. The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) regularly conducts birdwatching events here. ➤ Sambhar Lake, Rajasthan: Sambhar Lake, India's largest inland saltwater lake, lies about 80 km from Jaipur. Its saline waters support the growth of algae and plankton, providing abundant food for flamingos. During winter, the lake attracts thousands of these birds, creating a striking pink-and-white landscape. ➤ Pulicat Lake, Tamil Nadu-Andhra Pradesh Border: Pulicat Lake is India's second-largest brackish water lagoon, extending across the Tamil Nadu-Andhra Pradesh border. It supports large populations of flamingos during the migratory season. The annual Flamingo Festival, organized by the Andhra Pradesh government, celebrates the arrival of these birds. ➤ Chilika Lake, Odisha: Chilika Lake, India's largest coastal lagoon, serves as an important wintering ground for flamingos and other migratory birds. The area around Nalabana Island becomes a major flamingo congregation site during winter. The lake is also home to the Irrawaddy dolphin, making it ecologically significant. ➤ Bhigwan, Maharashtra: Located on the backwaters of the Ujani Dam, Bhigwan is often referred to as "Maharashtra's Mini Bharatpur." Situated about 100 km from Pune, it attracts flamingos and numerous other migratory species each winter. The area is popular for boat rides that allow close observation of bird colonies. ➤ Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Gujarat: Approximately 60 km from Ahmedabad, the Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary is a vast wetland that hosts flamingos, pelicans, and over 200 bird species.
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75. With reference to the e-Passport, consider the following statements:

1. It features a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Chip.
2. It uses Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) technology to protect sensitive personal data.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The e-Passport is a combined paper and electronic passport, with an embedded Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chip and antenna embedded as an inlay.

The main benefit of the e-Passport is its enhanced ability to maintain the integrity of its data. Since the e-Passport has the data in printed form on the booklet, as well as encrypted in the chip, it makes it harder to forge. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The underlying technology supporting the security of the ePassport is the Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) solution, which is the foundation for safeguarding sensitive information and confirming the integrity and origin of the personal and biometric data stored on the chip within the ePassport. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

- Public key infrastructure (PKI) refers to tools used to create and manage public keys for encryption, which is a common method of securing data transfers on the internet.
- PKI is built into all web browsers used today, and it helps secure public internet traffic.

- Organisations can use it to secure the communications they send back and forth internally and also to make sure connected devices can connect securely.
- The most important concept associated with PKI is the cryptographic keys that are part of the encryption process and serve to authenticate different people or devices attempting to communicate with the network.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

e-PASSPORT	
Recently in the News	India rolls out Passport Seva 2.0, UAE NRIs to receive chip-enabled e-passports.
About	The e-passport India is a biometric passport with an embedded electronic chip that stores the holder's personal and biometric details securely. ➤ Issuing Authority: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India ➤ Technology: International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)-compliant chip storing biometrics (fingerprints, iris, photograph)
Key Features	➤ Embedded chip on the front cover ➤ Stores biometric details (fingerprints, photograph, iris scan) ➤ Stores demographic data (name, date of birth, passport number, etc.) ➤ Contactless chip with secure access ➤ Compliant with ICAO standards ➤ Reduces the risk of fake or duplicated passports
Benefits	Here's how the e-passport enhances travel experience and strengthens identity protection: ➤ Enhanced security and data protection ➤ Faster immigration and e-gate access ➤ Reduces risk of identity fraud ➤ Globally accepted under ICAO guidelines ➤ Streamlined verification at international airports

76. Consider the following:

1. United Nations Environment Programme- World Conservation Monitoring Centre
2. World Wide Fund for Nature
3. Birdlife International

How many of the above is/are **not** a part of the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) Alliance?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) is designed to facilitate access to accurate and up-to-date biodiversity information to support critical business decisions. IBAT Alliance is an alliance of four of the world's largest and most influential conservation organisations:

- Birdlife International. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**
- Conservation International.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

It does not include World Wide Fund for Nature. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

- IBAT is based on three globally authoritative datasets: Protected Areas, Key Biodiversity Areas and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

- These geospatial data, alongside additional interpreted data layers, are provided through tailored reporting options, data download and API functionality.
- The datasets available through IBAT are used for early risk screening, setting goals and measuring progress towards global biodiversity targets such as those in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- IBAT supports businesses in understanding the impact of their activities on the natural world, in assessing these impacts, as well as dependencies and risks and aligning with regulatory and disclosure requirements.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

PROMINENT ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATION	
UNEP	The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the UN's leading global authority on environmental issues. It works to address the triple planetary crisis — climate change, biodiversity and land loss, and pollution and waste. ➤ Established in 1972, UNEP brings together governments, civil society, the private sector, and UN agencies to tackle the world's most urgent environmental challenges. ➤ It has played a key role in major global environmental actions — from protecting endangered species to restoring the ozone layer through international agreements. ➤ UNEP hosts the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), the world's top decision-making body on environmental matters, with participation from all 193 UN Member States. ➤ UNEP works with countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promote harmony between people and the planet. ➤ The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) serves as a global hub for biodiversity expertise, linking science, policy, and practice to support a sustainable future for both humanity and nature.
WWF	WWF stands for the World-Wide Fund for Nature (formerly known as the World Wildlife Fund). ➤ Founded in 1961, it is one of the world's largest and most recognised environmental conservation organisations, working across more than 100 countries. ➤ WWF focuses on: • Conserving biodiversity (protecting species, forests, oceans, and freshwater ecosystems) • Combating climate change • Promoting sustainable use of natural resources • Supporting local communities to live in harmony with nature ➤ Their famous logo features a giant panda, symbolising wildlife conservation. ➤ It is Headquartered in Gland, Switzerland.
BirdLife International	➤ BirdLife International is a global partnership of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working to conserve birds, their habitats, and global biodiversity. ➤ Founded in 1922 (originally called the International Council for Bird Preservation), with its Headquarters at Cambridge, United Kingdom. ➤ The organisation is active in over 120 countries and territories through national partner organisations.

- The mission of BirdLife International is to conserve birds, their habitats, and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources.

77. Which of the following best describes a condition where the atmosphere's evaporative demand stays unusually high above the 90th percentile for at least three consecutive days?

- (a) Heatwave
(b) Atmospheric river
(c) Heat dome
(d) **Thirstwave**

EXPLANATION:

A heatwave can be defined as a period where local excess heat accumulates over a sequence of unusually hot days and nights.

In India, heatwaves generally occur from March to June, sometimes extending till July, with about five to six events each year, mainly in northern India. **So, Option (a) is not correct.**

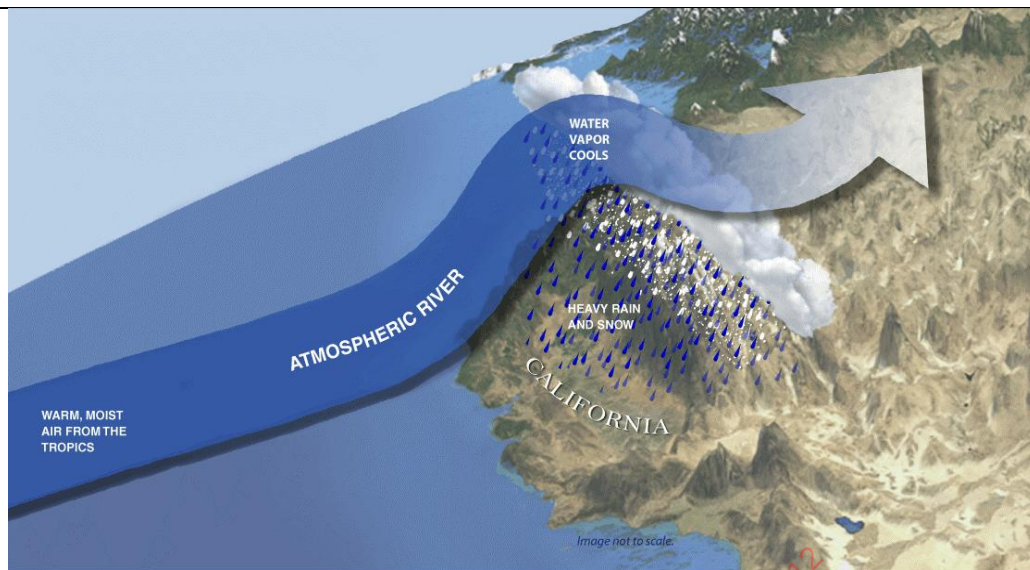
According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), a heat wave is declared based on temperature thresholds and deviations from normal conditions as follows:

- **Temperature Threshold:** A heat wave is considered when the maximum temperature reaches at least 40°C or more in the plains, or at least 30°C or more in hilly regions.
- **Based on Departure from Normal Temperature:**
 - Heat Wave: When the departure from normal maximum temperature is +4.5°C to +6.4°C.
 - Severe Heat Wave: When the departure from normal maximum temperature is greater than +6.4°C.
- **Based on Actual Maximum Temperature:**
 - Heat Wave: When the actual maximum temperature is $\geq 45^{\circ}\text{C}$.
 - Severe Heat Wave: When the actual maximum temperature is $\geq 47^{\circ}\text{C}$.
 - Spatial and Temporal Criteria

The above conditions must be observed in at least two stations within a meteorological sub-division, For at least two consecutive days. The heat wave is officially declared on the second day of occurrence.

Atmospheric rivers are relatively long, narrow regions in the atmosphere – like rivers in the sky – that transport most of the water vapour outside of the tropics. **So, Option (b) is not correct.**

- While atmospheric rivers can vary greatly in size and strength, the average atmospheric river carries an amount of water vapour roughly equivalent to the average flow of water at the mouth of the Mississippi River.
- Exceptionally strong atmospheric rivers can transport up to 15 times that amount.
- When the atmospheric rivers make landfall, they often release this water vapour in the form of rain or snow.
- Although atmospheric rivers come in many shapes and sizes, those that contain the largest amounts of water vapour and the strongest winds can create extreme rainfall and floods, often by stalling over watersheds vulnerable to flooding.
- A well-known example is the "Pineapple Express," which brings moist air from near Hawaii to the US West Coast.



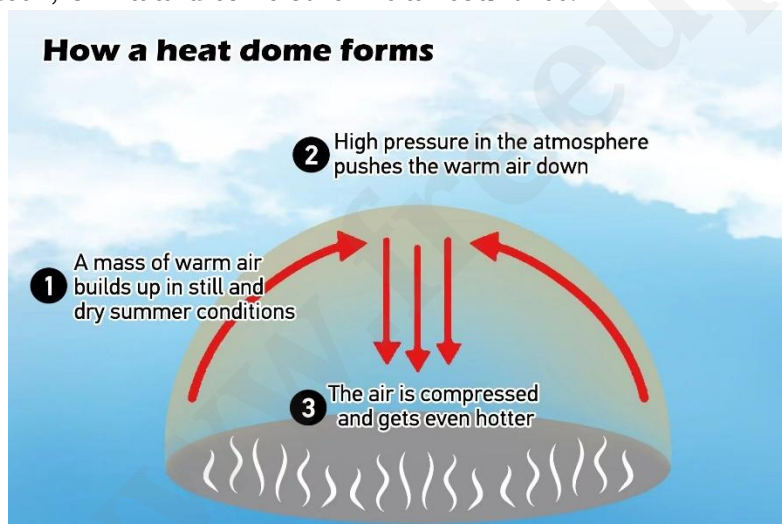
A heat dome is a type of high-pressure system that forms over a large area in the atmosphere and causes extremely hot and dry weather conditions.

The system traps hot air and prevents it from flowing to rise and cool. This air then becomes compressed and heats up, leading to a dome-shaped area of hot air that can persist for several days or even weeks.

So, Option (c) is not correct.

- In addition to temperatures which are highly unfavourable for humans, they can also lead to drought conditions and wildfire, as the hot and dry weather can quickly dry out vegetation and make it more susceptible to catching fire.
- 'Heat domes' are natural phenomena that have also been associated with unusually warm periods in India, Bangladesh, China and some other Asian countries.

How a heat dome forms



A Thirstwave is defined as at least three consecutive days when daily evaporative demand is greater than its historical 90th percentile value for that period. **So, Option (d) is correct.**

- Thirstwaves refer to a combination of factors that drive evaporative demand, including temperature, wind speed, and sunshine.
- Evaporative demand refers to how 'thirsty' Earth's atmosphere is, or how readily it sucks up moisture from plants, soil, and bodies of water.
- The term was coined by Kukal and Hobbins (US researchers).
- As thirstwaves become more frequent, crops will need more water, but existing irrigation systems may not be able to supply it quickly enough.

- By studying thiristwaves more closely, scientists and farmers can gain useful information to improve water management, plan irrigation more effectively, and maintain healthy crop yields even during extreme heat and dryness.

78. 'Tankai method' is related to:

- (a) Martial arts
- (b) Shipbuilding**
- (c) Coin minting
- (d) Temple architecture

EXPLANATION:

The Indian Navy has formally inducted the Ancient Stitched Ship (Tankai method), named INSV Kaundinya, at a ceremonial event held at Naval Base, Karwar.

Tankai method:

- The Tankai method of ship building (over 2,000 years old) involves stitching wooden planks with coir or fiber cords instead of using nails.
- This technique provides flexibility and durability, making ships resistant to damage from shoals and sandbars.
- Historically, such vessels enabled long maritime voyages, connecting ancient India with Southeast Asia through trade.
- Although replaced by European shipbuilding methods, this art form survives in limited coastal regions, mainly for small fishing boats.
- The revival of this technique preserves India's intangible maritime heritage. **So, Option (b) is correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

TANKAI METHOD (STITCHED SHIPBUILDING)	
Recently in news	Recently, the Ministry of Culture and the Indian Navy collaborated to revive and preserve the 2,000-year-old 'Tankai' shipbuilding technique, also known as the stitched shipbuilding method.
INSV Kaundinya	➤ INSV Kaundinya is a stitched sail ship inspired by a 5th-century CE vessel depicted in the Ajanta Cave paintings. ➤ Named after Kaundinya, the legendary Indian mariner who sailed to Southeast Asia, the ship symbolizes India's ancient maritime trade and cultural exchanges.

	➤ The project was launched under a tripartite agreement (July 2023) between the Ministry of Culture, the Indian Navy, and M/s Hodi Innovations, funded by the Ministry of Culture. ➤ Keel laying took place in September 2023, and the vessel was constructed using the traditional Tankai method by skilled artisans from Kerala. ➤ INSV Kaundinya showcases the blend of cultural revival, traditional craftsmanship, and naval heritage, highlighting India's rich maritime legacy through the ancient Tankai tradition.
Cultural Importance	The ship embodies India's rich artistic and maritime traditions through its traditional motifs and symbolic designs: ➤ Gandabherunda and the Sun on the sails represent power, protection, and vitality, reflecting ancient Indian iconography ➤ Simha Yali on the bow symbolizes strength, courage, and the guardianship of seafarers. ➤ A Harappan-style stone anchor on the deck connects the vessel to India's earliest maritime heritage, evoking the seafaring traditions of the Indus Valley Civilization.

79. Consider the following:

1. Euthanasia
2. Narco-analysis tests
3. General anesthesia

How many of the above involve the application of sodium pentothal?

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

EXPLANATION:

Sodium pentothal, also known as thiopental sodium, is a barbiturate that has been extensively utilised in the medical field for its anaesthetic and hypnotic properties.

It targets the central nervous system (CNS) and is classified as an ultra-short-acting barbiturate.

- Sodium pentothal is used in euthanasia and lethal injections.
- In voluntary euthanasia, doctors may use it to help terminally ill patients end their suffering.
- In the USA, sodium pentothal has been one of the drugs used in lethal injections for carrying out the death penalty. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

The narco analysis procedure involves the use of sodium pentothal, commonly referred to as "truth serum."

This drug is administered through an intravenous injection by a qualified anaesthetist. Sodium pentothal, diluted with distilled water, is injected to induce a hypnotic or semi-conscious state. This lowers the person's inhibitions and potentially makes them more susceptible to questioning. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

General anaesthesia brings on a sleep-like state with the use of a combination of medicines. The medicines, known as anaesthetics, are given before and during surgery or other medical procedures.

- Pentothal sodium has been widely used for primary and general anaesthesia induction. Also, it has been used to effectively inhibit convulsions.
- Pentothal sodium has many advantages, such as rapid anesthetic operation and stable anesthetic effect. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

Thus, all three, euthanasia, narco-analysis tests, and general anaesthesia, involves the applications of sodium pentothal.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

EUTHANASIA	
Recently in news	Recently, the UK's House of Commons passed the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, which allows passive euthanasia and has reignited the global debate on the right to die with dignity.
About	Euthanasia is the practice of ending someone's life to relieve their suffering. There are several types of euthanasia, each differing in intent and method: ➤ Active Euthanasia: Something is done to intentionally hasten a person's death, such as administering drugs with the purpose of bringing about death. ➤ Passive Euthanasia: Life-sustaining treatment is withdrawn or withheld — for example, turning off a life support machine or removing a feeding tube. (Note: This is legally permitted in the UK and is therefore not classified as euthanasia there.) ➤ Voluntary Euthanasia: The person consciously and willingly requests that their life be ended. ➤ Non-voluntary Euthanasia: The person is unable to make or express a decision (e.g., being in a coma), and someone else — such as a doctor or family member — decides to end life in their best interest. ➤ Involuntary Euthanasia: The person wants to live, but someone else decides to end their life, believing it to be in the person's best interest — for instance, after an accident likely to cause imminent and painful death. ➤ Assisted Suicide: Deliberately assisting or encouraging another person to take their own life.  The infographic shows 'Euthanasia' at the center, branching into six categories: Active euthanasia: Represented by a skull and crossbones and a syringe. Non-voluntary euthanasia: Represented by a clipboard with a question mark and the word 'CONSENT'. Voluntary euthanasia: Represented by a clipboard with a green checkmark and the word 'CONSENT'. Involuntary euthanasia: Represented by a clipboard with a red 'X' and the word 'CONSENT'. Passive euthanasia: Represented by a monitor with 'ON' and 'OFF' buttons. Assisted suicide: Represented by a person in a hospital bed with a skull and crossbones.
Legal Status of Euthanasia in India	While India has recognised passive euthanasia through a series of Supreme Court judgments, it has consciously drawn a line against active euthanasia. Active Euthanasia: ➤ The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 classifies any act intended to cause death as culpable homicide or murder under Sections 100 and 101. Therefore it is considered as illegal in India.

Passive Euthanasia:

- In Aruna Shanbaug v. Union of India (2011), the Supreme Court recognized that life-sustaining treatment may be withheld or withdrawn lawfully, even for persons without decision-making capacity.
- In Common Cause v. Union of India (2018), the Court held that the right to die with dignity is part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21.
- The judgment also legalized advance medical directives or “living wills”, allowing individuals to specify conditions under which medical treatment may be withdrawn.

80. Consider the following information:

	Place in news	Country
1.	Zangezur Corridor	Kazakhstan
2.	Heard Island and McDonald Islands	Australia
3.	Morag Axis	Egypt

How many of the above rows is/are correctly matched?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Zangezur Corridor is a proposed transport route designed to connect Azerbaijan's mainland with its exclave, the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, bypassing through Armenia's Syunik Province, it is not located in Kazakhstan.

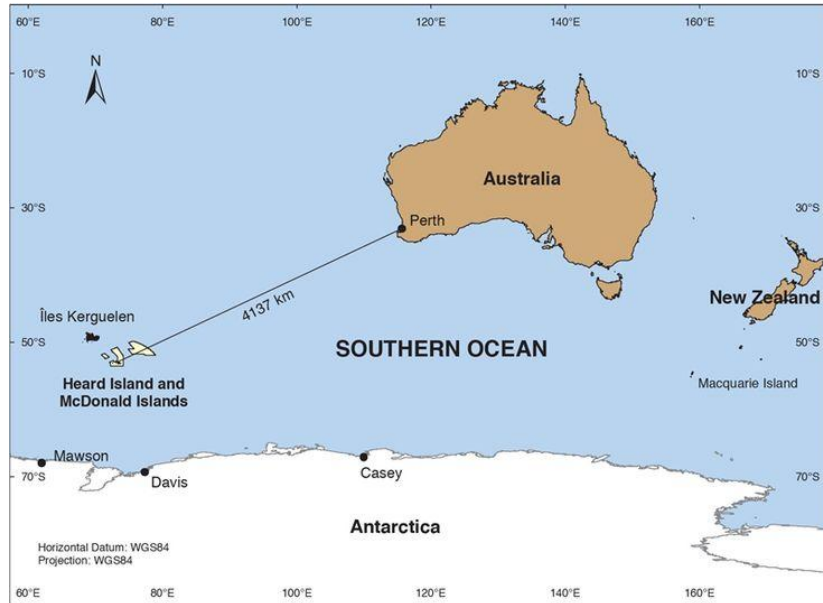
Strongly backed by Azerbaijan and Turkey, the project is a major infrastructure initiative aimed at improving regional connectivity.

However, it also remains a highly contentious issue, with Armenia and Iran firmly in opposition. The corridor is further entangled in broader geopolitical dynamics involving Russia and other global players. **So, Pair (1) is not correct.**



Heard Island and McDonald Islands are uninhabited, barren, Subantarctic islands in the Southern Ocean, far due south of India and roughly 400 km southeast of Kerguelen of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands.

The islands are administered by Australia and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Although they are run by Australia, the islands are approximately 4,000 km southwest from Perth. **So, Pair (2) is correct.**



Recently, Israeli Prime Minister announced the capture of an area that he referred to as the "Morag axis" in the southern Gaza Strip. The name "Morag" refers to an illegal Israeli settlement that was established in the region between 1972 and 2005.

- Morag Axis is an area that consists mainly of agricultural land located between Khan Younis and Rafah, stretching from east to west across the Gaza Strip, not Egypt.
- It includes parts of what the Israeli military had previously designated as a "humanitarian zone", where they had told internally displaced Palestinians to seek refuge. **So, Pair (3) is not correct.**



81. Semaglutide and Tirzepatide are drugs used for:

- (a) Cancer treatment
- (b) Hypertension
- (c) Fatigue
- (d) Weight management**

EXPLANATION:

Tirzepatide and Semaglutide are the glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs) used to treat type 2 diabetes and support weight loss. Both help lower blood sugar, reduce appetite, and promote weight reduction, but they differ in their mechanism of action:

Tirzepatide: Targets two receptors — GLP-1 and GIP (glucose-dependent insulintropic polypeptide). This dual action improves insulin secretion, reduces glucagon, slows digestion, and enhances weight loss.

Semaglutide: Targets only the GLP-1 receptor. Stimulates insulin release, suppresses glucagon, slows gastric emptying, and increases satiety.

Effectiveness:

- Both drugs are effective for blood sugar control and weight management.
- Clinical studies suggest tirzepatide may lead to greater weight loss due to its dual-receptor mechanism. **So, Option (d) is correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SEMAGLUTIDE AND TIRZEPATIDE	
Recently in news	A recent US study found that semaglutide and tirzepatide an injectable GLP-1 drugs used for obesity, lead to less weight loss in real-world use than in clinical trials.
GLP-1 medication	➤ It is a class of drugs that mimics the action of the natural hormone glucagon-like peptide-1 to help manage blood sugar for Type 2 diabetes and aid in weight loss for obesity. ➤ They work by stimulating insulin release, slowing stomach emptying, and increasing feelings of fullness, which helps lower blood glucose and reduce appetite. ➤ These are typically prescription injectables, though some may be available as oral medications
Details of the study	➤ The study (2021–2023) tracked adults with overweight or obesity but without diabetes who used these drugs. ➤ The reduced effectiveness is mainly due to early discontinuation or lower maintenance dosages by patients. ➤ Researchers categorized treatment discontinuation as: • Early: Within 3 months • Late: Between 3–12 months ➤ Findings showed that continuing treatment longer and using higher maintenance doses significantly improved weight loss outcomes. ➤ Factors linked to $\geq 10\%$ weight loss after one year included:

	• Continuing medication or discontinuing late • Higher maintenance dosage • Using tirzepatide instead of semaglutide • Being female rather than male
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82. With reference to the Extradition Act of 1962, consider the following statements:

1. As per the Act, 'Extradition treaties' include only those agreements relating to the extradition of fugitive criminals that were concluded after August 15, 1947.
2. The Ministry of External Affairs is the nodal authority for Extradition in India.
3. An appeal can be filed in court against the Government of India's decision regarding the extradition of an offender.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Extradition refers to the process by which one State surrenders an individual to another State for crimes for which they have been accused or convicted, and which are justiciable in the requesting State's courts.

An extradition request can be made for individuals under investigation, under trial, or already convicted.

In cases under investigation, law enforcement agencies must exercise extreme caution and ensure that prima facie evidence exists to substantiate the allegations before the courts of the foreign State.

The Extradition Act, 1962 provides the legislative framework for extradition in India.

- According to Section 2(d) of the Act, an "Extradition Treaty" refers to any treaty, agreement, or arrangement made by India with a foreign state for the extradition of fugitive criminals.
- It also includes any such treaty, agreement, or arrangement made before 15 August 1947, which remains binding on India.
- Extradition treaties are generally bilateral in nature, meaning they are agreements between two specific countries. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

Consular, Passport & Visa Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, is the Central/Nodal Authority that administers the Extradition Act, and it processes incoming and outgoing Extradition Requests. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

In India, while the final decision on extradition is an executive action of the Central Government, it is subject to judicial review.

The Supreme Court of India, as the highest judicial authority, plays a crucial role in extradition matters.

- **Appellate Jurisdiction:** It reviews appeals filed by fugitives challenging extradition orders issued by lower courts or the Central Government, ensuring that all procedures comply with the law.
- **Interpretation of Law:** The Court interprets extradition treaties and the Extradition Act, 1962, clarifying key principles such as dual criminality and the rule of specialty, thereby setting legal precedents for future cases.
- **Protection of Fundamental Rights:** The Court ensures due process, safeguards human rights, and examines whether extradition could lead to political persecution or inhumane treatment in the requesting country.

Through this judicial oversight, the Supreme Court ensures fairness, legality, and protection against arbitrary executive actions in extradition proceedings. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

EXTRADITION	
Recently in news	A Belgian court has concluded that fugitive Mehul Choksi, the main accused in the Punjab National Bank (PNB) “scam” cases, failed to demonstrate a risk of ill-treatment upon extradition to India.
Procedure for Making Extradition Requests from India	➤ Requests for extradition on behalf of the Republic of India can be made only by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, which formally submits the extradition request to the requested state through diplomatic channels. ➤ Extradition cannot be initiated at the request of private individuals.
India's Extradition Arrangements	➤ India can make an extradition request to any country. Its treaty partners are obligated to consider such requests. ➤ In the absence of a treaty, the decision to honour India's request depends on the foreign country's domestic laws and procedures, based on the principle of reciprocity. ➤ Similarly, any country can request extradition from India. Extradition from non-treaty states is also possible, as Section 3(4) of the Indian Extradition Act, 1962 provides for extradition procedures with countries that do not have a formal treaty with India.
Extradition offences	➤ The offences that are mentioned in the extradition treaty (in case of countries having such treaty). ➤ The offences for which the punishment is at least one year of imprisonment under the laws of any of the countries involved (in case there is no treaty). ➤ Any offence that is committed either wholly or partly in India or any other country involved and that will amount to an extradition offence in India is said to be a composite offence.
Who can request an extradition?	As per the Indian Extradition Act, a requisition for the surrender of an accused or a person who is convicted of committing an offence and is currently in a foreign country may be made by the Central Government through diplomatic channels.
Bars to Extradition	An alleged offender may not be extradited to the requesting state in the following cases: ➤ No treaty – In absence of a treaty, States are not obligated to extradite aliens/nationals ➤ No treaty crime – Extradition is generally limited to crimes identified in the treaty which may vary in relation to one State from another, as provided by the treaty. ➤ Military and Political Offences – Extradition may be denied for purely military and political offences. Terrorist offences and violent crimes are excluded from the definition of political offences for the purposes of extradition treaties. ➤ Want of Dual Criminality – Dual criminality exists when conduct constituting the offence amounts to a criminal offence in both India and the foreign country. ➤ Procedural considerations – Extradition may be denied when due procedure as required by the Extradition Act of 1962 is not followed.

83. With reference to the Bitra Island, consider the following statements:

1. It is the largest inhabited island of the Lakshadweep archipelago.
2. It experiences Wet equatorial climate (Af) under the Köppen climate classification.

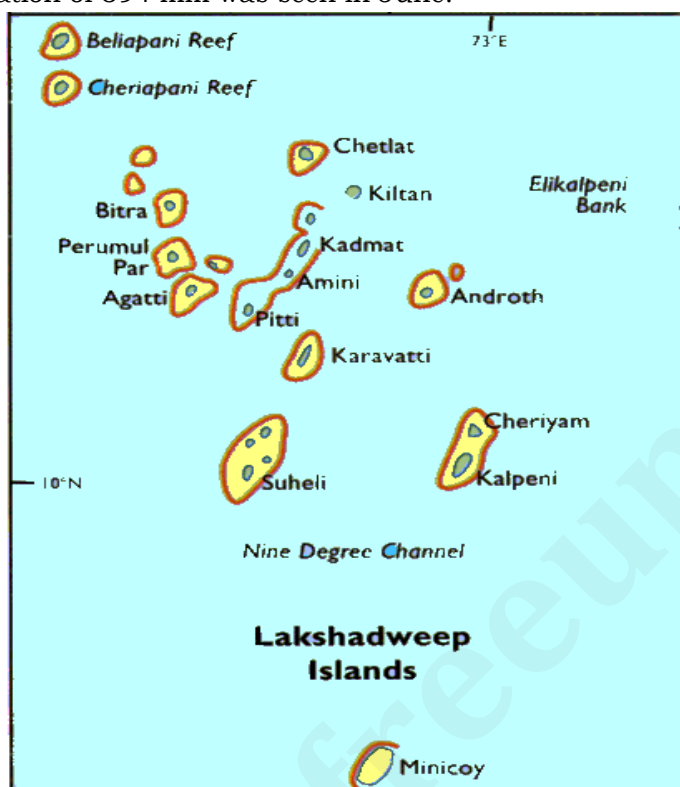
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The Bitra Island was in the news recently as the Lakshadweep administration is considering the acquisition of Bitra, one of the inhabited islands in the archipelago, for defence purposes.

- The Bitra Island is the smallest inhabited island in the territory having a land area of 0.105 sq km. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**
- Bitra Island is located near Agatti Island in Lakshadweep, the Arabian Sea.
- The climate of Agatti is categorised as 'Aw', i.e., tropical savannah, according to the Köppen-Geiger system of climate classification. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**
- The annual average temperature is 27.9°C, May being the warmest month at 29.6°C and August, the coldest at 27.2°C. The annual precipitation is 1575 mm.
- The highest precipitation of 394 mm was seen in June.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

INHABITED ISLANDS OF LAKSHADWEEP	
Important islands	Agatti Island: ➤ Located 459 km west of Kochi, to the west of Kavaratti Island. ➤ Has a lagoon area of about 17.5 sq km with rich coral growth and diverse marine life. ➤ Fishing is the main occupation; coir and copra are other important industries. Amini Island: ➤ Situated 407 km from Kochi, between Kavaratti (south) and Kadmat (north) ➤ Oval-shaped, about 2–3 m above mean sea level. ➤ Known for craftsmanship, especially walking sticks made from tortoise and coconut shells and stone engraving. Chetlat Island: ➤ Located 56 km north of Amini and 432 km from Kochi. ➤ The eastern side has a broad coral delta formed by storm deposits Kavaratti Island:

	➤ Administrative headquarters of the Union Territory of Lakshadweep. ➤ Located 404 km from Kochi, between Agatti (west) and Andrott (east). ➤ Has a 6 km long lagoon covering about 4.96 sq km. Minicoy Island: ➤ Southernmost island of Lakshadweep, about 398 km southwest of Kochi. ➤ Lies near the 9° Channel, close to the Maldives. ➤ Has a large lagoon on the western side and is about 11 km long.
Köppen Climate Classification	The Köppen climate classification system is one of the most widely used systems for identifying the world's climate regions. Developed by Wladimir Köppen, a German botanist and climatologist, in the late 19th century, it classifies climates based on temperature, precipitation, and natural vegetation. The system divides the Earth into five main climate zones, each associated with distinct vegetation and weather patterns: ➤ Zone A – Tropical (Equatorial): Hot and wet throughout the year. ➤ Zone B – Arid (Dry): Deserts and steppes with low rainfall ➤ Zone C – Temperate (Warm/Mild): Moderate temperatures with distinct seasons. ➤ Zone D – Continental: Large seasonal temperature variations. ➤ Zone E – Polar: Extremely cold regions with tundra or ice. Each zone is further divided into subtypes based on factors like dry season, temperature, or aridity. For example: ➤ Af: No dry season (tropical rainforest) ➤ Am: Short dry season (monsoon) ➤ Aw: Winter dry season (savanna) ➤ BWh/BWk: Hot or cold desert ➤ BSh/BSk: Hot or cold steppes ➤ ET/EF: Tundra or ice cap regions Some modern versions also include Zone H (Highland) for mountainous climates. Overall, the Köppen system links climate and vegetation, showing how temperature and rainfall determine the type of ecosystems found across the planet.

84. The 'Geelong treaty' is related to which one of the following alliances?

- (a) QUAD
- (b) AUKUS**
- (c) Squad
- (d) Five Eyes

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Geelong Treaty, a 50-year bilateral defense agreement between Australia and the United Kingdom, was signed on July 26, 2025, to formalize their cooperation under AUKUS Pillar I

- AUKUS is a security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, aimed at enhancing defence and technology collaboration in the Indo-Pacific region.
- It serves as a strategic response to China's growing influence in the region.
- The pact's key feature is the joint development of nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy.
- It also promotes cooperation in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, cyber operations, and missile technologies. **So, Option (b) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

OTHER ALLIANCES	
Quad	➤ The Quad comprises India, Australia, Japan, and the United States, committed to ensuring a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific. ➤ It was initially formed in 2004 to coordinate humanitarian relief after the Indian Ocean tsunami. ➤ Today, the Quad focuses on practical cooperation in areas such as health security, climate change, emerging technologies, infrastructure, cyber security, maritime security, and disaster relief. ➤ The grouping meets regularly at the leaders', foreign ministers', and senior officials' levels.
Squad	➤ A squad is one of the smallest military units, led by a non-commissioned officer. ➤ In military terms, it is larger than a team but smaller than a section, typically consisting of two or more fire teams.
Five Eyes	➤ The Five Eyes is an intelligence-sharing alliance among the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. ➤ It originated during World War II between the US and UK and expanded during the early Cold War. ➤ The alliance is based on shared democratic values, rule of law, human rights, and a common language, enabling close cooperation to protect shared national interests.

85. With reference to the ADEETIE scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It provides support to all Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to adopt energy-efficient technologies.
2. The technologies adopted should have a proven potential to save at least thirty percent of the energy of the enterprise.
3. The scheme offers an interest subvention of ten percent on loans to all MSMEs.

How many of the above statements is/are **not** correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The "Assistance in Deploying Energy Efficient Technologies in Industries and Establishments" (ADEETIE) Scheme is a flagship initiative of the BEE under the Ministry of Power, Government of India. The scheme covers 14 energy-intensive sectors: Brass, Bricks, Ceramics, Chemicals, Fishery, Food Processing, Forging, Foundry, Glass, Leather, Paper, Pharma, Steel Re-rolling, and Textiles.

This Scheme aims to catalyze the adoption of energy-efficient technologies among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), enhancing their competitiveness and contributing to India's climate goals.

This Scheme offers comprehensive financial and technical support only to Udyam registered MSMEs (not to all MSMEs) enabling them to implement energy-efficient technologies with a proven potential to save at least 10% (not 30%) of energy. **So, Statements 1 and 2 are not correct.**

The scheme is structured to provide targeted assistance in the form of interest subvention on loans, Investment Grade Energy Audits (IGEA), Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), and post-implementation Monitoring and Verification (M&V).

The scheme envisaged to provide interest subvention of 5% for Micro and Small Enterprises and 3% for Medium Enterprises on loans, ensuring accessibility and affordability for MSMEs seeking financial aid for energy efficiency projects. **So, Statement 3 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

ADEETIE SCHEME	
Recently in news	Ministry of Power launches ADEETIE scheme to promote industrial energy efficiency in MSMEs
About	➤ The Ministry of Power (MoP), with support from the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), has launched the Assistance for Deployment of Energy Efficient Technologies in Industrial Establishments (ADEETIE) Scheme. ➤ The scheme aims to help MSMEs adopt energy-efficient technologies through financial incentives such as interest subvention and technical support. ➤ It provides end-to-end assistance, including energy audits, project planning, and monitoring of implementation. ➤ The scheme targets MSMEs across 60 clusters in 14 sectors, promoting energy savings and sustainable industrial growth.
Scheme components	➤ Streamlined Project Implementation – Widespread promotion and awareness, support for investment-grade energy audits and preparation of detailed project reports, end-to-end support in all stages till monitoring and verification of the implementation. ➤ Support Provided: Technical handholding, financial incentives, Assistance in conducting IGEA, preparing DPRs, and MRV ➤ Scheme Duration: 3 years (FY 2025-26 to FY 2027-28).

86. Which one of the following is true about Girmitiyas?

- (a) **They were Indian indentured laborers sent to work in various British colonies.**
 (b) The system of Girmitiyas emerged after the abolition of slavery in British empire during the 20th Century.
 (c) At present, the Girmitiya community is only found in Caribbean countries.
 (d) All the above

EXPLANATION:

Recently, at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, the Prime Minister of India announced several initiatives to honour and connect with the Girmitiya community across the world.

“The term “Girmitiyas” refers to Indian indentured labourers who left India between the mid-19th and early 20th centuries to work in British colonies.

The word “Girmit” comes from a mispronunciation of “Agreement”, referring to the contracts under which they migrated. **So, Option (a) is correct.**

Slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 19th century (not 20th century). After the abolition of slavery in 1833–34, the British needed workers for plantations in their colonies. They brought Indians as indentured labourers to work on sugar, cotton, and tea plantations, and on railway projects in regions such as the West Indies, Africa, and Southeast Asia. **So, Option (b) is not correct.**

Between 1834 and World War I, about two million Indians were sent to 19 British colonies, including Fiji, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Trinidad, Guyana, Malaysia, Uganda, Kenya, and South Africa.

The system lasted until the 1920s, creating a large Indian diaspora across the Caribbean, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

Thus, the Girmitiya community is found in many regions, not just the Caribbean. Their descendants continue to play an important role in strengthening India's cultural and global ties. **So, Option (c) is not correct.**

87. With reference to weather derivatives, consider the following statements:

1. They can protect farmers against climate-related risks.
2. Underlying assets in weather derivatives lack intrinsic value.
3. Temperature and rainfall are considered quantifiable weather outcomes.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Recently The National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Ltd (NCDEX) signed an MoU with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) to develop India's first weather derivatives.

This agreement aims to create a framework for managing weather-related risks in agriculture and allied sectors.

Weather derivatives:

- Weather derivatives are financial instruments that allow stakeholders to hedge against losses from unexpected weather conditions.
- They enable trading based on quantifiable weather outcomes—such as rainfall, snowfall, or temperature—using independently verified meteorological data and predefined settlement terms.
So, Statement 3 is correct.
- Unlike traditional insurance, weather derivatives are based on measurable weather parameters rather than physical damage.
- The introduction of such instruments in India is expected to help farmers and allied sectors manage climate-related risks like erratic rainfall, heatwaves, and unseasonal weather events, making them an important tool for climate risk management. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

Derivatives are financial contracts whose value depends on an underlying asset such as stocks, currencies, commodities, or financial instruments.

Commodity Derivative:

- In India, when the underlying asset is a commodity or good notified by the Central Government under the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956, it is called a commodity derivative.
- These notified commodities may include cereals, pulses, oil, spices, fruits, and vegetables, as well as certain activities, services, rights, interests, or events—including weather derivatives.

In weather derivatives, the underlying asset is a meteorological parameter such as temperature, rainfall, or drought, measured using a predetermined weather index that varies by location and data source.

- Unlike traditional financial derivatives, these parameters have no intrinsic market value, making weather derivatives an incomplete market.
- The contracts are cash-settled, meaning one party pays the other the difference between the strike value (the agreed weather level) and the actual observed value during the contract period. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

88. Consider the following:

1. France
2. Germany
3. Belgium
4. Norway

Which among the above countries are part of the grouping known as E3 nations?

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

EXPLANATION:

The E3 is an informal foreign and security cooperation arrangement between the UK, Germany and France.

- Established in 2003, E3 is more of a working practice than a formalised institutional arrangement.
- It could be described as an informal kind of 'minilateralism', i.e. a small group of like-minded parties working together, either outside or inside international organisations. **So, Statement 1 and 2 are correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

E3 NATION	
Recently in news	Recently, Britain, France and Germany, collectively known as the E3, have formally triggered the "snapback" mechanism under the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to reimpose United Nations sanctions on Iran.
About	The E3, consisting of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom was formed in 2003 after the US invasion of Iraq, to develop a common approach towards Iraq and address nuclear risks from Iran. Its main role soon became negotiating with Iran after the IAEA reported that Iran had failed to disclose certain nuclear activities, raising concerns about uranium enrichment.
E3 progress	➤ In 2006, talks expanded to include the EU, forming the E3/EU format. ➤ Later, the dialogue grew to E3/EU+3 (China, Russia, and the US), leading to the 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal – the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). ➤ The E3 played a key role in implementing the JCPOA, which limited Iran's nuclear program in exchange for lifting UN sanctions. ➤ Although the US withdrew from the deal in 2018 under President Trump, E3 members continued efforts to keep the agreement alive. ➤ Under President Biden, negotiations resumed with continued E3 involvement. ➤ Since then, the E3 has broadened its focus beyond Iran to address global security issues, including conflicts in Syria, Libya, Iraq, and Egypt, crises in Moldova and the Sahel, and disputes in the South China Sea. ➤ Despite tensions during the Trump administration and the UK's Brexit, the E3 has remained active, maintaining coordination on key European and international security matters.

89. Piprahwa Relics are related to:

- (a) Adi Shankara
(b) Lord Mahavira
(c) Indrabhuti Gautama
(d) **Lord Buddha**

EXPLANATION:

The Piprahwa relics, discovered in 1898 by British engineer William Claxton Peppé in Piprahwa, Uttar Pradesh, are believed to contain the mortal remains of Lord Buddha.

Enshrined by His followers around the 3rd century BCE, these relics hold deep spiritual and historical significance.

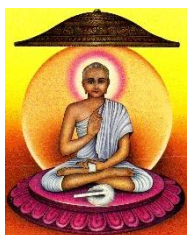
They include bone fragments, soapstone and crystal caskets, a sandstone coffer, and offerings such as gold ornaments and gemstones, excavated from the Piprahwa Stupa, identified as ancient Kapilavastu, the capital of the Shakyas republic where Prince Siddhartha once lived.

Recently, the sacred relics were brought back to India through a joint effort between the Government of India and the Godrej Industries Group. **So, Option (d) is correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SPIRITUAL FIGURES IN ANCIENT INDIA	
Adi Shankaracharya 	➤ Adi Shankaracharya, an 8th-century philosopher, profoundly shaped Hinduism with his Advaita Vedanta philosophy. ➤ He emphasized the non-dual nature of reality, stating Brahman and Atman are one, while the world is an illusion. ➤ Through knowledge and self-inquiry, he taught, one could achieve liberation. ➤ Shankaracharya established four mathas and composed influential hymns, leaving a lasting legacy on Hindu spirituality. ➤ This profound teaching continues to serve as a cornerstone for understanding the nature of existence and the path to enlightenment.
Lord Mahavira 	➤ Lord Mahavir, the 24th and last Tirthankara of Jainism, simplified religion by removing complex rituals and focusing on inner purity and harmony of the soul. ➤ He emphasized the supremacy of human life and the importance of a positive attitude. ➤ His core teachings were the five great vows • nonviolence (Ahimsa), • truth (Satya), • non-stealing (Achaurya), • celibacy (Brahmacharya), and • non-possession (Aparigraha) — reflecting universal compassion. ➤ Mahavir taught that every living being, regardless of form or development, has a soul capable of perfect perception, knowledge, power, and bliss. ➤ He promoted equality and universal love for all beings. ➤ He rejected the idea of a creator God and discouraged the worship of gods and goddesses for material benefits, focusing instead on self-realization and spiritual freedom.
Indrabhuti Gautama	➤ Indrabhuti Gautama is recognized in Jainism as the senior-most disciple of Bhagavan Mahavira, playing a crucial role in the teachings and inquiries surrounding the soul's rebirth and philosophical discussions.



- He is noted for his profound scholarship, calm demeanor, and a series of significant questions, including those about the cosmos and the nature of food related to the soul's experience.
- As the first Ganadhara, his contributions highlight the importance of questioning in Jain philosophy and his interactions with both Mahavira and various heretics.

90. With reference to Kannadippaya, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Geographical Indication (GI) tagged tribal handicraft of Karnataka.
2. It is a light reflective mat made from bamboo.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

Kannadippaya, a unique tribal handicraft from Kerala, has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, ensuring market protection and providing a global platform for this traditional craft. It is the first tribal handicraft product from Kerala to receive the GI tag. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

The term Kannadippaya means “bamboo mirror mat,” referring to its distinctive ‘kannadi’ (mirror-like) square designs that create light-reflective patterns which vary with the viewing angle. This effect is achieved through meticulous weaving techniques involving intricate warp and weft arrangements, showcasing the exceptional craftsmanship of Kerala’s tribal artisans. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

Tribal Artisans: The craft is traditionally practiced by Oorali, Mannan, Muthuva, Malayan, and Kadar tribes, as well as Ulladan, Malayarayan, and Hill Pulaya artisans in Idukki, Thrissur, Ernakulam, and Palakkad districts.

Material: The finest Kannadippaya mats are woven using reed bamboo (*Teinostachyum wightii*), though other bamboo species like *Ochlandra* sp. are also used.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS	
About	➤ A Geographical Indication (GI) is a name or sign used on products that originate from a specific geographical location — such as a region, town, or country. ➤ It certifies that the product possesses unique qualities, reputation, or characteristics linked to its geographical origin and traditional methods of production. ➤ GIs are commonly used for agricultural products, foodstuffs, spirit drinks, handicrafts, and industrial goods. ➤ A GI tag ensures that only authorized users can use the registered name, protecting the product's authenticity and preventing misuse.
Organization and legal framework	Geographical Indications are covered as a component of intellectual property rights (IPRs) under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property. ➤ At the International level, GI is governed by the World Trade Organisation's (WTO's) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). ➤ In India, Geographical Indications registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force with effect from 15th September 2003. ➤ The first product in India to be accorded with GI tag was Darjeeling tea in the year 2004-05.
Validity period	➤ The registration of a geographical indication is valid for a period of 10 years. ➤ It can be renewed from time to time for further period of 10 years each. ➤ If a registered geographical indication is not renewed it is liable to be removed from the register.
Benefits of GI Tag	➤ Provides legal protection to registered products. ➤ Prevents unauthorized use of the GI-tagged name. ➤ Assures consumers of authentic, high-quality products. ➤ Promotes economic prosperity and enhances market recognition for local producers at both national and international levels.

91. Who among the following is considered as the 'Father of cooperative movement' in the dairy sector of India?

- (a) Dr Verghese Kurien
- (b) Tribhuvandas Patel**
- (c) Rai Bahadur Mohan Singh Oberoi
- (d) F. C. Kohli

EXPLANATION:

Recently, the Lok Sabha has passed a Bill to set up the Tribhuvan Sahkari University in Anand, Gujarat, which is named after Tribhuvandas Patel.

- Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel, considered the "father of the cooperative movement" in the country. Shri Tribhuvandas K Patel was born on 22nd October 1903 in Anand, Kheda District, Gujarat, India.
- He was totally involved in the various movements of Mahatma Gandhi, like civil disobedience, rural development, and the drive against untouchability, Alcoholism, etc. He was the President of Harijan Sevak Samiti from 1948 to 1983.
- In Nasik in 1930, he was jailed for the first time for the salt satyagraha. He was further imprisoned in Visapur, 1930, wherefrom he took an oath to dedicate his life to the benefit of the masses at large.

- Shri Tribhuvandas Patel successfully led farmers against the unfair trade practices of traders of Polson and Polson Dairy and established Kaira District Co-operative Milk Producers' Union Limited on 14th December 1946, which is today known as "Amul".
- Honesty of purpose and sincerity of his efforts at social service earned him the respect of the masses. Tribhuvandas Patel developed the institution which Sardar had made him responsible for. The basic approach adopted by Shri Tribhuvandas Patel was first to establish milk co-operatives in the villages. These co-operatives were literally the "base" of the entire venture.
- He insisted that each village co-operative should be open to all milk producers in the village, regardless of caste, creed or community. He placed equal emphasis on the principle of 'one man one vote' regardless of each member's social and economic status. He never looked back since then and gave the dairy cooperative movement world recognition with the assistance of Dr. Verghese Kurien, better known as "Father of White Revolution" in India.
- During his lifetime, he held various positions and received innumerable recognitions and awards for his outstanding leadership and social service. Some of these awards are the Ramon Magsaysay Award from the Philippines in 1963, a recognition towards his Community Leadership, and the Padma Bhushan from the Government of India in 1964, towards Social Service. **So, Option (b) is correct.**

92. The "Naini Lake" recently seen in news for its depleting water levels is located in the which of the following states?

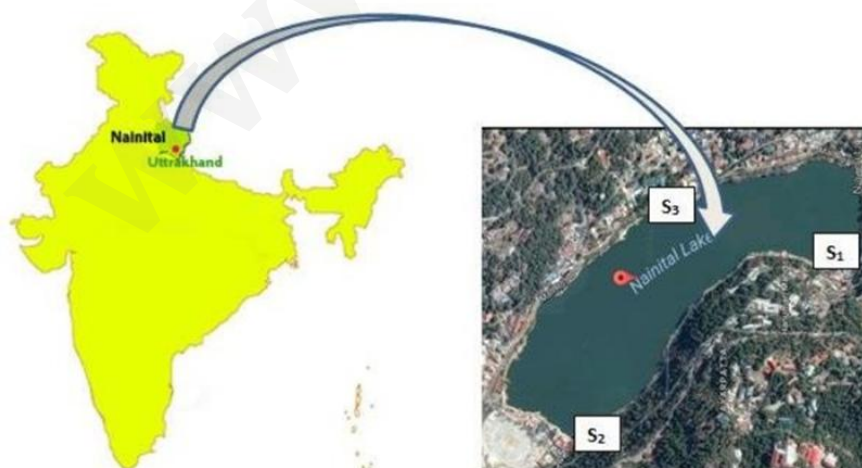
- (a) Himachal Pradesh
- (b) Uttarakhand**
- (c) Ladakh
- (d) Sikkim

EXPLANATION:

Recently, Naini Lake has recorded a water level of 4.7 feet, marking a five-year low that sparked concerns over drinking water scarcity ahead of the summer season.

- Naini Lake is a natural, kidney-shaped lake in Nainital, Uttarakhand, surrounded by seven hills.
- P. Baron, a British businessman, discovered this Lake in 1839
- It is the third-largest Lake in Uttarakhand by surface area.
- It is connected by a bridge between Mallital (north) and Tallital (south), and this bridge houses the world's only post office on a lake bridge.
- With its deepest point at 89 feet, the Naini Lake has a gauge level of 12 feet. The Uttarakhand Jal Sansthan extracts 10 million litres every day from the Lake to supply drinking water to the city.

So, Option (b) is correct.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

NAINI LAKE'S WATER CRISIS	
Reasons	➤ Decrease in snowfall and rainfall in the winter months. ➤ A report from the Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology found that compared to other Kumaon lakes, Naini Lake is subjected to the greatest man-made manipulations. ➤ It cited unplanned construction, encroachment, and degradation of recharge zones as key factors. ➤ The construction of concrete structures nearby further causes low rainwater infiltration, worsened by the low rainfall in some years. ➤ Enhancing siltation, dumping debris in Sukhatal Lake, which is a major aquifer recharge area for Naini Lake, causing the Lake to shrink. ➤ Pollution from the discharge of untreated wastewater, improper disposal of solid waste, and inadequate sewer systems causes sewage to overflow into stormwater drains and discharge into the Lake.
Other lakes in Uttarakhand	➤ Sattal Sattal is a group of seven lakes, namely Hanuman Lake, Ram Lake, Sita Lake, Lakshman Lake, Bharat Lake, Garuda Lake, and Nal Damyanti Lake. These are all freshwater lakes, and they are interconnected. Surrounded by tall trees like Oak and Pine, these lakes present pristine nature. ➤ Bhimtal Lake Situated 22 kms from Nainital, at an altitude of 1,370 m, Bhimtal Lake is larger than the famous Naini Lake. The emerald green waters of the Lake mirror the lovely greenery of the surrounding hills and conjure a striking view. Spread over a vast area, Bhimtal Lake is home to a rich diversity of aquatic life. During the winter months, the Lake is visited by migratory birds, too. ➤ Naukuchiatal Also known as "the lake of nine corners", it is a small nine-cornered lake situated about 4 km from Bhimtal. As per legends, Naukuchiatal is associated with Lord Brahma and even has a temple dedicated to him. Within the valley, there are opportunities for angling and bird watching.

93. Which of the following is the first mission to successfully penetrate the soil of a celestial body to deploy a thermal probe?

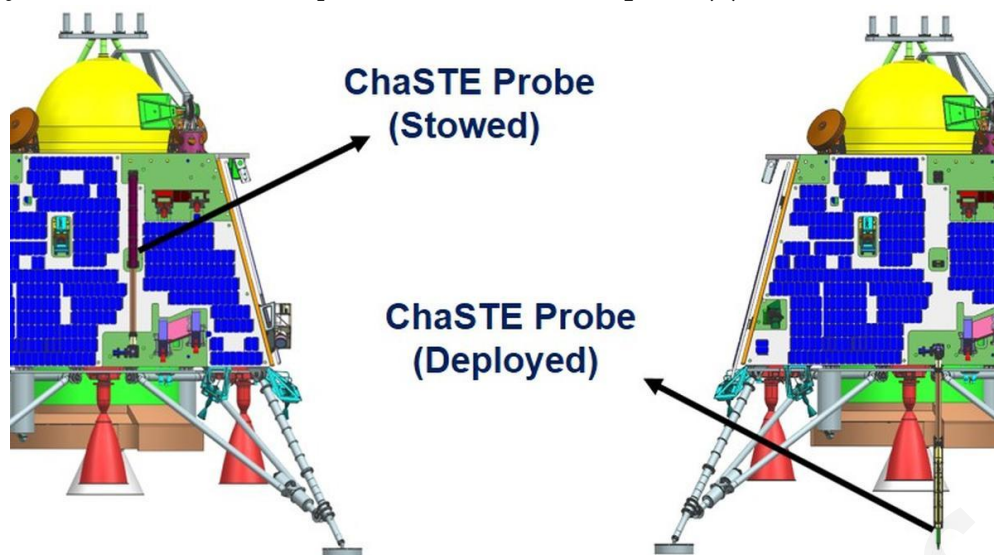
- (a) Apollo 11
- (b) Viking Lander 1
- (c) Chandrayaan-3**
- (d) Luna 2

EXPLANATION:

When the Vikram lander of Chandrayaan-3 touched down on the Moon on August 23, 2023, it deployed a thermal probe named Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE).

- The probe, integrated within the lander's panels, gradually extended itself into the lunar soil using precision-controlled motors and secured its position upon reaching the desired depth
- ChaSTE is the first instrument to measure in-situ temperatures near the Moon's south pole.
- The data collected provided valuable insights, indicating that water ice is more abundant on the lunar surface than previously estimated.

- Additionally, ChaSTE marked a significant milestone as the first successful mission to penetrate the soil of a celestial body to deploy a thermal probe, succeeding where two earlier missions had not.
- It reached a final depth of 10 cm and continued recording thermal measurements throughout the Chandrayaan-3 mission until September 2, 2023. **So, Option (c) is correct.**



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SPACE MISSION	
Chandrayaan-3	➤ Chandrayaan-3 is a follow-on mission to Chandrayaan-2 to demonstrate end-to-end capability in safe landing and roving on the lunar surface. ➤ It consists of Lander and Rover configuration. ➤ The mission objectives of Chandrayaan-3 are: • To demonstrate Safe and Soft Landing on Lunar Surface • To demonstrate Rover roving on the moon and • To conduct in-situ scientific experiments.
Apollo 11	➤ Apollo 11 was a historic U.S. spaceflight during which Commander Neil Armstrong and Lunar Module Pilot Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin became the first humans to land on the Moon and walk on its surface on July 20, 1969. ➤ The primary objective of the Apollo 11 mission was to achieve the national goal set by President John F. Kennedy on May 25, 1961 — to perform a crewed lunar landing and return safely to Earth. ➤ In addition to this main goal, the mission had several scientific and technical objectives, including: • Conducting scientific exploration of the lunar surface by the Lunar Module crew. • Deploying a television camera to transmit live signals to Earth. • Installing scientific instruments such as the Solar Wind Composition Experiment, Seismic Experiment Package, and Laser Ranging Retroreflector to study the Moon’s environment and properties. ➤ Apollo 11 marked a defining moment in human history, symbolizing the culmination of scientific innovation, exploration, and international inspiration.
Viking Lander 1	➤ NASA’s Viking Project made history as the first U.S. mission to land safely on Mars and return images of its surface.

	➤ Viking 1, part of this two-part mission, included an orbiter and a lander designed to capture high-resolution images and study Mars's surface and atmosphere. ➤ Landing on Chryse Planitia (22.27° N, 312.05° E), Viking 1 operated for over six years, far beyond its planned 90-day mission. ➤ It used a robotic arm to collect and analyze Martian soil samples in a biological laboratory, finding no evidence of life, but revealing that Mars is a cold planet with volcanic soil, a thin CO₂ atmosphere, and traces of ancient rivers and floods. ➤ Powered by radioisotope thermoelectric generators (RTGs), Viking 1 was able to conduct long-term studies despite limited sunlight. ➤ Its orbiter completed 1,489 orbits before ending its mission in 1980, and the lander sent its final signal on November 11, 1982.
Luna 2	➤ Luna 2, launched by the Soviet Union on September 12, 1959, marked a significant milestone in space exploration by becoming the first human-made object to impact the Moon. ➤ The mission aimed to gather data about cosmic rays, magnetic fields, and micrometeorite impacts, revealing that the Moon lacked a magnetic field and providing insights into Earth's radiation belts.

94. With how many of the following countries do India have signed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement?

1. South Korea
2. Japan
3. UAE
4. Chile

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

EXPLANATION:

A Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) is a type of trade agreement that goes beyond the scope of a traditional Free Trade Agreement (FTA) by covering not only trade in goods but also a wide range of areas such as services, investment, competition, government procurement, and regulatory cooperation.

It aims for deeper economic integration between partner countries through broader commitments and mutual recognition of regulatory standards.

Indian and South Korea (CEPA):

- India and South Korea signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) on 7 August 2009, which came into force on 1 January 2010.
- The agreement covers areas such as trade in goods and services, investment, rules of origin, and intellectual property rights, aiming to strengthen trade ties and create new opportunities for exporters and investors through tariff reductions. **So, Statement 1 is correct.**

India and Japan (CEPA):

India and Japan signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) on 16 February 2011 in Tokyo, which came into force on 1 August 2011 after completing legal formalities.

This agreement is significant as it marks India's first CEPA with a developed country, giving India access to Japan's US\$ 5 trillion economy, while providing Japanese companies greater business opportunities in India's growing market. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**

India and UAE (CEPA):

The India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) was signed on 18 February 2022 and came into force on 1 May 2022.

It is the first bilateral trade agreement of the UAE and India's first with a MENA country.

The agreement covers key areas such as trade, investment, healthcare, digital trade, government procurement, and intellectual property rights.

It aims to boost bilateral trade in goods to US\$ 100 billion and trade in services to US\$ 15 billion within five years. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

India and Chile signed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) on 8 May 2025, marking a major step towards deeper trade and economic cooperation. At present, no CEPA has been signed between the two countries.

The proposed CEPA aims to build upon the existing Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between India and Chile and seeks to expand cooperation into new areas such as digital services, investment promotion, MSMEs, and critical minerals, thereby enhancing overall economic integration. **So, Statement 4 is not correct.**

95. Consider the following statements regarding Dhansiri River:

1. It is a distributory of the Brahmaputra River.
2. It flows through the states of Nagaland and Assam.
3. It forms the boundary between Karbi Anglong and Nagaland.

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

EXPLANATION:

The river Dhansiri, an important left bank tributary (Not distributory) of the River Brahmaputra, originates from the south-west corner of Naga Hill below the Laishang peak. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

- The river flows through the states of Nagaland and Assam before joining the mighty River Brahmaputra. **So, Statement 2 is correct.**
- The Dhansiri river forms a boundary between the Karbi Anglong plateau (Assam) and Nagaland. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**
- The Dhansiri basin is bound by the river Brahmaputra in the north, Manipur in the south, Karbianglong district in the west, and the Jhanji basin in the east.
- The total length of the river from its source to outfall is approximately 352km.
- For the first 40 km from its source, the river flows in a north-westerly direction, and thereafter it flows to the north-east for about 76km up to Dimapur in Nagaland.
- Beyond Dimapur, the direction of flow is generally northerly up to Golaghat, where the river takes an abrupt turn towards Northwest and ultimately joins the Brahmaputra at Dhansirimukh. It is the main river of the Golaghat district of Assam and Dimapur of Nagaland.
- Recently, the Dhansiri River has been in the news over alleged hazardous effluent discharge from Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) into the Dhansiri River in Golaghat district, Assam, warning of severe ecological damage.



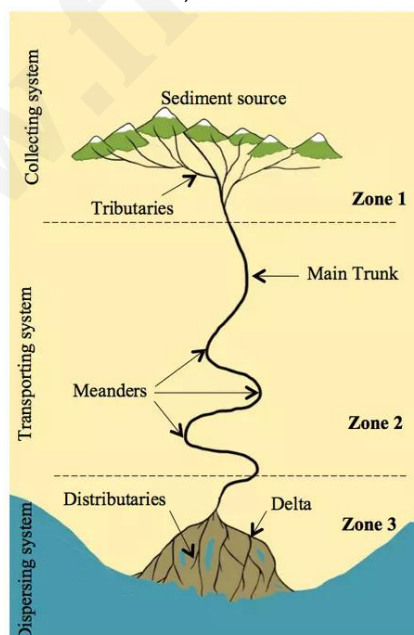
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

EVOLUTION OF RIVER SYSTEM

About

The river starts its journey from its source or headstream at a higher elevated region, and the water may come from the melting of glaciers, lakes or underwater springs.

- **Tributaries and Confluence:** The river proceeds with its course, expands and starts to grow gradually as various branches of different streams start to join in. These streams of a river are called as tributaries and the sites of merging of one or more of them with the main river are called confluence. It is well known that these tributaries do not merge directly with the sea.
- **Flow direction:** Based on their orientation with respect to the flow direction, the tributaries can be Right Bank and Left Bank.
- **Distributary:** when a stream diverges and flows out from the main river, it is called as a distributary.
- **Early and Later tributary:** The site of joining of the tributary with respect to the main river renders it as early tributary (joining closer towards the source) or late tributary (joining towards the mouth).



96. Consider the following statements regarding United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF):

1. It is a functional commission under the United Nation Environment Programme.
2. Any country which is a non-member of the UN can be a member of the UNFF.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

EXPLANATION:

The United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) is an intergovernmental policy forum which promotes "management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and to strengthen long-term political commitment to this end". India holds the distinction of being a founding member of UNFF.

The UN Forum on Forests is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with universal membership. **So, Statement 1 is not correct.**

- Since its establishment in 2000, the Forum has set many milestones including
 - the first UN Forest Instrument in 2007,
 - the Global Forest Financing Facilitation Network (GFFFN) in 2015, and
 - adoption of the first UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 and its six Global Forest Goals in 2017.
- The Forum has universal membership and is composed of all Member States of the United Nations and specialised agencies. The non-UN members cannot be members of the UNFF. **So, Statement 2 is not correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)	
Recently in News	India has been elected to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for a three-year term starting 2026 with a commitment to championing development, getting 181 out of the 187 valid votes cast. This will be at least the 18th term for India on the council, having last completed a four-term run from 2008 to 2020.
About	➤ Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN), responsible for the direction and coordination of the economic, social, humanitarian, and cultural activities carried out by the UN. ➤ It is the UN's largest and most complex subsidiary body. ➤ ECOSOC is the main UN body with representation for all its 193 members that deals with sustainable development and economic matter ➤ ECOSOC has 54 members, a third of whom complete their terms every three years, and 18 seats came up for election.

97. Consider the following:

Statement-I:

The Tulare Lake of California called a "Ghost Lake".

Statement-II:

It has disappeared for a century.

Statement-III:

It has reappeared due to the Atmospheric River event.

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

- (a) **Both Statement-II and Statement-III are correct and both of them explain Statement-I**
- (b) Both Statement-II and Statement-III are correct, but only one of them explains Statement-I
- (c) Only one of the Statement II and III is correct and that explain Statement-I
- (d) Neither Statement-II nor Statement-III is correct

EXPLANATION:

Tulare Lake, once a vast freshwater body in California, has reappeared after 130 years due to heavy snowmelt.

Tulare Lake earned the nickname "ghost lake" because it vanished over a century ago after its water was diverted for farming. Once the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi, it was replaced by vast fields, leaving behind no visible trace. For years, its presence lived only in historical records and Indigenous memory. But during especially wet seasons, like in 2023, the Lake mysteriously reappears, flooding farmland. **So, Statement 1 and 2 are correct.**

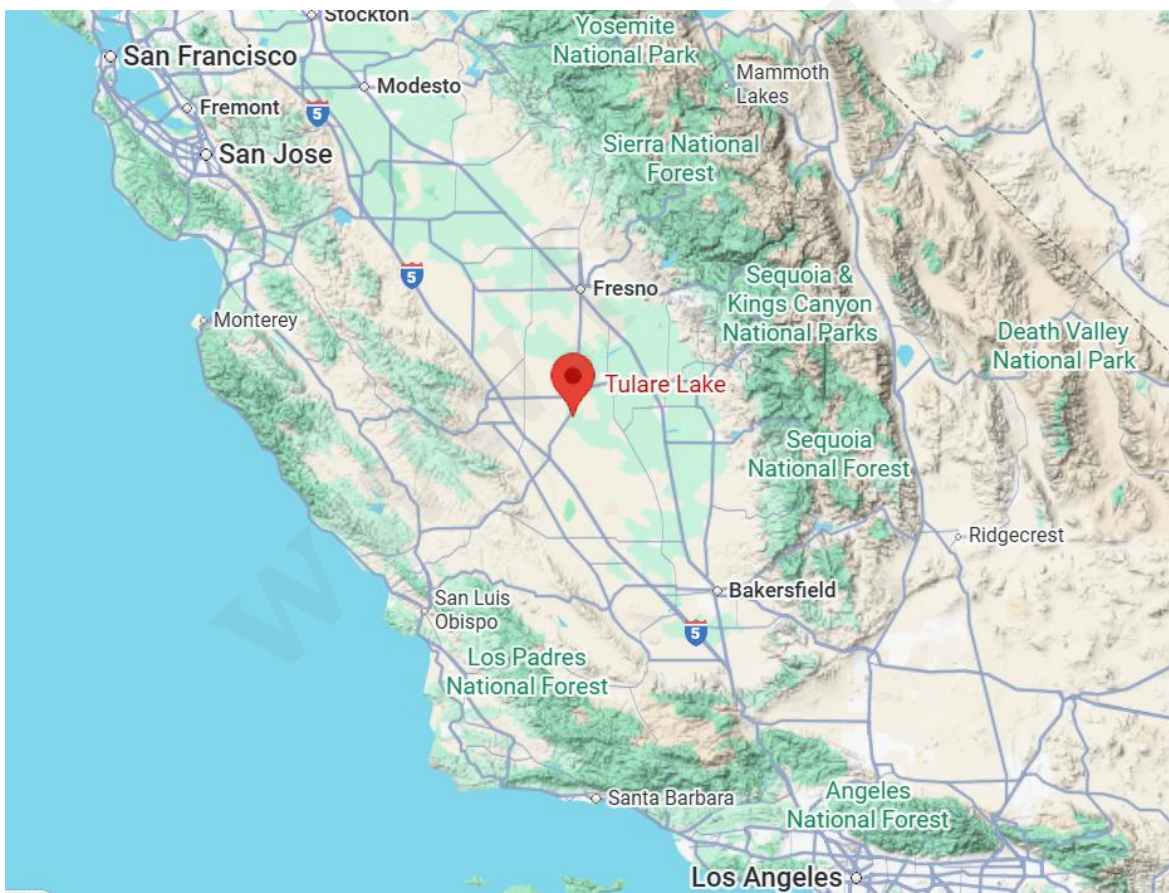
Tulare Lake wasn't always something from the past. Back in the 1800s, it was the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi River. But things started to change in the late 19th century. As more settlers arrived, massive irrigation systems were built to divert water for farming. Slowly, the Lake dried up and was replaced by crops like cotton, almonds, and pistachios.

This transformation— often called "land reclamation" – did more than just reshape the land. It also displaced the Tachi Yokut tribe, the Lake's original inhabitants, who had lived there for generations and called it Pa'ashi. With the Lake gone, they lost not just their home, but a way of life deeply connected to the water.

In early 2023, California was hit by a series of winter storms, followed by a major snowmelt from the Sierra Nevada mountains. All that water began flowing back into the old Tulare Lake basin. The drainage systems built to keep the land dry for farming just couldn't handle the sudden surge. Within weeks, fields that once grew crops were completely submerged, turning the area back into a wide, shallow lake.

Thus, Tulare Lake reemerged in the San Joaquin Valley after a series of intense atmospheric rivers brought heavy rain to the state. **So, Statement 3 is correct.**

Both Statement-II and Statement-III are correct and both of them explain Statement-I.



98. Under India's Semiconductor Mission, India's first semiconductor unit is located in the state of ?

- (a) **Gujarat**
- (b) Assam
- (c) Uttar Pradesh
- (d) Karnataka

EXPLANATION:

India's first semiconductor fabrication unit is located in Dholera in the Ahmedabad district of Gujarat.

So, Option (a) is correct.

- India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) was launched in December 2021. The mission is aimed at fostering chip manufacturing, packaging, testing and design capabilities. It also promotes collaboration between academia and industry to boost R&D and develop a highly skilled talent pool.
- As per industry estimates, India's chip market stood at approximately USD 38 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow to USD 100-110 billion by 2030.
- Under the Semiconductor fabs Scheme, companies receive up to 50 per cent financial support for setting up semiconductor fabrication plants. Similar schemes support display manufacturing, packaging units (ATMP/OSAT) and design startups through the Design Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme.
- India's growing ambition in semiconductors is showcased annually at the SEMICON India summit, the flagship event hosted in partnership with SEMI (Semiconductor Equipment and Materials International).
- The 2025 edition, which took place at New Delhi's Yashobhoomi from September 2-4, featured over 300 exhibitors from 18 countries, including pavilions from Japan, South Korea, Singapore, and Malaysia.
- Behind India's push towards the Semiconductor mission is the geopolitical shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine conflict, which exposed vulnerabilities in the global semiconductor supply chain, dominated by a few nations like Taiwan, South Korea, China, and the United States.
- Recently, Vikram 3201 Microprocessor were designed & developed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre of ISRO in collaboration with SCL. VIKRAM3201 is the first fully "Make-in-India" 32-bit microprocessor that is qualified for use in the harsh environmental conditions of space launch vehicles. This processor is an advanced version of the indigenously designed 16-bit VIKRAM1601 microprocessor, which has been flying in the Avionics system of ISRO's launch vehicles since 2009.
- As of May 2025, about six semiconductor fabrication units have been approved under the India Semiconductor Mission, which are about to come at the locations of Bhubaneshwar, Chandigarh (Mohali), Andhra Pradesh, Noida, Sanand and Dholera in Gujarat.

99. The "Framework on Repairability Index (RI) in Mobile and Electronic Sector" is published by which of the following?

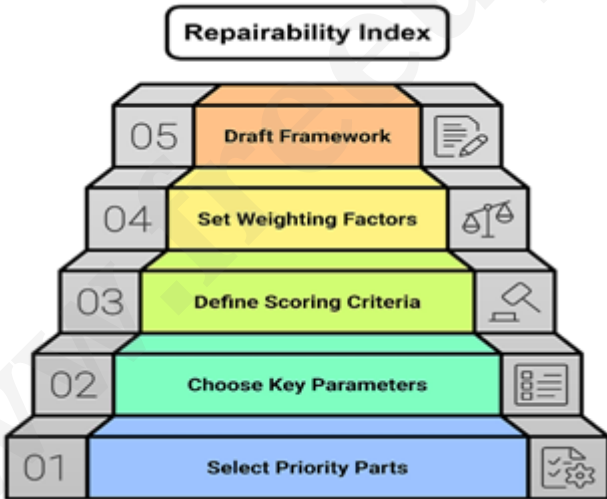
- (a) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- (b) NITI Aayog
- (c) **Department of Consumer Affairs**
- (d) Bureau of Indian Standards

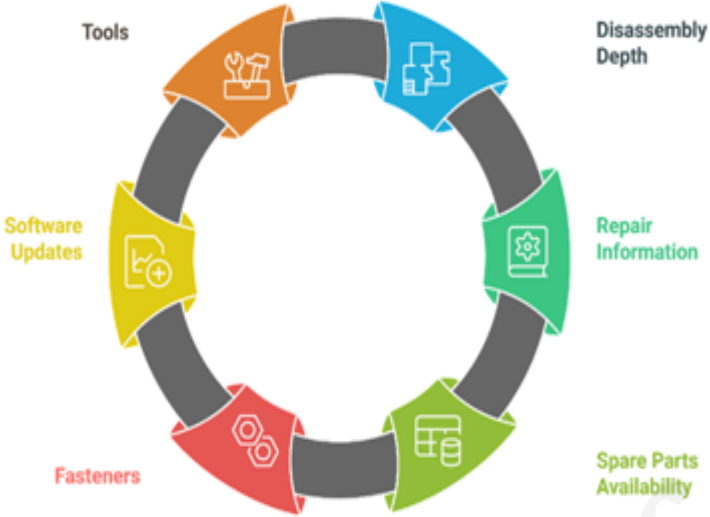
EXPLANATION:

The Framework on Repairability Index (RI) was developed by a committee constituted under the Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, aiming to improve transparency and accessibility in post-sale services for mobile and electronic products.

Under the RI, consumer electronics and electronic appliances would be assigned a score depending on how easy they are to repair by evaluating products under criteria like availability of spare parts, cost of repair, software updates, and availability of information. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

REPAIRABILITY INDEX (RI)	
About	➤ The committee's recommendations have been framed in alignment with the best global practices without causing any impediment to the industry with regard to innovation and ease of doing business. ➤ The Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) are required to self-declare the Repairability Index based on a standards scoring criteria provided in the framework, with no additional compliance burden. ➤ Further, the committee recommended that the Repairability Index should be displayed at the point of sale/purchase, on E-commerce platforms and in the form of a QR code on packaged products to enable consumers to make informed choices. ➤ Repairability Index aims to create an ecosystem where consumers choose options that align with the ethos of 'mindful utilisation' of their products over 'wasteful consumption'. ➤ By empowering consumers with ease and hassle-free repair options, the Department of Consumer Affairs is reaffirming its commitment to a self-reliant, sustainable, and consumer-friendly economy.
The Committee Include	➤ Stakeholders from the industry with companies like Apple, Samsung, Google, Vivo, HMD Mobiles, Dell, and HP. ➤ Prominent Industry associations like ICEA and MAIT, ➤ Representatives from consumer organisations like EPIC, ➤ Members of academia and senior officials of DoCA, Meity, and MSME ➤ Scientific organisations such as NTH and BIS The committee was mandated to recommend a robust framework for the Repairability Index (RI) in the Mobile and Electronics Sector. Based on the deliberations, the committee has identified smartphones and tablets as a product category for notification in the initial phase of the Repairability Index in the Mobile and Electronics Sector. 
Priority Parts	The committee identified priority parts which are most prone to frequent failures and have high functional relevance as follows: ➤ Battery, ➤ Display assembly, ➤ Back cover assembly, ➤ Front-facing camera assembly, ➤ Rear-facing camera assembly, ➤ Charging port, ➤ Mechanical buttons, ➤ Main microphone(s), ➤ Speaker,

	➤ Hinge assembly or mechanical display folding mechanism, ➤ External audio connector(s).
Components of RI	Components of Repairability Index 

100. The 'Sugar Board' initiative recently seen in news is the initiative of which of the following?

- (a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- (b) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India
- (c) Central Board of Secondary Education**
- (d) NITI Aayog

EXPLANATION:

In a major policy move to improve student health and address the growing problem of childhood diabetes, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) following recommendations from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) recently directed all affiliated schools to set up 'sugar boards' on their campuses.

This initiative is part of a nationwide effort to reduce excessive sugar consumption among school children.

It builds on existing regulations to limit unhealthy food environments near schools and stresses the importance of parental and community involvement for lasting impact. **So, Option (c) is correct.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

SUGAR BOARDS	
Recently in news	In response to growing health concerns among students, the CBSE has launched 'Sugar Boards' in schools across India. These interactive and visually appealing boards aim to raise awareness about the harmful effects of excessive sugar consumption
WHO report	➤ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2022, more than 390 million children and adolescents (aged 5–19 years) worldwide were above a healthy weight. ➤ Out of these, 160 million faced serious health issues related to excessive weight gain. Studies show a strong link between childhood obesity and Type 2 Diabetes (T2D), along with other weight-related health problems.
CBSE's Sugar	➤ In India, cases of Type 2 Diabetes among children and adolescents are increasing, with an estimated incidence rate of 397 per 100,000 in 2021. ➤ To address this growing concern, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), following recommendations from the National Commission for Protection of Child

Board Initiative	Rights (NCPCR), has directed all affiliated schools to install 'Sugar Boards' by July 15, 2025. ➤ These boards will visually display the amount of sugar in commonly consumed snacks and drinks, comparing it with the recommended daily limit. ➤ The aim is to raise awareness among students and encourage them to make healthier food choices by understanding how excess sugar affects long-term health. ➤ By involving students, educators, and parents alike, the initiative presents an opportunity to curb sugar intake and foster a culture of mindful eating and long-term wellness.
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