



# IAS PARLIAMENT

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## MONTHLY PRESTORMING

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**Shankar IAS Academy™**

Door No 18, New Plot No 259 /109,  
AL Block, 4th Avenue, Shanthi Colony,  
Annanagar, Chennai - 600040.



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**01-03-2021**

1) With respect to *Maritime India Summit 2021*, consider the following statements:

1. The Summit aims to visualize a roadmap for India's Maritime sector and to propel India to the forefront of the Global Maritime Sector.
2. It is being organized by the Indian Navy under the aegis of the Andaman and Nicobar Command with Denmark as partner country.

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *PSLV-C51 Mission*

1. PSLV-C51 successfully launched the Amazonia-1 satellite which is an optical earth observation satellite from Brazil.
2. It is the first dedicated commercial mission of NewSpace India Limited (NSIL).

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

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Bir Chilarai*

1. He is a renowned warrior and general of the Koch royal dynasty of Assam.
2. He is the son of Maharaja Viswa Singha, the founder of Kuch royal dynasty and younger brother of King Nara Narayan of the Kamata Kingdom.

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

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

4) *Channapatna Toys* are a particular form of wooden toys manufactured in?

- a. Karnataka
- b. Tamil Nadu
- c. West Bengal
- d. Andhra Pradesh

5) *Aos* is one of the major tribes of?

- a. Odisha
- b. Nagaland
- c. Lakshadweep
- d. Andaman & Nicobar Islands

6) Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to *Flexible Inflation Target (FTI)*

1. The Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 was amended to provide a statutory basis for a FTI framework.
2. India has adopted FTI mandate of 6 (+/- 2) percent and Wholesale Price Index was chosen as a key indicator.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)*



1. Bt cotton is the only Genetically Modified (GM) crop that is allowed in India.
2. The task of regulating GMO levels in imported consumables is done by Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are *incorrect*?

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Saras Aajeevika Mela*

1. It is a programme to transform rural India in general and the lives of rural women in particular.
2. It is an initiative of ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Which of the following ministry has launched "*E-Daakhil portal*"?

- a. Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- b. Ministry of Home Affairs
- c. Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- d. Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution

10) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Vajrayana Buddhism*

1. It is often referred to simply as "Tibetan Buddhism" or "Tantric Buddhism".

2. The practitioner of the Vajrayana Buddhism takes his or her innate Buddha nature as the means of practice.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

## Answers

1. a

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate 'Maritime India Summit 2021' on 2nd March via video conferencing.

### Maritime India Summit 2021

- The Maritime India Summit 2021 is being organized by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways on a virtual platform [www.maritimeindiasummit.in](http://www.maritimeindiasummit.in) from 2nd March to 4th March 2021.
- The Summit will visualize a roadmap for India's Maritime sector for next decade and will work to propel India to the forefront of the Global Maritime Sector. Eminent speakers from several countries are expected to attend the Summit and explore the potential business opportunities and investments in Indian Maritime domain. Denmark is the partner country for the three-day summit.

2. c

### PSLV-C51 Mission

- India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C51 successfully launched Amazonia-1 along with 18 co-passenger satellites recently from Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota.
- Amazonia-1, which became the first Brazilian satellite to be launched from India, is an optical earth observation satellite of National Institute for Space Research (INPE).
- It is the first dedicated PSLV commercial mission by New Space India Limited (NSIL) - commercial arm of Department of Space.



- The 18 co-passenger satellites onboard PSLV-C51 includes four from IN-SPACe and fourteen from NSIL.
- PSLV-C51 is the 53rd flight of PSLV and 3rd flight of PSLV in 'DL' configuration (with 2 strap-on motors).
- This was the 78th launch vehicle mission from SDSC SHAR, Sriharikota.

3. c

**Bir Chilarai**

- He is a renowned warrior and general of Koch Royal Dynasty of Assam.
- He is the younger brother of Maharaja Nara Narayan of the Kamata Kingdom and played a key role in the expansion of the empire of his brother.
- Bir Chilarai is the son of Maharaja Viswa Singha, the founder of Kuch royal dynasty.
- The birth anniversary of this general is celebrated every year as Bir Chilarai Divas.
- Since 2005, the Assam government is conferring Bir Chilarai Award to honour bravery of individuals.

4. a

- Channapatna Toys are a particular form of wooden toys and dolls that are manufactured in the town of Channapatna in the Ramanagara district of Karnataka state, India.

5. b

**khujli ghar**

- It is a traditional form of punishment in Nagaland.
- Social offenders or violators of Naga customary laws have over the ages dreaded a cramped, triangular cage made from the logs of an indigenous tree that irritates the skin.
- The dread is more of humiliation or loss of face within the community or clan than of spending at least a day scratching furiously without any space to move.
- Such itchy cages are referred to as *khujli ghar* in Nagamese.
- But each Naga community has its own name.

- The Aos, one of the major tribes of Nagaland, call it Shi-ki that means flesh-house.
- A few villages where traditional practices are very strong still prescribe this form of punishment, a deterrent for offenders of various shades, including robbers and drug addicts.

6. a

**Flexible Inflation Target**

- Inflation Targeting is a central banking policy that revolves around adjusting monetary policy to achieve a specified annual rate of inflation.
- Flexible inflation targeting is adopted when the central bank is to some extent also concerned about other things, for instance, the stability of interest rates, exchange rates, output and employment.
- In India Flexible Inflation Target (FIT) was adopted in 2016, which has put India on par with other nations in terms of flexible inflation targeting.
- India adopted a flexible inflation targeting mandate of 4 (+/-2) percent and headline consumer price inflation was chosen as a key indicator.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its Currency and Finance (RCF) report for the year 2020-21 has said that the current inflation target band (4% +/-2%) is appropriate for next 5 years.

7. b

**Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)**

- In India, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is the apex body that allows for commercial release of GM crops.
- The task of regulating GMO levels in imported consumables was initially with the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC).
- Its role was diluted with the enactment of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and FSSAI was asked to take over approvals of imported goods.
- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) in a recent order has set 1% threshold for Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) in food crops imported into India.

- Earlier in August 2020, FSSAI had issued the order that 24 food crops the country imports would need a 'non-GM-origin-cum-GM-free certificate' issued by a competent authority.

8. a

#### **Saras Aajeevika Mela**

- Recently, the Union Ministry for Rural Development inaugurated Saras Aajeevika Mela 2021.
- It aims to bring the rural women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under one platform so that they can showcase their skills, sell their products, and help them build linkages with bulk buyers.
- It is an initiative by the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) under the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) organised by the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART).
- CAPART is an autonomous body set up by the Ministry of Rural Development to interface between the government and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) that seek to improve the quality of life in India's rural areas.

9. d

#### **E-Daakhil portal**

- Recently, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution has provided that 'E-Daakhil portal' is now operational in 15 States/Union Territories.
- It is a consumer grievance redressal platform developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 has provision for e-filing of consumer complaints in the Consumer Commissions and online payment of the fees for filing a complaint.
- The E-filing was launched by National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC) in September 2020.

**National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC)**

- It is a quasi-judicial commission in India which was set up in 1988 under the Consumer Protection Act of 1986.
- It is headed by a sitting or retired judge of the Supreme Court of India.
- It shall have jurisdiction to entertain a complaint valued more than one crore.
- It shall also have Appellate and Revisional jurisdiction from the orders of State Commissions or the District fora as the case may be.

10. c

#### **Vajrayana Buddhism**

- It is also known as "Thunderbolt Vehicle", a form of Buddhism that developed in India in the 5th century C.E.
- It is generally accepted that Vajrayana Buddhism emerged out of the Mahayana in India.
- Vajrayana ritual and devotion employs mantras (esoteric verbal formulas), mandalas (diagrams and paintings used in visualization practices), and a complex array of other rituals.
- Recently, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has unearthed a Buddhist monastery in a village situated in a hilly area of Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand.
- The researchers have excavated 10 stone statues of deity Tara and the Buddha in Burhani village near Juljul Pahar of Sitagarhi Hills.
- The researchers provided that the presence of statues of deity Tara shows possible proliferation of Vajrayana form of Buddhism in this region.

**02-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Sugamya Bharat App**

1. The app acts as a way of sensitising and enhancing accessibility in the 3 pillars of the Accessible India Campaign.
2. The app has been developed by the Department of Empowerment of





**Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)  
under Ministry of Social Justice and  
Empowerment.**

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

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to Waste to Wealth Mission**

- 1. It is one of the 9 national missions of the Prime Minister's Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).
- 2. Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship, which was launched recently, comes under the Waste to Wealth Mission.

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

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

**3) Which of the following missions are not among the 9 national missions implemented by the Prime Minister's Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC)?**

- 1. Artificial Intelligence
- 2. National Solar Mission
- 3. National Biodiversity Mission
- 4. Natural Language Translation
- 5. National Mission for a Green India

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below:**

- a. 1 and 3 only
- b. 2 and 5 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3 only
- d. None of the above

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Amyntas Alexandri***

- 1. It is an exotic and highly invasive earthworm recently reported from Karnataka for the first time.
- 2. It is a medium-to-large-sized worm and its colour is brownish in light and dark at dorsum.

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

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

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI)***

- 1. It is a statutory body established under Land Ports Authority of India Act, 2010.
- 2. It works under the aegis of Ministry of Home Affairs.

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

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

**6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Pastuerella multoceda***

- 1. It is a common bacteria found in the respiratory tract of herbivores, especially in cattle.
- 2. It causes diarrhoea and often haemorrhagic septicemia.

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below:**

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only



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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Wolly Necked Stork*

1. It is a bird found in Sub-Saharan Africa, India and South East Asia.
2. It is listed as 'Near Threatened' under the IUCN Red List.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are *incorrect*?

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Anti-defection Law*

1. 91st Amendment Act of 2003 removed an exception provision in anti-defection law i.e., disqualification on ground of defection not to apply in case of split.
2. Any question regarding such disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by Supreme Court.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Which is the nodal ministry that supports *Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research (AWSAR)* initiative?

- a. Ministry of Education
- b. Ministry of Labour and Employment
- c. Ministry of Science & Technology
- d. Ministry of Skill development and Entrepreneurship

10) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *King Krishnadevaraya*

1. He was a shaivite and followed the teachings of Nayanmars.
2. He wrote *Amuktamalyada*, which tells the story of the Tamil poet-saint Andal
3. Recently found inscriptions records his demise in Saka 1451, lunar eclipse, which corresponds to 1529 AD.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

## Answers

1. c

- Union Minister for Social justice and Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot will virtually launch "Sugamya Bharat App" and a handbook entitled "Access – The Photo Digest" through video conference.
- The App and the handbook have been developed by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD)** under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

## Sugamya Bharat APP

- It is a Crowdsourcing Mobile Application.
- It is a means for **sensitising and enhancing accessibility in the 3 pillars of the Accessible India Campaign** i.e.
  1. Built environment
  2. Transportation sector
  3. ICT ecosystem in India
- **Registered users can raise issues related to accessibility being faced.**
- The App also has provision of easy photo uploads with geotagging option of the premise where accessibility intervention is required.





- The App has provision for providing notifications to the users at the time of registration, regular status updates as well as at the time of resolution and closure of the complaint.

2. c

- The **Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser** to the Government of India under its “Waste to Wealth” Mission has recently launched the “Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship”.
- The fellowship aims to recognize students, community workers/self-help groups, and municipal/sanitary workers who are engaged in tackling the enormous challenge of waste management, scientifically and sustainably.

### Waste to Wealth Mission

- It is one of the 9 national missions of the Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).
- The mission aims to identify, develop and deploy technologies to treat waste to generate energy, recycle materials, and extract resources of value.
- The mission will also work to identify and support the development of new technologies that promise to create a clean and green environment.
- The mission will assist and augment the Swachh Bharat and Smart Cities projects by leveraging science, technology, and innovation to create circular economic models that are financially viable for waste management to streamline waste handling in the country.

3. b

List of 9 Science and Technology Missions implemented by Prime Minister’s Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC)

- AGNIi
- Electric vehicles
- Waste to Wealth
- Quantum frontier
- Artificial intelligence
- Deep Ocean Exploration
- National biodiversity mission

8. BioScience for Human Health

9. Natural Language Translation

List of 8 Missions of India’s National Action Plan on Climate Change

- National Solar Mission
- National Water Mission
- National Mission for a Green India
- National Mission on Sustainable Habitat
- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture
- National Mission on Enhanced Energy Efficiency
- National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Eco-system
- National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change

4. c

### Amyntas Alexandri

- It is an exotic and highly invasive earthworm of the *Megascolecidae* family.
- It has been collected and reported for the first time from Karnataka.
- Its original home is believed to be Southeast Asia.
- It has been found to be distributed at four sites in the State — Hosabale and Hosanagara in Shivamogga district, Kaimara in Chikkamagaluru district, and Konaje in Dakshina Kannada.
- Earlier, the same earthworm was recorded in 15 States/Union Territories in India, according to a study published in the January issue of the Canadian journal *Megadrilologica*, an international scientific journal devoted to publishing earthworm studies from across the world.

5. c

### Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI)

- It is a statutory body established under Land Ports Authority of India Act, 2010.
- It functions under the Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs with representation from the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Commerce & Industry,



Department of Revenue and other stakeholders.

- LPAI also associates with the concerned State Governments and respective Border Guarding Force like Border Security Force, Sashastra Seema Bal and Assam Rifles deployed at the concerned border of India in its work.
- The Act gives powers to LPAI to develop, sanitize and manage the facilities for cross-border movement of passengers and goods at designated points along the international borders of India.

6. c

#### ***Pastuerella multoceda***

- It is a small, gram-negative, non-motile, non-spore-forming coccobacillus with bipolar staining features.
- It multiplies rapidly and moves from the respiratory tract to the bloodstream only in times of stress in the animal, or when the animal has low immunity or is unhealthy.
- It can cause a zoonotic infection in humans, which typically is a result of bites or scratches from domestic pets.
- Recently, the death of six elephants at Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary in Kalahandi due to a bacterium has raised concern among the environmental experts.
- The death of elephants is mainly due to haemorrhagic septicemia caused by bacteria *Pastuerella multoceda*.

7. b

#### ***Wolly necked Stork***

- The woolly-necked stork or whitenecked stork (*Ciconia episcopus*) is a large wading bird in the stork family Ciconiidae.
- It is usually found near or in a large variety of wetlands such as rivers, marshes, lakes, rice fields, flood plains and pastures and swamp forest.
- In India, it prefers waterlogged ground.
- In East Africa, it is found in coastal areas, on mudflats and coral reefs, but also in savanna, grassland and cultivated areas.

- It feeds on marine invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, crustaceans, molluscs and large insects.
- It is listed as 'Vulnerable' under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- Recently, a woolly-necked stork has been spotted and recorded at the Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary in Ariyalur district.
- Karaivetti is one of the largest freshwater lakes in South India which is fed by River Kaveri.

8. a

#### ***Anti-defection Law***

- The 52nd Amendment Act of 1985 provided for the disqualification of the members of Parliament and the state legislatures on the ground of defection from one political party to another.
- The amendment led to addition of a new Schedule (the Tenth Schedule) to the Constitution.
- Any question regarding disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by the presiding officer of the House.
- The Supreme Court held that the presiding officer, while deciding a question under the Tenth Schedule, function as a tribunal.
- The presiding officer of a House is empowered to make rules to give effect to the provisions of the Tenth Schedule.
- According to the rules made so, the presiding officer can take up a defection case only when he receives a complaint from a member of the House

9. c

#### ***Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research (AWSAR)***

- AWSAR is an initiative that aims to disseminate Indian research stories among the masses in an easy to understand and interesting format.
- It aims to encourage youth pursuing higher studies to submit at least one story/article based on their research work.
- It also foster, strengthen and create scientific temper through popular science writing and



creating a culture of science communication /popularisation among the scholars.

10. c

### **King Krishnadevaraya**

- He was the king of Vijayanagara Empire who resigned in the 16th century over most of South India.
- He was a Sri Vaishnava, a follower of the Tamil saint Ramanuja.
- He was commonly known as abhinava-bhoja, "a New Bhoja," sakala-kala-bhoja, "Bhoja in all arts," and Andhra Bhoja.
- He wrote Amuktamalyada, which tells the story of the Tamil poet-saint Andal.
- Recently, the first-ever epigraphical reference to the date of death of Vijayanagara king Krishnadevaraya has been discovered at Honnenahalli in Tumakuru district.
- The inscription is engraved on a slab kept on the north side of the Gopalakrishna temple.
- The inscription is written in Kannada, also registers gift of village Honnenahalli in Tumakuru for conducting worship to the god Veeraprasanna Hanumantha of Tumakuru.

**03-03-2021**

### **1) Consider the following statements with respect to Nag River Pollution Abatement Project**

1. The project aims to reduce pollution level in Nag River which flows through Nagpur city.
2. The project, approved under the National River Conservation Plan, will be implemented by the National River Conservation Directorate, NRC.

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

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

### **2) Consider the following statements with respect to National Council of Science Museums (NCSM)**

1. It is the implementing agency to set up science cities/centres and Innovation Hubs in India.
2. It is an autonomous society under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

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

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

### **3) Consider the following statements about Special-Purpose Acquisition Companies**

1. They are also known as blank-cheque companies.
2. They pose lesser risk for an investor than IPOs

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

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

### **4) The term taper tantrum, recently seen in news, is related to?**

- a. The tapering of ice bergs in Artic Circle due to increasing sea surface temperature
- b. The capital outflows in emerging economies caused by tapering of US Fed's bond-buying programme
- c. The tapering of Forex reserve of a country due to increase in oil prices
- d. The partial solar eclipse caused when the moon is near its apogee



5) Consider the following statements about Agriculture Infrastructure Development Cess

1. It is aimed at not only boosting production but also in helping conserve and process farm output efficiently.
2. It gives greater autonomy to states to use funds effectively based on demand.

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

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

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Registration of Political Parties*

1. A party seeking registration has to submit an application to the election Commission within a period of 30 days following the date of its formation.
2. For a party to get recognised as national party in India it must win at least two percent seats in the Lok Sabha and these members are elected from at least three different States.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)*

1. It aims to provide strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions.
2. It systematically rank education institutions and universities primarily on innovation related indicators.

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

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Black-Browed Babbler*

1. It is a songbird species which is endemic to Amazon forest.
2. The species is listed in the "Data Deficient" category under the IUCN red list.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *Global Bio-India 2021*

1. It is the largest Bio event which will showcase opportunities in Indian Biotechnology sector to the world.
2. It is being organized by the Department of Biotechnology and Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

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

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

10) With respect to *Exercise Desert FLAG VI*, consider the following statements:

1. It is an annual multi-national large force employment warfare exercise



hosted by the United Arab Emirates Air Force.

**2. Indian Air Force is participating in the exercise for the first time.**

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

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

## Answers

1. c

### **Nag River Pollution Abatement Project**

- The Nag River Pollution Abatement Project has been approved recently at a cost of Rs. 2,117.54 crores.
- The river, which flows through Nagpur city, thus giving its name to the city, is now a highly polluted water channel of sewage and industrial waste.
- The project, approved under the National River Conservation Plan, will be implemented by the National River Conservation Directorate, NRCD.
- It will reduce the pollution level in terms of untreated sewage, flowing solid waste and other impurities flowing into the Nag river and its tributaries.

2. c

- *The Udaipur Science Centre, at Udaipur, Tripura was dedicated to the people by the Governor of Tripura, Shri Ramesh Bais recently.*
- Udaipur Science Centre is the 22nd Science Centre which has been developed by NCSM and handed over to the State Governments under the Ministry of Culture's Scheme for Promotion of Culture of Science.

### **National Council of Science Museums (NCSM)**

- It is an autonomous society under the Ministry of Culture, formed on April 4, 1978.

- Today, it administers 25 Science Centres/Museums spread all over India.
- Science City, Kolkata, Birla Industrial and Technological Museum (BITM), Kolkata, Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai, Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum (VITM), Bangalore and National Science Centre, Delhi are National level centres of NCSM.
- All having its Regional centres and District Level Centres called Satellite Units (SUs).
- NCSM forms the largest network of science centres and museums in the world under single administrative umbrella.

3. a

- A SPAC is an empty corporate shell that raises money from investors with the aim of acquiring private businesses by merging them.
- The success of SPACs lies in letting their investors own a piece of highly fancied emerging businesses that can quickly soar in value.
- They are also known as blank-cheque companies because SPACs have no operations or business plans when they seek investor money.
- They raise money, then hunt around for merger candidates and hit jackpot if they get lucky with their investments.
- SPACs offer a new route for high-risk taking individuals to participate in the start-up euphoria.
- Imagine you are an investor who dabbles in US markets and pays \$10 per share to invest in a newly established SPAC. Your money, along with the money of many others like you who bought shares, is deposited in a trust account.
- Now, the SPAC starts looking for a target company.
- If the SPAC fails to spot a target within two years, you get back your \$10 per share, plus applicable interest.

4. b

- In May 2013, the US Fed's announcement that it would taper its massive bond-buying programme that had been on since the global



financial crisis led to a sudden sell-off in global stocks and bonds.

- This triggered capital outflows and currency depreciation in many emerging market economies that received large capital inflows. This episode earned the nickname taper tantrum.

5. a

- The Budget for 2021-22 proposed Agriculture Infrastructure Development Cess.
- Cess is a kind of special-purpose tax which is levied over and above basic tax rates.
- The purpose of the new AIDC is to raise funds to finance spending on developing agriculture infrastructure.
- The new cess will only offset the reduction in customs or excise duty and thus will not raise the tax incidence for consumers.
- Drawing power from Articles 270 and 271 of the Constitution, the Centre collects cess and deposits it in the Consolidated Fund of India.
- However, the money is then supposed to be transferred to a segregated fund to be used for specific purpose.
- The AIDC is proposed to be used to improve agricultural infrastructure aimed at not only boosting production but also in helping conserve and process farm output efficiently.
- But the money collected through cess and surcharge are not part of the divisible pool, from which devolution of Central taxes takes place to the States.
- When customs duty or excise is replaced by cess, the pie from which States get a share tends to shrink.

6. c

### **Registration of Political Parties**

- Registration of political parties is governed by the provisions of section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- A party seeking registration under the said section with the Commission has to submit an application to the Commission within a period of 30 days following the date of its formation

as per guidelines prescribed by the Commission.

- As per existing guidelines, the applicant association is, inter-alia, asked to publish proposed Name of party in two national daily newspapers and two local daily newspapers, on two days for submitting objections, if any, with regard to the proposed registration of the party before the Commission within 30 days from such publication.
- The Commission has announced the General Elections for the Legislative Assemblies of West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry on 26.02.2021.
- The Election Commission has given a relaxation and has reduced the notice period from 30 days to 7 days for the parties who have published their public notice on or before 26.02.2021.
- To be eligible for a 'National Political Party of India,' the Election Commission has set the following criteria:
  1. It secures at least six percent of the valid votes polled in any four or more states, at a general election to the House of the People or, to the State Legislative Assembly; and
  2. In addition, it wins at least four seats in the House of the People from any State or States. OR
  3. It wins at least two percent seats in the House of the People (i.e., 11 seats in the existing House having 543 members), and these members are elected from at least three different States.

7. b

### **Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)**

- It is a centrally sponsored programme which aims to work with 300-plus state universities and its affiliated colleges to raise the bar of campus life.
- The central funding (in the ratio of 60:40 for general category states, 90:10 for special category states and 100% for union territories) is based on norms and is outcome dependent.
- It places greater emphasis on the improvement of the quality of teaching-learning processes in



order to produce employable and competitive graduates, post-graduates and PhDs.

- It aims to create new universities through upgradation of existing autonomous colleges and by conversion of colleges to a cluster.
- It aims to create new model degree colleges, new professional colleges and provide infrastructural support to universities and colleges.

#### **Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)**

- It is initiated by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India to systematically rank education institutions and universities primarily on innovation related indicators.
- ARIIA considers all major indicators which are commonly used globally to rank most innovative education institutions/ universities in the world.
- ARIIA will primarily focus on 6 main parameters such as,
  1. Programs and Activities on IPR, Innovation, Start-up and Entrepreneurship
  2. Pre Incubation & Incubation Infrastructure & Facilities to Support I&E
  3. Annual Budget Spent on Promoting and Supporting I&E Activities
  4. Courses on Innovation, IPR and Entrepreneurship Development
  5. Intellectual Property (IP), Technology Transfer and Commercialization
  6. Successful Innovation and Start-ups & Funding Innovation & start-ups

8. b

#### **Black-Browed Babbler**

- Black browed Babbler *Malacocincla perspicillatum*, unseen for 170 years has been re-discovered recently.
- The species is endemic to Borneo, a rugged island in Southeast Asia's Malay Archipelago.
- Only a single specimen, collected in the nineteenth century was known, until the bird was rediscovered in Indonesia.

- According to IUCN the global population size has not been quantified, but the species is described as possibly extinct and known only from a single specimen.

9. c

#### **Global Bio-India 2021**

- The largest bio-technology conglomerate Global Bio-India 2021 was recently inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare.
- Biotechnology sector is recognized as the key driver for contributing to India's USD 5 Trillion economy target by 2024.
- As India progresses on this transformational journey, Global Bio-India 2021, the largest Bio event, would showcase opportunities in Indian Biotechnology sector to the world.
- Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India and its Public Sector Undertaking, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) are organizing Global Bio-India 2021.

10. c

- Ex Desert Flag is an annual multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the United Arab Emirates Air Force.
- The Indian Air Force is participating for the first time in Exercise Desert Flag-VI along with air forces of United Arab Emirates, United States of America, France, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Bahrain.
- The exercise is scheduled to be take place at Al-Dhafra airbase, UAE.
- The aim of the exercise is to provide operational exposure to the participating forces while training them to undertake simulated air combat operations in a controlled environment.

**04-03-2021**

**1) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to PRASHAD Scheme**



1. It aims for integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations.
2. It is launched by Ministry of Culture and sponsored by respective state governments.

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

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Himalayan Serow*

1. They are generally found at an altitude with an average elevation of 5000 metres above sea level.
2. It is categorized as 'vulnerable' under IUCN Red List and listed under Schedule I of The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

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

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

3) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Merchant Digitization Summit 2021*?

1. It aims to accelerate responsible digitization of merchants in India's North-Eastern and Himalayan regions, and Aspirational districts.
2. It is joint initiative of Ministry of Finance, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), and UN-based Better than Cash Alliance.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

4) Which of the following organisation has released *Nationally Determined Contribution Synthesis Report*?

- a. Ministry of Coal
- b. Green Peace International
- c. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- d. UN- Framework Convention on Climate Change

5) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Aroma Mission*

1. It is an initiative of National Horticulture Board.
2. Purple Revolution under this mission aims to provide free lavender saplings to farmers.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Aries-Devasthal Faint Object Spectrograph & Camera (ADFOSC)*

1. It is a low-cost optical spectrograph that can locate sources of faint light from distant quasars and galaxies.
2. It was indigenously designed and developed by Aryabhata Research Institute of observational sciences (ARIES), Nainital.

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

- a. 1 only

- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

7) With respect to Javadhu Hills, consider the following statements:

1. It is an extension of the Eastern Ghats spread across parts of the state of Tamil Nadu in southeastern India.
2. Malayali tribal people constitutes the majority of the inhabitants of the Javadhu hills.
3. Vainu Bappu Observatory, India's astronomical observatory owned and operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, is located in the Javadhu Hills.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)*

1. It is globally identified as a tool for sustainable and integrated ocean management.
2. It will be implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) through National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) for India.
3. In its primary phase, India will conduct marine spatial planning in Lakshadweep and Puducherry in co-operation with Russia.

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

9) *Arktika-M*, sometimes seen in the news recently, refers to?

- a. Intercontinental Nuclear ballistic missile developed by Iran
- b. World's first mission launched by NASA to study black holes
- c. Russia's space satellite to monitor climate and environment in the Arctic Region
- d. India's surveillance satellite deployed in space to monitor Indian Ocean Region

10) The U.N. General Assembly has recently declared the year 2023 as?

- a. The International Year of Millets
- b. The International Year of Tourism
- c. The International Year of Camelids
- d. The International Year of Peace and Trust

## Answers

1. a

### PRASHAD Scheme

- It is an infrastructure development scheme of Ministry of Tourism.
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** fully financed by the Government of India.
- It aims to **identify and develop pilgrimage tourist destinations** on the principles of high tourist visits, competitiveness and sustainability.
- Under the scheme recently, the Ministry of Tourism has laid the foundation stone for the project **development of Maa Bamleshwari Devi Temple, Dongargarh, Chhattisgarh.**

2. a

### Himalayan Serow

- The Himalayan Serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis* thar) resembles a cross between a goat, a donkey, a cow, and a pig.

- It is a medium-sized mammal with a large head, thick neck, short limbs, long, mule-like ears, and a coat of dark hair.
  - It is restricted to the Himalayan region and can be regarded as a subspecies of the mainland serow.
  - The Serows are generally not found at an altitude with an average elevation of 4,270 metres above sea level.
  - Recently, the Himalayan Serow was spotted for the first time in Assam.
  - Its distribution ranges are in the following regions
1. The dark form in the southern slopes of Himalayas from Jammu & Kashmir in west to Arunachal Pradesh in the east.
  2. The enigmatic red form in the hills of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and Nagaland.

#### **Wild life protection act of 1972**

- Wild life protection act of 1972 has six schedules which give varying degrees of protection.
- Schedule I and part II of Schedule II provide absolute protection for the species listed, offences under these are prescribed the highest penalties.

3. d

#### **Merchant Digitization Summit 2021**

- The theme is Towards AatmaNirbhar (Self Reliance) Bharat with special focus on Himalayan Regions, North East Regions and Aspirational Districts of India'.
- It provides that the responsible digitization must strongly include rural networks such as Self Help Groups and community enablers to create the local digital ecosystems.

4. d

#### **NDC Synthesis Report**

- NDCs are at the heart of the Paris Agreement and embody efforts by each country to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

- Each NDC reflects the country's ambition, taking into account its domestic circumstances and capabilities.
- The NDC Synthesis Report covers submissions up to 31st December 2020 and includes new or updated NDCs by 75 Parties, which represent approximately 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions.
- It has called for more ambitious climate action plans by the countries in order to achieve the Paris Agreement target of containing global temperature rise to 2°C (ideally 1.5°C) by the end of the century.

#### **UNFCCC**

- The UNFCCC secretariat (UN Climate Change) is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change.
- The Convention has near universal membership (197 Parties) and is the parent treaty of the 2015 Paris Agreement.
- The UNFCCC is also the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol.

5. b

#### **Aroma Mission**

- The CSIR Aroma Mission will promote the cultivation of aromatic crops for essential oils that are in great demand by the aroma industry.
- The nodal laboratory of the mission is CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow.
- The participating laboratories are CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (CSIR-IHBT), Palampur; CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu etc.
- It is expected to enable Indian farmers and aroma industry to become global leaders in the production and export of some other essential oils on the pattern of menthol mint.

#### **Purple Revolution (Under Aroma Mission)**

- Under this initiative farmers were given free lavender saplings and those who have cultivated lavender before were charged Rs. 5-6 per sapling.

- It aims to support domestic aromatic crop based agro economy by moving from imported aromatic oils to home-grown varieties.
- Main product of this initiative is Lavender oil which sells for at least Rs. 10,000 per litre
- Lavender water, which separates from lavender oil, is used to make incense sticks.
- Hydrosol, which is formed after distillation from the flowers, is used to make soaps and room fresheners.

6. c

#### **Aries-Devasthal Faint Object Spectrograph & Camera (ADFOSC)**

- Indian Scientists have recently designed and developed a low-cost optical spectrograph **Aries-Devasthal Faint Object Spectrograph & Camera (ADFOSC)** that can locate sources of faint light from distant quasars and galaxies in a very young universe, regions around supermassive black-holes around the galaxies, and cosmic explosions.
- Such spectroscopes were so far imported from abroad involved high costs.
- ADFOSC was indigenously designed and developed by **Aryabhata Research Institute of observational sciences (ARIES), Nainital.**
- ARIES is an autonomous institute of Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.
- ADFOSC is about 2.5 times less costly compared to the imported ones and can locate sources of light with a photon-rate as low as about 1 photon per second.
- The spectroscope, the largest of its kind among the existing astronomical spectrographs in the country, has been successfully commissioned on the 3.6-m Devasthal Optical Telescope (DOT), the largest in the country and in Asia, near Nainital Uttarakhand.

7. d

- In Javadhu Hills, the Van Dhan tribal start-ups programme, a component of the 'Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & Development of Value Chain

*for MFP' Scheme, has emerged as a major source of employment for the local tribals.*

#### **Javadhu Hills**

- The hills also called as Jawadhi, Jawadhu, Javadi Hills, are an extension of the Eastern Ghats spread across parts of Vellore and Tiruvannamalai districts in the northern part of the state of Tamil Nadu in southeastern India.
- They are bisected into eastern and western sections by the Cheyyar and Agaram rivers, tributaries of the Palar River.
- They consist of bluish gray granites, with peaks averaging 3,600–3,800 feet (1,100–1,150 m).
- The hills are sparsely populated; the majority of the inhabitants are Malayali tribes people, though other castes are also present.
- The **Malayali tribal people constitute 92.60%** of the total population in this block and their mainstay is through the non-timber forest produce and a variety of trees grown on this patta land such as tamarind, jackfruit, coconut, lemon and plantain and gooseberry.
- Vainu Bappu Observatory, India's astronomical observatory owned and operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, is located at Kavalur in the Javadi Hills.

8. a

- *India and Norway have recently agreed to jointly work in the area of marine spatial planning in the oceanic space for the next five years.*
- This is a part of the **Indo-Norway Integrated Ocean Initiative** under the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two countries in 2019.
- Lakshadweep and Puducherry have been identified as pilot sites for the project.

#### **Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)**

- The two countries have decided to extend support for sustainable ocean resources utilisation to advance economic and social development in coastal areas.
- The initiative known as Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) will be implemented by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) through



National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) for India.

- In its primary phase, NCCR will develop a marine spatial planning framework for Puducherry and Lakshadweep.
- Notably, the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have expressed interest in supporting MoES in conducting MSP, a societal-beneficial initiative for India's coastal regions.
- The MSP initiative will be implemented by MoES and the Norwegian Environment Agency through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway.
- Earlier, NCCR had developed coastal management plans for Chennai, Goa, and Gulf of Kachchh which proved very successful.
- Now, the MSP initiative will aid development of multiple economic sectors and stakeholders in greater number of coastal areas of the country.

9. c

#### **Arktika-M**

- Russia has recently launched its space satellite Arktika-M on a mission to monitor the climate and environment in the Arctic.
- The Arctic has warmed more than twice as fast as the global average over the last three decades and Moscow is seeking to develop the energy-rich region, investing in the Northern Sea Route for shipping across its long northern flank as ice melts.
- The satellite successfully reached its intended orbit after being launched from Kazakhstan's Baikonur cosmodrome by a Soyuz rocket.
- Russia plans to send up a second satellite in 2023 and combined the two will offer round-the-clock, all-weather monitoring of the Arctic Ocean and the surface of the Earth.

#### **'Sindhu Netra'**

- DRDO's 'Sindhu Netra' surveillance satellite deployed in space, will help to monitor Indian Ocean Region.

10. a

- The U.N. General Assembly has recently adopted by consensus a resolution sponsored by India and supported by over 70 nations declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
- It aimed at raising awareness about the health benefits of the grain and their suitability for cultivation under changing climatic conditions.
- The resolution titled 'International Year of Millets 2023' was initiated by India with Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia and Senegal and was co-sponsored by over 70 nations.
- The 193-member General Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution.
- In April 2016, the U.N. General Assembly had proclaimed the U.N. Decade of Action on Nutrition from 2016 to 2025, recognising the need to eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide.

**05-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to CSIR Floriculture Mission**

- 1. Under the mission, efforts are being made to brought in agro-technologies and new varieties available with the CSIR institutions to farmers and help them in multiplying their income.**
- 2. The mission is being implemented in collaboration with ICAR, KVIC, TRIFED and others.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**2) With respect to floriculture in India, consider the following statements:**

- 1. Despite India has diverse agro-climatic and edaphic conditions, and rich plant diversity, it shares only 0.6% of global floriculture market.**





2. Government of India has identified floriculture as a sunrise industry and accorded it 100% export oriented status.
3. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is responsible for export promotion and development of floriculture in India.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ease of Living Index, 2020*

1. The index aims to measure the well-being of Indian citizens in 111 cities, across the pillars of Quality of Life, Economic-ability, and Sustainability.
2. Bengaluru tops the Million+ population category and Shimla tops the Less than Million category.
3. The report was prepared and launched by NITI Aayog.

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

4) Match the following:

*GI Textiles – Region*

1. PatanPatola - a. Telangana
2. Uppada Jamdani Sarees - b. Andhra Pradesh
3. Paithani Sarees and Fabrics - c. Gujarat
4. Pochampally Ikat - d. Maharashtra

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1-d; 2-a; 3-c; 4-b
- b. 1-c; 2-b; 3-d; 4-a
- c. 1-c; 2-a; 3-d; 4-b
- d. 1-a; 2-b; 3-c; 4-d

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *CSIR's Societal Portal*

1. The portal aims to facilitate the public to submit the societal problems that can be resolved using Science and Technology interventions.
2. This portal has been developed by CSIR Team with the help of National Informatics Centre (NIC).

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

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

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA)*

1. It is a tax treaty signed between two or more countries to help taxpayers avoid paying double taxes on the same income.
2. The DTAA becomes applicable in cases where an individual is a resident of one nation, but earns income in another.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Platypus*



1. It is one of the five species of monotremes, the only mammals that lay eggs instead of giving birth to young ones.
2. It is endemic to South America, including Costa Rica, where it is classified as a vulnerable species

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

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

8) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Freedom in the World Index 2021*

1. It is released by Amnesty International, which is headquarters in the United Kingdom focused on human rights.
2. The report has demoted India's freedom score from "free" to "partly free" due to erosion of rights and civil liberties.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Which of the following are criteria considered for providing *Least Developed Country status* to a nation?

1. Per capita Income
2. Gross Domestic Product Values
3. Consumer Price Index
4. Human Assets Index
5. Economic Vulnerability Index

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 & 3 only

- b. 1, 2 & 3 only
- c. 2, 3, & 5 only
- d. 1, 4 & 5 only

10) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Telecom Equipment Export Promotion Council*

1. It has been set up by the Ministry of External affairs and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
2. India Telecom 2021, an Exclusive International Business Expo has been organized by the council.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

## Answers

1. c

### CSIR Floriculture Mission

- Aim: Through Floriculture Mission of CSIR, **agro-technologies, new varieties and value addition technologies** available with the CSIR institutions, efforts are being made to take these to farmers and entrepreneurs, and help them in multiplying their income.
- Market linkage and trade issues will be solved with partnership of APEDA, state horticulture departments and TRIFED.
- The convergence of Floriculture with Apiculture as envisaged in the mission will yield even greater benefits.
- The Mission is being implemented in collaboration with ICAR, KVIC, APEDA, TRIFED, Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC), Kannauj, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of MSME and Universities.

2. d

- During the launch of CSIR Floriculture Mission, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Minister for Science and Technology has said, "Farmers have little knowledge about floriculture which can give 5 times more return than the traditional crops.
- Floriculture has the potential to provide employment to a large number of people through nursery raising, floriculture farming, entrepreneurship development for nursery trade, value addition and export.
- Despite the fact that India has diverse agro-climatic and edaphic conditions, and rich plant diversity, it shares only 0.6 % of global floriculture market.
- At least 1200 million USD worth of floriculture products are being imported by India every year from different countries.

#### **Background**

- Government of India has identified floriculture as a sunrise industry and accorded it 100% export oriented status.
- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), is responsible for export promotion and development of floriculture in India.
- Floriculture products mainly consist of cut flowers, pot plants, cut foliage, seeds bulbs, tubers, rooted cuttings and dried flowers or leaves.

3. a

- **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** has recently announced the release of the final rankings of Ease of Living Index (EoLI) 2020 and the Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2020.
- The rankings under Ease of Living Index 2020 were announced for cities with a population of more than a million, and cities with less than a million people.
- Bengaluru emerged as the top performer in the Million+ category, followed by Pune, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Surat, Navi Mumbai, Coimbatore, Vadodara, Indore, and Greater Mumbai.

- In the Less than Million category, Shimla was ranked the highest in ease of living, followed by Bhubaneswar, Silvassa, Kakinada, Salem, Vellore, Gandhinagar, Gurugram, Davangere, and Tiruchirappalli.

#### **Ease of Living Index (EoLI)**

- The EoLI report aims to measure the well-being of Indian citizens in 111 cities, across the pillars of Quality of Life, Economic-ability, and Sustainability, with 49 indicators under 13 categories.
- The EoLI 2020 strengthens its scope by consolidating the framework with the addition of a Citizen Perception Survey in the index, holding a weightage of 30%.
- It, therefore, examines the outcomes that lead to existing living conditions through pillars of Quality of Life, Economic Ability, Sustainability, spanning across 13 categories of -Education, Health, Housing and Shelter, WASH and SWM, Mobility, Safety and Security, Recreation, Level of Economic Development, Economic Opportunities, Environment, Green Spaces, and Buildings, Energy Consumption, and City Resilience, that account for 70% of the overall outcome.
- The Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) was undertaken to help validate citizens' experience of their city in terms of service delivery.
- Bhubaneswar had the highest CPS score, followed by Silvassa, Davangere, Kakinada, Bilaspur and Bhagalpur.

#### **Municipal Performance Index (MPI), 2020**

- The index examined the sectoral performance of 111 municipalities (with Delhi being assessed separately for NDMC, and the three Municipal Corporations) across five verticals which comprise of 20 sectors and 100 indicators in all totality.
- The five verticals under MPI are Services, Finance, Policy, Technology and Governance.
- In the Million+ category, Indore has emerged as the highest ranked municipality, followed by Surat and Bhopal. In the Less than Million category, New Delhi Municipal Council has emerged as the leader, followed by Tirupati and Gandhinagar.



4. b

1. PatanPatola - Gujarat
2. Uppada Jamdani Sarees - Andhra Pradesh
3. Paithani Sarees and Fabrics - Maharashtra
4. Pochampally Ikat - Telangana

5. a

- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Minister for Science and Technology, has recently launched CSIR's Societal Portal along with the Android App.

#### **CSIR Societal Portal**

- This portal has been developed by CSIR Team with the help of **MyGov Team**.
- The Portal is to facilitate the public to submit the societal problems that can be resolved using S&T interventions.
- This is the first step in terms of seeking inputs on challenges and problems being faced by different stake holders in society.

6. c

#### **Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA)**

- India presently has DTAA with 80+ countries, with plans to sign such treaties with more countries in the years to come.
- Finance Ministry announced that the NRIs and foreign nationals stuck in India due to the Covid-19 pandemic and facing double taxation can submit the details to the Income Tax Department to avail relief.
- It is a form of relief provided by exempting income earned in a foreign country from tax in the resident nation or offering credit to the extent taxes have been paid abroad.
- The individual can claim relief at the time of filing tax return for that financial year, provided there is an applicable DTAA.

7. b

#### **Platypus**

- Platypus this duck-billed mammal is the only animal in the world to have a beak, fur and webbed feet.

- It is endemic to eastern Australia, including Tasmania, where it is classified as an endangered species.
- To promote breeding and rehabilitation of platypus that faces extinction due to climate change, the world's first platypus refuge would be built in Australia.
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red list Status of the animal is Near Threatened.

8. a

#### **Freedom in the World Index 2021**

- Washington-based think tank Freedom House has released the 2021 Freedom in the World Index.
- It is an annual global report on political rights and civil liberties.
- It is composed of numerical ratings and descriptive texts for each country and a select group of territories.
- The report's methodology is derived in large measure from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948.
- The report has cited numerous reasons for demoting India's freedom score such as attacks on Muslims, use of the sedition law, and the government's coronavirus response including the lockdown.
- India's score decreased from 71 to 67, with 100 being the ranking for the most free country.
- The report highlighted the increased pressure on human rights organizations, rising intimidation of academics and journalists, and a spate of bigoted attacks.
- The most free countries in the world, with a score of 100, are Finland, Norway and Sweden, while the least free with a score of 1 are Tibet and Syria.
- Amnesty International publishes the State of the World's Human Rights report.

9. d

#### **Least Developed Country status**

- UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP) decides on the Least Developed Country (LDC) status of a country based on three criteria,
  1. Per capita income,
  2. Human Assets Index
  3. Economic Vulnerability Index
- A country must achieve two of the three criteria at two consecutive triennial reviews to be considered for graduation.
- Recently CDP has recommended graduation of Bangladesh from the category of LDC to the category of Developing Country.
- Bangladesh has met for the second time all the three eligibility criteria for graduating from the LDC category to the developing nations category.
- This proposal will be sent to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for endorsement, late to the UN General Assembly (UNGA).
- Usually countries are given 3 years for transition but this year due to the pandemic, Bangladesh has been given 5 years i.e. up to 2026.

10. b

**Telecom Equipment Export Promotion Council**

- It has been set up by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Ministry of Communications.
- Its objective is to promote and develop of Export of Telecom Equipment and Services.
- It makes various recommendations to the Government for making necessary changes in various policies and procedures for promotion of Exports and Services.
- Recently, the Telecom Equipment Export Promotion Council (TEPC) has organized 'India Telecom 2021'.
- It is a platform for convergence of technologies and business exchange.
- It is an Exclusive International Business Expo being held under Market Access Initiative Scheme (MAI).

**Market Access Initiative Scheme (MAI)**

- It is an Export Promotion Scheme, envisaged to act as a catalyst to promote India's exports on a sustained basis.
- The scheme is formulated on focus product-focus country approach to evolve specific market and specific product through market studies/survey.
- The assistance would be provided to Export Promotion Organizations/Trade Promotion Organizations/National Level Institutions/Research Institutions/Universities/Laboratories, Exporters etc., for enhancement of exports.

**06-03-2021**

**1) With respect to Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) Technology, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a missile propulsion system being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
2. This technology will provide a technological advantage which will enable DRDO to develop future Indian long range air-to-air missiles.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are incorrect?**

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

**2) With respect to Guidelines on Blood Donor Selection and Blood Donor Referral of 2017, consider the following statements:**

1. The guideline ban transgender persons, members of the gay community and sex workers from donating blood.
2. It was issued by the National Blood Transfusion Council and the National Aids Control Organisation (NACO).

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

- a. 1 only



- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Red Rice*

1. The red rice, locally known as *Bao-dhaan*, is rich in Iron content.
2. It is grown in the *Brahmaputra* valley of Assam, without the use of any chemical fertilizer.

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

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

4) The Government of India had set up the *Rice Export Promotion Forum (REPF)* to provide stimulus to rice exports. It functions under the aegis of?

- a. Indian Council of Agricultural Research
- b. International Rice Research Institute - India
- c. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
- d. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority

5) Match the following:

*GI Products – States*

1. *Erode Turmeric* – a. Tamil Nadu
2. *Bydagi Chilli* – b. Karnataka
3. *Kandhamal Haladi* – c. Odisha
4. *Tejpata* – d. Uttarakhand

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1-d; 2-c; 3-b; 4-a
- b. 1-c; 2-b; 3-a; 4-d

- c. 1-a; 2-d; 3-c; 4-b
- d. 1-a; 2-b; 3-c; 4-d

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Central Revenues Control Laboratory (CRCL)*

1. It is under the administrative control of Central Board of Direct Taxes.
2. It is recognized as a *Regional Customs Laboratory (RCL)* of the *World Customs Organisation (WCO)* for Asia-Pacific Region.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Technology and Innovation Report 2021*

1. The report is released by the *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)*.
2. According to the report, India was the biggest 'over performer' in frontier technologies than the country's per capita GDP.

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

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Food Waste Index Report 2021*

1. It measures total food waste rather than loss or waste associated with specific commodities.





**2. It is released by UN-Food and Agriculture Organization**

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**9) Which of the following organization has published *World Report on Hearing*?**

- a. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- b. World Health Organization
- c. United Nations Children's Fund
- d. Doctors without Borders

**10) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2020***

- 1. It seeks to examine local government practice in five verticals namely Services, Finance, Policy, Technology and Governance.
- 2. It is prepared by NITI Aayog and Released by Ministry of Home Affairs

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**Answers**

1. d

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully carried out a flight demonstration based on Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) technology from Integrated Test Range Chandipur off the coast of Odisha recently.

- During the test, many new technologies were proven, including Solid Fuel based Ducted Ramjet technology.

***Solid Fuel based Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) Technology***

- The successful demonstration of Solid Fuel based Ducted Ramjet technology has provided DRDO with a technological advantage which will enable it to develop future Indian long range air-to-air missiles.
- At present, such technology is available only with a handful of countries in the world.

2. c

- The Supreme Court has recently asked the government to respond to a plea challenging blood donation guidelines released in 2017.

***Guideline on Blood Donor Selection and Blood Donor Referral of 2017***

- It ban transgender persons, members of the gay community and sex workers from donating blood.
- The Guideline was issued by the National Blood Transfusion Council and the National Aids Control Organisation (NACO).
- It classifies transgender persons, men having sex with men and female sex workers as a "high-risk category" vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.

3. c

- In a major boost to India's rice exports potential, the first consignment of 'red rice' was flagged off recently to the USA.

***Red Rice***

- The rice is grown in Brahmaputra valley of Assam, without the use of any chemical fertilizer.
- The rice variety, which is rich in Iron content, is referred as 'Bao-dhaan', which is an integral part of the Assamese food.

4. d

***Rice Export Promotion Forum (REPF)***

- The Government of India had set up the REPF to boost the rice exports.

- It works under the aegis of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).
- It will include representatives from the rice industry, officials from APEDA, exporters, Commerce Ministry, Agriculture Ministry and Directors of Agriculture from major rice producing states such as West Bengal, Punjab, Telangana, Haryana, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh.

5. d

1. Erode Turmeric – a. Tamil Nadu
2. Bydagi Chilli – b. Karnataka
3. Kandhamal Haladi – c. Odisha
4. Tejpata – d. Uttarakhand

6. b

#### **Central Revenues Control Laboratory (CRCL)**

- Central Revenues Control Laboratory (CRCL), is established in 1939.
- It is under the administrative arm of Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs.
- It is the headquarters of 14 Revenue Laboratories, including 2 laboratories working at Government Opium & Alkaloid Works, Ghazipur & Neemuch.
- With its recognition as RCL, CRCL joins a select group of Customs Laboratories in the region like those in Japan & Korea.

#### **World Customs Organization (WCO)**

- The World Customs Organization (WCO), established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC), headquartered in Brussels, Belgium.
- It is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Customs administrations.
- India had become the vice-chair (regional head) of the Asia Pacific region of the WCO for a period of two years to June, 2020.
- Regional Customs Laboratory's traditional work is the chemical analysis to determine tariff classification and the level of duties and other taxes.

- Their role has evolved over time with changes in trade patterns and technical evolution.

7. d

#### **Technology and Innovation Report 2021**

- Frontier technologies are defined as potentially disruptive technologies that can address large-scale challenges or opportunities.
- They include artificial intelligence (AI), the internet of things, big data, block chain, 5G, 3D printing, robotics, drones, gene editing, nanotechnology and solar photovoltaic.
- The report examines the likelihood of frontier technologies widening existing inequalities and creating new ones.
- India's actual index ranking is 43, while the estimated one based on per capita income is 108.
- This meant that India over performed other countries by 65 ranking positions.
- India performed well in research and development.

#### **Reports published by UNCTAD**

1. Trade and Development Report
2. World Investment Report
3. The Least Developed Countries Report
4. Information and Economy Report
5. Technology and Innovation Report
6. Commodities and Development Report

8. a

#### **Food Waste Index Report 2021**

- Recently, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released the Food Waste Index Report 2021.
- It presents the most comprehensive food waste data collection, analysis and modelling to date, generating a new estimate of global food waste.
- It also publishes a methodology for countries to measure food waste, at household, food service and retail level, to track national progress towards 2030.
- In contrast to the Food Loss Index, the Food Waste Index measures total food waste (rather

than loss or waste associated with specific commodities).

- This report estimates that around 931 million tonnes of food waste was generated in 2019.
- 61% of which came from households, 26% from food service and 13% from retail.

### **Food Loss Index**

- The Food Loss Index (FLI) focuses on food losses that occur from production up to (and not including) the retail level.
- It measures the changes in percentage losses for a basket of 10 main commodities by country in comparison with a base period.
- The FLI contributes to measure progress towards SDG Target 12.3.

9. b

### **World Report on Hearing**

- The First World Report on Hearing was released by the World Health Organization (WHO) to coincide on World Hearing Day.
- The Report underlines the need to rapidly step up efforts to prevent and address hearing loss by investing and expanding access to ear and hearing care services.
- Highlights of the report are
  1. Nearly 2.5 billion people worldwide or 1 in 4 people will be living with some degree of hearing loss by 2050.
  2. Over 27,000 children are born deaf every year in India.
  3. There are many children who can benefit through advanced hearing technology but are missed out because of low awareness around hearing issues in babies.
  4. One major reason is the unavailability of newborn screening programmes at birth and low awareness among parents.
- In India National Programme for the Prevention & Control of Deafness (NPPCD) under National Health Mission aims to prevent the avoidable hearing loss on account of disease or injury.

10. a

### **Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2020**

- Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has released the Municipal Performance Index (MPI) 2020.
- It was launched as an accompaniment to the Ease of Living Index.
- The municipalities are ranked across five verticals which comprise of 20 sectors and 100 indicators in all totality.
- It seeks to simplify and evaluate the complexities in local governance practice and promote the ethos of transparency and accountability.
- It has classified municipalities based Million+ (municipalities having over a million population) and Less than Million Population.
- In the Million+ category, Indore has emerged as the highest ranked municipality, followed by Surat and Bhopal.
- In the Less than Million category, New Delhi Municipal Council has emerged as the leader, followed by Tirupati and Gandhinagar.

**08-03-2021**

**1) With respect to Sattras, consider the following statements:**

1. They are monastic institutions created by Neo-Shaivite reformer Basavanna.
2. Each Sattr has a naamghar (worship hall) as its nucleus and is headed by an influential Sattradhikar.
3. Sattras received a lot of donations in the form of land or money from the kings during the Ahom reign.

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

- a. 2 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

**2) Food Waste Index Report, 2021 was released recently by?**

- a. World Food Programme

- b. UN Environment Programme
- c. Food and Agricultural Organization
- d. International Food Policy Research Institute

3) With respect to *Technology and Innovation Report, 2021*, consider the following statements:

1. It was launched by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
2. According to the report, India was the biggest 'overperformer' in frontier technologies.

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

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Simlipal Biosphere Reserve*

1. Simlipal, which derive its name from 'Simul' (silk cotton) tree, is a national park and a tiger reserve situated in Odisha.
2. Sal is a dominant tree species in the reserve.
3. The reserve that lies in the eastern end of the eastern ghat was declared a biosphere reserve in 1994.

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

5) With respect to Asia Environmental Enforcement Award, consider the following statements:

1. It recognizes the excellence in enforcement by government officials

and institutions combating trans-boundary environmental crimes around the world.

2. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) received the award for the year 2020 under the Innovation category.

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

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

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Insurance Ombudsman*

1. An Ombudsman shall be selected from amongst persons having experience of the insurance industry, civil service, administrative service or judicial service.
2. Term of office of Insurance ombudsman is 5 years and not eligible for reappointment.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *OBC Reservation*

1. The reservation for OBCs is a 'constitutional' dispensation to be provided by the State legislation.
2. The extent of reservation given to the OBCs in local bodies cannot take the total reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs beyond the 50 per cent ceiling.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

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

**8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to National Cyber Security Strategy 2020**

1. It is formulated by NITI Aayog and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
2. It calls for an index of cyber preparedness, and attendant monitoring of performance.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**9) What is the conservation status of Fishing Cats under IUCN Red List?**

- a. Critically Endangered  
b. Endangered  
c. Vulnerable  
d. Near Threatened

**10) Consider the following statements with respect to Dishonoured Cheque**

1. It is a condition in which the bank refuses to pay the amount of cheque to the payee.
2. The dishonour of cheque is a criminal offence and is punishable by imprisonment up to two years or with monetary penalty or with both.

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

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

## Answers

1. c

### Sattras

- They are monastic institutions created as part of the 16th century **Neo-Vaishnavite** reformist movement started by Vaishnavite saint-reformer **Srimanta Sankaradeva** (1449-1596).
- As the saint travelled across Assam, spreading his teachings and propagating an egalitarian society, these Sattras/Thans were established as centres of religious, social and cultural reforms in the 16th century.
- Nowadays, Sattras are spread across the state, promulgating Sankaradeva's unique "worship through art" approach with music (borgeet), dance (xattriya) and theatre (bhauna).
- Each Sattra has a naamghar (worship hall) as its nucleus and is headed by an influential "Sattradhikar".
- Monks, known as bhakats, are inducted into Sattras at a young age.
- They may or may not be celibate, depending on the kind of Sattra they are inducted into.
- These institutions are of paramount importance and lie at the heart of Assamese culture.
- During the Ahom reign, the Sattras received a lot of donations in the form of land or money from the kings.

### Sankaradeva

- He propagated a form of Bhakti called eka-sharana-naam-dhrama, and espoused a society based on equality and fraternity, free from caste differences, orthodox Brahmanical rituals and sacrifices.
- His teaching focused on prayer and chanting (naam) instead of idol worship.
- His dharma was based on the four components of deva (god), naam (prayers), bhakats (devotees), and guru (teacher).

2. b



- The Food Waste Index Report 2021 released recently has revealed that 17% of all food available at consumer levels was wasted in 2019.
- That year, some 690 million people had to go hungry.
- Contrary to belief, the study by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) revealed that food waste was a global problem and not that of just the developed world.
- The data, though scarce, revealed that food waste was substantial, regardless of income level.

3. c

- A few developing nations are showing stronger capabilities to use, adopt and adapt frontier technologies than their per capita GDPs would suggest, but most are lagging behind, according to an index of 158 countries in UNCTAD's **Technology and Innovation Report 2021**, published recently.
- The report provides a "country readiness index" that assesses the progress of countries in using frontier technologies, considering their national capacities related to physical investment, human capital and technological effort.
- India was the biggest 'overperformer' in frontier technologies.
- Frontier technologies include artificial intelligence, the internet of things, big data, blockchain, fifth-generation mobile telephony, three-dimensional printing, robotics, drones (remotely controlled flights), gene-editing, nanotechnology and solar power — the ones that take advantage of digitalisation and connectivity.

4. d

- *The Simlipal forest reserve area frequently witnesses forest fires during dry weather conditions.*

#### **Similipal**

- The word derives its name from 'Simul' (silk cotton) tree.
- It is a national park and a tiger reserve situated in the northern part of Odisha's Mayurbhanj district.

- Similipal and the adjoining areas, comprising 5,569 sq km, was declared a biosphere reserve by the Government of India on June 22, 1994, and lies in the eastern end of the eastern ghat.
- Similipal is the abode of 94 species of orchids and about 3,000 species of plants.
- The identified species of fauna include 12 species of amphibians, 29 species of reptiles, 264 species of birds and 42 species of mammals, all of which collectively highlight the biodiversity richness of Similipal.
- Sal is a dominant tree species.

5. b

- The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has received the Asia Environmental Enforcement Award-2020 awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- The WCCB received the award twice in three years.
- Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been awarded this year under the Innovation category.
- Earlier, the Bureau had received the award in 2018 under the same category.

#### **Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards**

- It publicly recognize and celebrate excellence in enforcement by government officials and institutions/teams combating trans-boundary environmental crime in Asia.
- The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been selected among the winners of the Asia Environment Enforcement Awards for its work in combating trans-boundary environmental crimes.

6. a

#### **Insurance Ombudsman**

- Its powers, functions, terms of office etc. were laid in Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017.
- An Ombudsman shall be selected by a Selection Committee comprising of:
  1. Chairperson of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) who is also the Chairman of the Selection Committee.



2. One representative each of the Life Insurance Council and the General Insurance Council from the Executive Council of Insurers.
3. A representative of the Government of India not below the rank of a Joint Secretary.
4. After amendment to Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017, the selection committee will now include an individual with a track record of promoting consumer rights or advancing the cause of consumer protection in the insurance sector.
- Term of Office is three years and it is eligible for reappointment provided that no person shall hold office as an Ombudsman after he has attained the age of seventy years.
- Recently, the Union government amended the Insurance Ombudsman Rules, 2017, bringing insurance brokers within the ambit of the Insurance Ombudsman and also allowed policy holders to file online complaints.

7. b

#### **OBC Reservation**

- Recently, the Supreme Court held that the reservation for OBCs is only a 'statutory' dispensation to be provided by the State legislation unlike the 'constitutional' reservation regarding SCs/STs, which is linked to the proportion of population.
- The State legislation must ensure that in no case the aggregate vertical reservation in respect of SCs/STs/OBCs taken together should exceed 50 per cent of the seats in the concerned local bodies.
- Conditions for notifying seats as reserved for OBC category in local bodies are:
- Setting up of a dedicated Commission to conduct contemporaneous rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of the backwardness qua local bodies, within the State;
- Specifying the proportion of reservation required to be provisioned local body wise in light of recommendations of the Commission; and
- In any case such reservation shall not exceed aggregate of 50 per cent of the total seats

reserved in favour of SCs/STs/OBCs taken together.

8. b

#### **National Cyber Security Strategy 2020**

- A National Cyber Security Strategy 2020 is being formulated by the Office of National Cyber Security Coordinator at the National Security Council Secretariat.
- Highlights
  1. There will be table-top cyber crisis management exercises regularly to reinforce the idea that cyber-attacks can take place regularly.
  2. A separate budget for cybersecurity is suggested, as also to synergise the role and functions of various agencies with the requisite domain knowledge.

#### **National Security Council (NSC)**

- National Security Council (NSC) is an executive government agency tasked with advising the Prime Minister's Office on matters of national security and strategic interest.
- It was established by the former prime minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee on 19 November 1998.
- It is a three-tiered organization that oversees political, economic, energy and security issues of strategic concern.

9. c

#### **Fishing Cats**

- The fishing cat is nocturnal (active at night) and apart from fish also preys on frogs, crustaceans, snakes, birds, and scavenges on carcasses of larger animals.
- Fishing cats have a patchy distribution along the Eastern Ghats. They abound in estuarine floodplains, tidal mangrove forests and also inland freshwater habitats.
- Apart from Sundarbans in West Bengal and Bangladesh, fishing cats inhabit the Chilika lagoon and surrounding wetlands in Odisha, Coringa and Krishna mangroves in Andhra Pradesh.
- The first-ever survey of the elusive fishing cat in and around Asia's biggest brackish water

lagoon, the Chilika lake in Odisha has launched recently.

10. c

### ***Dishonoured Cheque***

- Cheques is a negotiable instrument and it is not negotiable by any person other than the payee.
- The cheques have to be deposited into the payee's bank account.
- The author of the cheque is called 'drawer', the person in whose favour, the cheque is drawn is called 'payee', and the bank who is directed to pay the amount is known as 'drawee'.
- A cheque is said to be honoured, if the banks give the amount to the payee.
- While, if the bank refuses to pay the amount to the payee, the cheque is said to be dishonoured.
- Recently Supreme Court has proposed setting up fast-track courts for a limited time to clear dishonoured cheque cases.

**09-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mission Vatsalya***

- 1. It is an umbrella scheme under the Ministry of Women and Child Development.**
- 2. The mission will consist of policies and schemes for protection and empowerment of women.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Support to Tribal Research Institute (TRIs)***

- 1. Funding under this Scheme would be 100% grant-in-aid by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.**
- 2. Ministry of Tribal Affairs shall be the nodal Ministry for operationalizing the scheme.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**3) With respect to *Schedules of Indian Constitution*, consider the following statements:**

- 1. Fifth Schedule asks for annual reports from the Governors of each State having Scheduled Areas to the President.**
- 2. Sixth Schedule contains recommendations relating to the ability of the autonomous regions to frame land-use policies and policies related to reserved forests.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**4) *Korku, Nihali, Kolami, Vadi and Halpati* are?**

- Tribal Languages
- Mountain Ranges
- Indus Valley Cities
- GI tagged Products

**5) Which of the following is/are the world heritage sites in India?**

- 1. Santiniketan**



2. Dholavira: A Harappan City
3. Sacred Ensemble of Hoysalas
4. Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 4 only
- b. 3 and 4 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3 only
- d. All of the above

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Director of CBI*

1. He is appointed on the recommendation of a three-member committee consisting of the Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Chief Justice of India.
2. He has been provided security of five year tenure in office.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Singorgarh Fort*

1. Gond ruler Sangramshahi conquered the Singorgarh fort in early period of 16th century.
2. The fort was attacked in 1564 under the rule of Rani Durgavati.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Whale sharks*

1. They are one of the largest fish which feed on both meat and planktons
2. It is categorized as Endangered under the IUCN Red List.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) The term *ShadowPad* recently in news refers to?

- a. Japan's rover to moon
- b. USA's security software
- c. Organization on cyber security
- d. Trojan Malware

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *MSME Credit Health Index*

1. The Index measures the credit health of India's MSME industry on two parameters i.e. growth and strength.
2. It is launched by TransUnion CIBIL in partnership with the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI)

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

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

## Answers

1. a

- For effective implementation of various schemes and programmes of the Ministry of



Women and Child Development, all major schemes of the Ministry have been classified under 3 umbrella schemes viz.

1. **Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0** - Anganwadi Services, Poshan Abhiyan, Scheme for Adolescent Girls, National Creche Scheme
2. **Mission VATSALYA** - Child Protection Services and Child Welfare Services
3. **Mission Shakti (Mission for Protection and Empowerment for Women)**
  - SAMBAL (One Stop Centre, Mahila Police Volunteer, Women's Helpline/Swadhar/Ujjawala/Widow Homes etc.)
  - SAMARTHYA (Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Creche, Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana/ Gender Budgeting/Research

2. c

- Under the scheme of 'Support to Tribal Research Institute (TRIs), Ministry of Tribal Affairs extends support to TRIs for carrying out various research & documentation activities including programs for documentation of tribal languages, dialects, art, culture, dance, music and development of bilingual Primers.
- Accordingly, TRIs are conducting documentation and preservation of endangered tribal languages through preparation of primers, dictionaries and organization of cultural programmes.

#### **Support to Tribal Research Institute (TRIs)**

- The basic objective of the scheme is to strengthen the Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) in their infrastructural needs, Research & documentation activities and Training & Capacity Building programmes etc.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA), Government of India shall be the nodal Ministry for operationalizing the scheme.
- The scheme shall be a Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding by the Central Government to the TRIs directly or through State Government.
- A National Level Institute under MoTA could probably be set up to coordinate the activities

of TRIs across the country, and to undertake National Level Activities.

#### **Tribal Research Institute (TRI)**

- TRI is the research body of the Ministry of Tribal affairs at state level.
- It is envisaged that TRIs should focus on their core responsibilities as body of knowledge & research more or less as a think tank for tribal development, preservation of tribal cultural heritage, providing inputs to States for evidence based planning and appropriate legislations, capacity building of tribals and persons / institutions associated with tribal affairs, dissemination of information and creation of awareness.
- There are 26 Tribal Research Institute (TRIs) supported by ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.

3. c

#### **Fifth Schedule**

- Fifth Schedule (3) - It asks for annual reports from the Governors to the President;
- Fifth Schedule (4) - It provides extensive executive power over Scheduled areas in order to protect them from illegal transfer of their land and to insulate them from private moneylenders;
- Fifth Schedule (5) - It asks for the formation of Tribal Advisory Councils to participate in the formulation of policy.

#### **Sixth Schedule**

- It contains wide ranging recommendations relating to the ability of the autonomous regions and autonomous districts to frame land-use policies, policies related to reserve forests, related to inheritance and marriage rules, and other important determinants of social and economic life in the areas under the sixth Schedule.

4. a

#### **Tribal Festival, Research, information and Mass Education**

- Under the Financial Assistance for support to Centres of Excellence of the scheme "Tribal Festival, Research, information and Mass Education", financial assistance is provided to

repute Institution for carrying out research study programmes including documentation of tribal languages.

- In this regard, Ministry has sanctioned projects to Bhasha Research and Publication Centre during 2018-19 and 2019-20 which inter- alia covered activity of identification and documentation of threatened/dying languages.
- The organization has carried out documentation of Korku, Nihali, Kolami, Vadi, Halpati, Dungra Bhili, Dhavadi, Dhatti, Thali, Nahal and Seheriya languages.

5. a

### **World Heritage List in India**

- At present, **India has 38 World Heritage Properties.**
- All the sites under the Ministry are conserved as per ASI's Conservation Policy.
- At present, India has 42 sites listed under Tentative List which is a pre-requisite condition for inscription as World Heritage Site.
- 'Dholavira: A Harappan City' has been submitted for nomination of World Heritage Site in 2019-2020.
- Nomination dossiers of 'Santiniketan, India' and 'Sacred Ensemble of Hoysalas' have been submitted to UNESCO for the year 2021-22 cycle.

6. a

### **Director of CBI**

- The Director of the CBI is appointed as per section 4A of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act of 1946.
- The Director of CBI has been provided security of two-year tenure in office by the CVC Act, 2003.
- The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act (2013) amended the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act (1946) and made the following changes with respect to appointment of the Director of CBI:
- The Central Government shall appoint the Director of CBI on the recommendation of a three-member committee consisting of the

Prime Minister as Chairperson, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and the Chief Justice of India or Judge of the Supreme Court nominated by him.

- Later, the Delhi Special Police Establishment (Amendment) Act, 2014 made a change in the composition of the committee related to the appointment of the Director of C.B.I.
- It states that where there is no recognized leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha, then the leader of the single largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha would be a member of that committee.

7. c

### **Singorgarh Fort**

- It is an old hill-fort of Gondwana dynasty which is spread over hills in a forested area in Damoh district of Madhya Pradesh.
- It was residence of Gond rulers of Central India.
- In year 1308, Singorgarh was ruled by Vyaghradev Ji who was ruler of Kumhari and was under rulers of Kalinjar.
- The fort was attacked in 1564 during the last war of the Garha Kingdom dynasty, under the rule of Rani Durgavati.
- At that time, Rani Durgavati, the ruling Queen of Gondwana, resided there; she later moved to Chouragarh Fort in Narsinghpur.

### **Gondwana Kingdom**

- Region under Gondwana Kingdom includes core region of eastern part of the Vidarbha of Maharashtra, the parts of Madhya Pradesh immediately to the north of it, and parts of the west of Chhattisgarh.
- The Gondwana Kingdom was ruled by Rajgonds, the Rajgonds are the ruling class among the Gond tribe.

8. b

### **Whale sharks**

- They are largest shark, and indeed largest of any fishes alive today.
- The maximum size of whale sharks is not known, but could be as large as 20m.



- Whale sharks are found in all the tropical oceans of the world.
- The whale shark is a 'filter feeder shark' which means it does not eat meat like other sharks.
- They filter sea water and feed on tiny planktons.
- It is protected under CITES: Appendix II and Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I

9. d

#### **ShadowPad**

- It is a backdoor Trojan malware, it opens a secret path from its target system to its command-and-control servers.
- Information can be extracted or more malicious code delivered via backdoor Trojan malware.
- It is built to target supply-chain infrastructure in sectors like transportation, telecommunication, energy and more.
- It was first identified in 2017, when it was found hidden in a legitimate software produced by a company named NetSarang.
- The security analysis firm FireEye links ShadowPad to a group known as 'APT41', which is allegedly developed by Chinese-speaking actors

10. c

#### **MSME Credit Health Index**

- The Index is published quarterly aims to provide a measure of the growth and strength of the MSME sector in India.
- Both the growth and strength indices follow the principle of higher the better.
- Growth is measured by plotting increase in exposure value (outstanding balances) over time.
- An increasing Growth Index indicates improvement in credit growth.
- Strength is measured by decrease/increase in credit risk in terms of non-performing assets (NPA).
- An increasing Strength Index implies better asset quality and therefore denotes an

improvement in the structural strength of the sector.

**10-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Fuel cell based Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) System**

1. The system enables conventional diesel-electric submarines to stay underwater for vastly longer periods than nuclear submarines.
2. The technology creates energy by combining hydrogen and oxygen, with only water created as a by-product.
3. The system is being designed and developed by Indian Navy.

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

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

**2) Mobilising Electric Vehicle Financing in India Report was released recently by?**

- a. NITI Aayog
- b. Ministry of Heavy Industries
- c. Rocky Mountain Institute India
- d. Both A and C

**3) With respect to River Tawi, consider the following statements:**

1. The river originates in Kailash Kund glacier in Jammu.
2. It is a major left bank tributary of the river Chenab.

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

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

d. Neither 1 nor 2

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to Agriculture Voltage Technology**

1. It is a system of generating electricity and growing cash crops simultaneously on the same piece of land.
2. It was developed by Central Arid Zone Research Institute in co-operation with Israel.

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

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

**5) Violence against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018 was released recently by?**

- a. World Bank
- b. UN Human Rights Council
- c. World Health Organization
- d. UN Office on Drugs and Crime

**6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to Quasar**

1. Quasars are very luminous objects in faraway galaxies that emit jets at radio frequencies.
2. They are only found in galaxies that have supermassive black holes which power these bright discs.

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below:**

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

**7) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to Diphtheria**

1. It is spread by close contact with someone infected, which affect the nose and throat and sometimes the skin.
2. It is primarily caused by virus of the Paramyxoviridae family.

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below:**

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

**8) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to National Commission on Backward Classes (NCBC)**

1. It has been accorded Constitutional Status and constituted through 102nd Amendment Act, 2018.
2. The members of the commission shall hold office for a term of five years and eligible for reappointment for any number of terms.

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below:**

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

**9) The Miyawaki Technique is primarily applied in which of the following areas?**

- a. Self Defence
- b. Sewage Treatment
- c. Afforestation
- d. Diplomacy and Bilateral Relations

**10) Consider the following statements with respect to New Umbrella Entities (NUEs) for payment systems**

1. It will develop new payment methods, standards and technologies as well as



operate clearing and settlement systems.

2. The entity eligible to apply as promoter for the NUE should have 15 years' experience in Banking and Finance

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

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

## Answers

1. b

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has reached another milestone with the completion of its final Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) test recently.
- In developing the AIP technology, India joins an elite list of countries that currently only includes the United States, France, China, the United Kingdom and Russia.

### Diesel and Electric Submarines

- Submarines run on diesel and electricity require a network of batteries charged by a diesel generator.
- In order for them to charge, the submarine needs to snorkel i.e. travel just under the surface of the water so that the diesel generator can be turned on and exhaust generated released via a pipe that breaches the surface.
- During this period, the submarine becomes extremely vulnerable to enemy radars and hostile submarine assets.
- In fact, some submarines are even equipped with 'diesel sniffers' which can detect the emissions released by snorkelling submarines.

### Fuel Cell based Air Independent Propulsion (AIP)

- The technology create energy by combining hydrogen and oxygen, with only water created as a by-product.

- Since these cells are extremely efficient and have minimal moving parts, they can also operate without increasing the acoustic signature of the submarine.
- Hydrogen fuel cells create no exhaust fumes which also eliminates the need to have special exhaust scrubbing and disposable machine parts.
- Fuel-cell based AIPs enable submarines to stay underwater for vastly longer periods of time than conventional diesel-electric submarines increasing their range and turning them into a far more potent and lethal adversary.
- A submarine enabled with AIP can remain submerged for weeks sometimes without surfacing.
- Despite the advantage it offers them against conventional diesel-electric submarines, they still do not have the same endurance as nuclear submarines that do not need to surface at all.

2. d

- NITI Aayog and Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) India has recently released a new report 'Mobilising Electric Vehicle Financing in India'.
- The report highlights the role of finance in the India's transition to electric vehicles (EVs) and analyses that the transition will require a cumulative capital investment of USD 266 billion (Rs 19.7 lakh crore) in EVs, charging infrastructure, and batteries over the next decade.

3. c

- River Tawi is a source of drinking water for thousands in Jammu and over the years, it has turned into a garbage dump, with heaps of toxic waste that pollutes its water and ecosystem dumped on its shores.
- It remains littered with plastics, medicines, biomedical waste and industrial effluent.

### River Tawi

- Tawi originates in Kailash Kund glacier located in Jammu's Bhaderwah.
- It flows through Doda and Udhampur districts of Jammu.

- The Tawi is a major left bank tributary of the river Chenab.
- It is a source of drinking water for more than 700,000 people in the city of Jammu.

4. a

- An Agri-voltaic system with a capacity of 105 KW was developed by ICAR-Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur.

#### **Agriculture Voltage Technology**

- This technology can increase the income of farmers by generation of electricity and growing of cash crops simultaneously on the same land.
- Under the Kisan Urja Suraksha Utthan Mahabhiyan (KUSUM) scheme, there is a provision for installation of agri-voltaic system in farmers' fields with a capacity of 500 KW-2 MW.
- Moreover, National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) has documented 13 operational agri-voltaic systems in the country managed by different solar PV functionaries and public Institutes.

5. c

- World Health Organization (WHO) has recently released a report titled *Violence against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018*.
- According to the report, one in three women across the world, or around 736 million women, faced physical or sexual violence from their intimate partners or non-partners.
- Younger women and those in low or lower-income countries were most at risk.
- WHO conducted the study on behalf of United Nations agencies and gathered data from 2000 to 2018.
- The new statistics replaced estimates on violence against women brought out in 2013.

6. c

#### **Quasar**

- The word quasar is short for "quasi-stellar radio source", most quasars are faint radio emitters.

- In addition to radio waves and visible light, quasars also emit ultraviolet rays, infrared waves, X-rays, and gamma-rays.
- Most quasars are larger than our solar system, A quasar is approximately 1 kiloparsec in width.
- Quasars are formed by the energy emitted by materials swirling around a blackhole right before being sucked into it.
- They are further categorised into the "radio-loud" and the "radio-quiet" classes.
- Recently, an international team of astronomers has discovered the most distant 'Radio-Loud' Quasar named P172+18 with the help of European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope (ESO's VLT).

7. a

#### **Diphtheria**

- Diphtheria is primarily caused by the bacterium *Corynebacterium diphtheria*.
- It is mainly spread by coughs and sneezes, or through close contact with someone infected.
- In most cases, the bacteria cause acute infections, driven by the diphtheria toxin, the key target of the vaccine.
- However, non-toxigenic *C. diphtheria* can also cause disease, often in the form of systemic infections.
- In high-income countries, all babies are vaccinated against the infection.
- Recently it is found that Diphtheria has started to become resistant to several classes of antibiotics and in future, it may even become immune to vaccination.

8. b

#### **National Commission on Backward Classes (NCBC)**

- Article 338B deals with the structure, duties and powers of the National Commission on Backward Classes (NCBC).
- Article 342-A speaks about the power of the Indian President to notify a class as Socially and Educationally Backward (SEBC) and the power of Parliament to alter the central SEBC list.

- The Commission consists of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and three other Members in the rank & pay of Secretary to the Govt of India.
- The members shall hold office for a term of three years from the date on which the Member assumes such office.
- The Members shall not be eligible for appointment for more than two terms.

9. c

### **Miyawaki Technique**

- It is an afforestation method based on the work of Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki in the 1980s.
- The technique compresses layers of a forest shrubs, trees, canopies on small plots of land, turning them into tiny forests.
- Using this method mini forests can be grown 10 times faster and become 30 times denser and 100 times more bio-diverse than those planted through conventional methods.
- This method involves planting three to four saplings per square metre, using native varieties adapted to local conditions.
- A wide variety of species ideally 30 or more are planted to recreate layers of a natural forest.
- Recently Mumbai's eastern suburbs has become a testament to the creation of "urban forests" through the Miyawaki technique.

10. a

### **New Umbrella Entities (NUEs) for payment systems**

- The RBI has the right to approve the appointment of directors as also to nominate a member on the board of the NUE.
- The entity eligible to apply as promoter or the promoter group for the NUE should be 'owned and controlled by residents'.
- The entity should have 3 years' experience in the payments ecosystem as Payment System Operator (PSO) or Payment Service Provider (PSP) or Technology Service Provider (TSP).
- Any entity holding more than 25 per cent of the paid-up capital of the NUE will be deemed to be a promoter.

- As of now the umbrella entity for providing retail payments system in India is NPCI, which is a non-profit entity, owned by banks.
- As per the RBI, no single promoter or promoter group should have more than 40 per cent investment in the capital of the entity.

**11-03-2021**

### **1) Consider the following statements with respect to Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN)**

1. It is a single non-lapsable reserve fund for Health in the Public Account.
2. The proceeds of share of health in the Health and Education cess levied under Finance Act, 2007 will be credited into the fund.
3. The fund will be administered and maintained by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

**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

### **2) Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCs) works under the aegis of?**

- a. Ministry of Home Affairs
- b. Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- c. Ministry of Rural Development
- d. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

### **3) Consider the following statements with respect to King Bhumibol World Soil Day - 2020 Award**

1. It was awarded by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).





2. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) received the award.

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

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

4) Exercise DUSTLIK is an annual bilateral joint military exercise between India and?

- a. Tajikistan
- b. Kazakhstan
- c. Uzbekistan
- d. Turkmenistan

5) With respect to *INS Karanj*, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is the third of six Scorpene-class submarines being built under Project-75 by Mazagon Dock Limited, Goa.
- 2. It is a nuclear powered submarine to be commissioned into Indian Navy in collaboration with France.

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

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Sun Temple at Konark*

- 1. The temple was built by the Ganga dynasty king Anantavarman Chodaganga in the 12th century CE.
- 2. The Jaganmohan of the temple was filled with sand and sealed by the British in 1903 to ensure the stability of the monument.

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

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

7) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal*

- 1. Under this, the complainant must mandatorily select the Category of crime and their State of residence to register their complaint.
- 2. It is an initiative of Ministry of Electronics and IT.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

8) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Banks Board Bureau (BBB)*

- 1. It is a constitutional body setup under the recommendations of Urjit Patel Committee.
- 2. It will take the final decision on the appointments PSU banks in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *NISAR Mission*

1. It uses a dual-frequency L and S-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) for earth observation.
2. It can produce extremely high-resolution images day and night in any weather.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary is located in which of the following regions?

- a. Maharashtra
- b. Rajasthan
- c. Haryana
- d. Delhi

## Answers

1. d

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has recently approved the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN).

### Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Nidhi (PMSSN)

- It is a single non-lapsable reserve fund for share of Health from the proceeds of Health and Education Cess levied under Section 136-b of Finance Act, 2007.

### Salient features of the PMSSN

- A non-lapsable reserve fund for Health in the Public Account.
- Proceeds of share of health in the Health and Education Cess will be credited into PMSSN.
- Accruals into the PMSSN will be utilized for the flagship schemes of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare namely,

1. Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)

2. Ayushman Bharat - Health and Wellness Centres (AB-HWCs)
3. National Health Mission
4. Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY)
5. Emergency & disaster preparedness and responses during health emergencies
6. Any future programme/scheme that targets to achieve progress towards SDGs and the targets set out in the National Health Policy (NHP) 2017.
- Administration and maintenance of the PMSSN is entrusted to Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
- In any financial year, the expenditure on such schemes of the MoHFW would be initially incurred from the PMSSN and thereafter, from Gross Budgetary Support (GBS).

2. d

- Ministry/Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCs) in 2019.
- It aims for Development and Welfare of Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities for a period of three years extendable up to 5 years.

The responsibilities of the DWBDNC are:

1. To formulate and implement Welfare and Development programmes, as required, for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.
2. To identify the locations/areas where these communities are densely populated.
3. To assess and identify gaps in accessing existing programmes and entitlements and to collaborate with Ministries/implementing agencies to ensure that ongoing programmes meet the special requirements of De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.
4. To monitor and evaluate the progress of the schemes of Government of India and the States/UTs with reference to Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.

3. c

- Ms. Suchitra Durai, Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Thailand received the prestigious “King Bhumibol World Soil Day - 2020 Award” of Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) on the behalf of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

- The international recognition was announced by the FAO, Rome on the eve of World Soil Day - 2020 in view of the ICAR’s excellent contributions in “Soil Health Awareness” on the theme “Stop soil erosion, save our future” during the last year.

4. c

- The India – Uzbekistan joint military exercise “DUSTLIK II” commenced recently in Foreign Training Node Chaubatia, Ranikhet (Uttarakhand).
- This is the second edition of annual bilateral joint exercise of both armies.
- The first edition of the exercise was held at Uzbekistan in Nov 2019.

5. d

- Indian Navy’s third stealth *Scorpene* class Submarine INS Karanj has been commissioned recently at the Naval Dockyard Mumbai through a formal commissioning ceremony.

#### **Project 75**

- Six *Scorpene* Class submarines are being built in India under the Project-75 by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), **Mumbai**, under collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France.
- Two *Scorpene*-class submarines INS Kalvari and INS Khanderi have already been commissioned into the Indian Navy.
- The fourth and fifth *Scorpene*-class submarines- INS Vela & INS Vagir have been undergoing sea trials.
- The sixth *scorpene* class submarine named Vagsheer is currently under construction.
- INS Karanj would form part of the Western Naval Command’s Submarine fleet and would be another potent part of the Command’s arsenal.

- Scorpene* Submarines are one of the most advanced conventional submarines in the world.

6. b

#### **Sun Temple at Konark**

- It was built by King Narasimhadeva I, the great ruler of Ganga dynasty.
- It remains a major pilgrimage site for Hindus, who gather here every year for the Chandrabhaga Mela around the month of February.
- A Jaga Mohan is an assembly hall in the Hindu temple architecture, especially in Orissa.
- It is located between the temple entrance and the Garba griha.
- The Jaga Mohana is built on a plan based on structures of rectangles and triangles and highly decorated with sculptures of deities, mythological scenes or ornaments.
- It is typical of the Nagara architecture temples of northern India.
- In the south of India, the halls are named mandapas which are often large halls with columns.

#### **Jaganath Temple**

- Ganga dynasty king Anantavarman Chodaganga built the puri Jaganath Temple in the 12th century CE.

7. a

#### **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal**

- It was operationalized in 2019 to provide a centralised mechanism to the citizens for online reporting of all types of cybercrime incidents.
- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs under National Mission for the safety of women to facilitate victims/complainants to report cybercrime complaints online.
- The incidents reported on this portal, their conversion into FIRs and subsequent action thereon are handled by the State/UT law enforcement agency.

- The 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects as per the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India.
- It caters all types of cyber-crime complaints including complaints pertaining to online Child Pornography (CP), Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) or sexually explicit content such as Rape/Gang Rape (CP/RGR) content and other cyber-crimes.

8. c

#### **Banks Board Bureau (BBB)**

- It was set up in February 2016 as an autonomous body— based on the recommendations of the RBI-appointed Nayak Committee.
- It was part of the Indradhanush Plan.
- It will make recommendations for appointment of whole-time directors as well as non-executive chairpersons of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and state-owned financial institutions.
- The Ministry of Finance takes the final decision on the appointments in consultation with the Prime Minister's Office.
- Banks Board Bureau comprises of
  1. A Chairman,
  2. Three ex-officio members i.e Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises, Secretary of the Department of Financial Services and Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India,
  3. Five expert members, two of which are from the private sector.

#### **Urjit Patel Committee**

- The Expert Committee to revise and strengthen the Monetary Policy Framework, headed by RBI Deputy Governor Urjit R Patel was appointed in 2014 by the RBI.

9. c

#### **NISAR Mission**

- It is a joint Earth-observing mission between NASA and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).
- NASA is providing the mission's L-band SAR, ISRO is providing the spacecraft bus, the S-

band radar, launch vehicle and associated launch services for the mission.

- NISAR uses a sophisticated information-processing technique known as SAR to produce extremely high-resolution images.
- The radar penetrates clouds and darkness, enabling NISAR to collect data day and night in any weather.
- The NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface less than a centimetre across.

10. d

#### **Asola-Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary**

- It is located in Southern Delhi Ridge of Aravalli hill range on Delhi-Haryana border.
- This protected area contains one of the last surviving remnants of Delhi Ridge hill range and its semi-arid forest habitat and its dependent wildlife.
- This is an important habitat for the Indian leopard.
- Endangered species in the sanctuary include red-headed vulture and egyptian vulture.
- Recently Supreme Court-mandated Ridge Management Board has decided to constitute an expert committee to look into the proposal of dumping inert (non-reactive) waste in the mines of Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary (Delhi).

#### **Ridge Management Board**

- The Supreme Court mandated the Delhi Government to constitute a Ridge Management Board for protection of the Delhi Ridge through their orders in the M.C. Mehta case 1987.
- The Delhi Ridge acts as the green lungs of the capital and, through various government orders over the years, all construction has been banned in the Ridge in an effort to preserve it.
- It was establishment on 6th October 1995, Chairman of the board is Chief Secretary of Delhi and Head of the Forest Department of Delhi Government is its Member Secretary.



- The Board also has members from the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs).

- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

**12-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Global Breast Cancer Initiative***

- It aims to reduce global breast mortality by 2.5 per cent by 2040.
- It was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

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

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

**2) *Shramik Kalyan Portal* is associated with which of the following?**

- a. Indian Railways
- b. Ministry of Mines
- c. Ministry of Labour and Employment
- d. Indian Council of Agricultural Research

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)***

- The CISF is an armed force of the Union established under an Act of Parliament.
- The CISF will also provide protection to some private sector units and important government buildings in Delhi.
- The CISF is governed by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and its headquarters are at New Delhi.

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

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only

**4) Consider the following statements**

- In astronomical lingo, elements heavier than Hydrogen and Helium are collectively called as metals.
- Metal content is an important parameter of the star and planets are more likely to occur around metal-rich stars.

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

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

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to *SERB – PRISM***

- It is the external public portal developed as part of the Management Information System (MIS) of Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB).
- The portal will provide information regarding projects sanctioned by Science and Engineering Board (SERB) from 2011 onwards.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are incorrect?**

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

**6) Consider the following statements with respect to *International Lunar Research Station (ILRS)***

- It is a joint initiative of ISRO and NASA to train astronauts for landing on moon
- It will be established in moon landscapes of Challakere, Karnataka.



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

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

7) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *National Employability through Apprenticeship Program (NETAP)*

- 1. It is in accordance with the National Employability Enhancement Mission of the AICTE and launched by Ministry of Skill development.
- 2. It is funded 30% by State government and 70% by Central government.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

8) Which of the following statements are *incorrect* with respect to *National Social Assistance Programme (NASP)*

- 1. The amount of assistance under different components of the program ranges from Rs.1500 to Rs.5000 per month.
- 2. It is a centrally sponsored scheme administered by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Genome mapping project in the Indian Ocean*

- 1. It is aimed at understanding the biochemistry and the response of the ocean to climate change.
- 2. It will collect samples from various stretches of the ocean at an average depth of about 5 km.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following community celebrates *Herath Festival*?

- a. Kodava Tribes
- b. Kashmiri Pundits
- c. Zoroastrians
- d. Munda Tribes

## Answers

1. c

- To mark International Women's Day, on 8 March, the World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), is launching the Global Breast Cancer Initiative.

### *Global Breast Cancer Initiative*

- It aims to reduce global breast mortality by 2.5 per cent by 2040.
- The aim is to reduce 2.5 million global deaths, particularly in low-income countries, where the progress to tackle the disease has been relatively slow.
- The primary objective of the initiative is to reduce global breast cancer mortality by increasing access to breast cancer early diagnosis and prompt comprehensive cancer management.



2. a

- Indian Railways ensures 100% compliance of payment of minimum wages to contract workers through e-application Shramik Kalyan Portal.
- E-Application ensures the compliance of provisions of Minimum Wages Act and also ensures that contractual workers working in Indian Railways get their rightful due by enforcing the contractors to regularly upload wage payment data into e-application.
- This helps Railways as Principal Employer, in keep vigil over wages disbursed by contractors to contract workers.

3. d

- The CISF raising day (CRD) is observed on March 10 in India every year.*

#### **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)**

- It is a Central Armed Police Forces in India set up under an Act of the Parliament of India, Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968.
- The CISF is governed by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, its headquarters are at New Delhi.
- According to the mandate, CISF provides security to the premises staff along with the security of property and establishments.
- CISF is providing security to the strategic establishment, including the Department of Space, the Department of Atomic Energy, the Airports, the Delhi Metro, the ports, the historical monuments and the basic areas of Indian economy such as petroleum and natural gas, electricity, coal, steel and mining.
- CISF is providing protection to some private sector units and important government buildings in Delhi.
- Presently, CISF is also providing security to the protected persons classified as Z Plus, Z, X, Y.
- CISF is the only force with a customized and dedicated fire wing.

4. c

- Scientists studying exo-planets have recently found that a metal-rich environment of host*

*stars is vital for the formation of Jupiter-type light, but giant planets.*

- But, it is not necessary for the long orbit heavy giant planets.
- This study which explores connections between the planet and host star properties, can help in understanding how planets form and evolve at large orbital distances.

#### **Background**

- Stars are largely made of Hydrogen and Helium with a small fraction of other elements.
- In astronomical lingo, elements heavier than Hydrogen and Helium are collectively called as metals.
- Metal content is an important parameter of the star, and there is a consensus that planets (small or large) are more likely to occur around metal-rich stars.

5. d

#### **SERB Project Information System and Management (SERB – PRISM)**

- It is the external public portal developed as part of the Management Information System (MIS).
- This portal is designed to provide information regarding projects sanctioned by SERB from 2011 onwards, including funding details, status, research summary, and project output information such as publications and patents.
- Search facilities enables retrieval of information about projects by Name of PI, institution, state, keywords, as well as year-wise listing and equipment that has been sanctioned by SERB in these projects.

#### **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)**

- It is a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), established to support basic research in all frontier areas of science and engineering.

6. d

#### **International Lunar Research Station (ILRS)**

- China and Russia have agreed to build an International Lunar Research Station (ILRS).

- The ILRS is a comprehensive scientific experiment base with the capability of long-term autonomous operation.
- The station would be built on the lunar surface and/or on the lunar orbit that would carry out scientific research activities such as the lunar exploration and utilization, lunar-based observation, basic scientific experiment and technical verification.
- Russia and China will facilitate extensive cooperation in the ILRS, open to all interested countries and international partners.

7. a

**National Employability through Apprenticeship Program (NETAP)**

- NETAP was structured to overcome the challenges of the Apprenticeship Act, 1961.
- The program was launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and TeamLease Skills University (Gujarat).
- It was set up as a 100% employer-funded Public-Private Partnership (PPP).
- NETAP proposed to appoint 2 lac apprentices every year for the next 10 years. At peak capacity, it will be the world's largest apprenticeship program.
- It will help the unemployed youth to build skills through Learning by doing and Learning while earning along with providing them with access to practical skills.
- Recently NETAP has released its latest edition of the Apprenticeship Outlook Report for 2021 (January-June 2021).

8. a

**National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)**

- The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) provides financial assistance to the elderly, widows and persons with disabilities in the form of social pensions.
  - The National Assistance Program consists of five sub-schemes:
1. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)

2. Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS)
  3. Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)
  4. National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)
- Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development in its report submitted to the Lok Sabha on pensions offered under NSAP scheme.
  - The Committee observed that under National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), meagre amount of assistance ranging from Rs.200 to Rs.500 per month is provided under the different components of this Scheme.

9. c

**Genome mapping project in the Indian Ocean**

- The first-of-its-kind research project that will be flagged off at Visakhapatnam and course the Indian Ocean from India's east coast, all the way to Australia, then onward towards Port Louis in Mauritius and up to the border of Pakistan, off India's west coast.
- It will gather samples for genome mapping of microorganisms in the Indian Ocean.
- The researchers will collect samples from various stretches of the ocean at an average depth of about 5 km.
- The mapping of the Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and Ribonucleic acid (RNA) will show the nutrients present in them, and also those lacking in different parts of the ocean.
- The ocean has several micronutrients like nitrates, sulphates and silicates, minerals like iron ore and zinc, and trace metals like cadmium or copper.
- The genome mapping will show the presence of which these microbes have adapted to, in addition to their reaction to atmospheric carbon dioxide.
- This will help in identifying which part of the ocean has a greater concentration of which mineral or element.

10. b

**Herath Festival**



- Kashmiri Pundits in Jammu and Kashmir celebrates most important festival Sivaratri, locally called 'Herath'.
- Walnuts and fish dishes are central to the festival.
- At the end of the religious ceremonies, a day is observed as 'Salaam', which entailed celebrations with the Muslim brethren in Kashmir.
- During such festivals shops run by Muslims provides paraphernalia for puja.
- Temporary stalls by Muslim vendors will sell local fish and Trout, which is preferred by the pundits during the occasion.

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

**3) With respect to One Nation One Ration Card Scheme, consider the following statements:**

- a. The scheme is being implemented for nation-wide portability of ration cards under National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013
- b. This system allows all NFSA beneficiaries, particularly migrant beneficiaries, to claim either full or part foodgrains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) in the country
- c. The system also allows their family members back home, if any, to claim the balance foodgrains on same the ration card
- d. None of the above

**13-03-2021**

**1) With respect to the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, which of the following statements is incorrect?**

- a. The Act prohibits conversion of any place of worship
- b. The Act provides for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on the day of commencement of this Act
- c. Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to the Ram Janma Bhumi-Babri Masjid situated in Ayodhya
- d. The Act also exempted any place of worship that is covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958

**2) With respect to Sahitya Akademi Award, consider the following statements:**

- 1. The award will be presented to the books of literary merit published in English and Sanskrit, besides the 22 languages enumerated in the Constitution of India.
- 2. The award will be presented only to Indian Nationality.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

**4) With respect to Superior Mirage, consider the following statements:**

- 1. It is an optical illusion caused by a meteorological phenomenon called temperature inversion.
- 2. This phenomenon is common in deserts at summer noon, due to which an inverted image of a distant tree is seen formed in hot sand below it.

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

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

**5) Mera Ration Mobile App was launched recently by?**

- a. Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- b. Ministry of Home Affairs
- c. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- d. Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

6) Consider the following statements with respect to 1930 Dandi March

1. Gandhi was arrested during this act of nonviolent civil disobedience movement and the event continued without him.
2. Gandhi agreed to call off this satyagraha in exchange for an equal negotiating role at a London conference on India's future.

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

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

7) Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to *Seabuckthorn*

1. It produces edible fruit which is rich in vitamins, carotenoids and omega fatty acids
2. It is found generally in arid and dry areas such as deserts.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

8) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal*

1. He lived in the Princely Kingdom of Travancore in the early decades of the 19th Century Kerala.
2. He was a close associate of Dayananda Saraswathi, the founder of Arya Samaj.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

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

9) Which of the following pairs are matched correctly with respective to *India's Joint Space missions*?

Space Mission	Partnering Nation
TRISHNA	- CNES, France
NISAR	- NASA, USA
LUPEX Mission	- JAXA, Japan
Megha-Tropiques	- CNES, France

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 & 4 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 3 & 4 only
- d. All of the above

10) *Bamyan Buddha* were located in which of the following mountain ranges?

- a. Karakoram
- b. Hindukush
- c. Khyber Mountains
- d. Kirthar Mountains

## Answers

1. b

- The Supreme Court has recently asked the Centre to respond to a plea challenging the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991.
- In agreeing to examine the law, the court has opened the doors for litigation in various places of worship across the country including Mathura and Varanasi.

**Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991**

- The Act prohibits conversion of any place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship



as it existed on the 15th day of August, 1947, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

- No person shall convert any place of worship of any religious denomination into one of a different denomination or section.
- All suits, appeals or other proceedings regarding converting the character of a place of worship, that were pending on August 15, 1947, will stand abated when the Act commences and no fresh proceedings can be filed.
- However, legal proceedings can be initiated with respect to the conversion of the religious character of any place of worship after the commencement of the Act if the change of status took place after the cut-off date of August 15, 1947.
- Nothing contained in this Act shall apply to the place or place of worship commonly known as Ram Janma Bhumi-Babri Masjid situated in Ayodhya in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

Besides the Ayodhya dispute, the Act also exempted:

1. any place of worship that is an ancient and historical monument or an archaeological site, or is covered by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958
2. a suit that has been finally settled or disposed of
3. any dispute that has been settled by the parties or conversion of any place that took place by acquiescence before the Act commenced

2. b

- *Politician-writer M Veerappa Moily, poets Arundhati Subramaniam and Anamika are among the twenty writers who will be conferred with the Sahitya Akademi Award 2020.*

### **Sahitya Akademi Award**

- Every year since its inception in 1954, the Sahitya Akademi Award prizes to the most outstanding books of literary merit published in English and Rajasthani, besides the 22 languages recognized by the Constitution of India.
- The first Awards were given in 1955.

- The author must be of Indian Nationality.

3. d

### **One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) Scheme**

- The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution in association with State/UT Governments is implementing 'One Nation One Ration Card' (ONORC) plan for nation-wide portability of ration cards under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA).
- So far, the facility has been enabled in 32 States/UTs covering nearly 69 Crore beneficiaries, almost 86% of NFSA population of the country.
- This system allows all NFSA beneficiaries, particularly migrant beneficiaries, to claim either full or part foodgrains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) in the country through existing ration card with biometric/Aadhaar authentication in a seamless manner.
- The system also allows their family members back home, if any, to claim the balance foodgrains on same the ration card.

4. b

### **Superior Mirage**

- It is an optical illusion, seen, at sea-shore in winter evening, due to which an image of a ship is seen formed in air in sea-sky. The actual ship is nowhere visible.
- Such illusions are reasonably common in the Arctic but can also happen in UK winters when the atmospheric conditions are right, though they are very rare.
- The illusion is caused by a meteorological phenomenon called a temperature inversion.
- Normally, the air temperature drops with increasing altitude, making mountaintops colder than the foothills.
- But in a temperature inversion, warm air sits on top of a band of colder air, playing havoc with our visual perception.
- Because cold air is denser than warm air, it has a higher refractive index.
- In the case of the "hovering ship", this means light rays coming from the ship are bent



downwards as it passes through the colder air, to observers on the shoreline.

- This makes the ship appear in a higher position than it really is – in this instance, above the sea surface.

### **Inferior Mirage**

- It is an optical illusion, seen in deserts at summer noon, due to which an inverted image of a distant tree is seen formed in hot sand below it, as if formed in water. Actually there is no water anywhere.

5. d

- **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution** has recently launched Mera Ration Mobile App for the benefit of those ration card holders who move to new places in search of livelihood.

6. c

### **1930 Dandi March**

- The Lahore Congress of 1929 had authorized the Congress Working Committee (CWC) to launch a programme of civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes.
- In February 1930, CWC meeting at Sabarmati Ashram, invested Gandhi with full powers to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement at a time and place of his choice.
- The Dandi March, also known as the Salt March and the Dandi Satyagraha was an act of nonviolent civil disobedience led by Gandhi.
- The march lasted from 12th March, 1930 to 6th April, 1930 as a direct-action campaign of tax resistance and nonviolent protest against the British salt monopoly.
- On 12th March, Gandhiji set out from Sabarmati with 78 followers on a 241-mile march to the coastal town of Dandi on the Arabian Sea.
- There, Gandhi and his supporters were to defy British policy by making salt from seawater.
- Civil disobedience broke out all across India, soon involving millions of Indians, and British authorities arrested more than 60,000 people.

7. a

### **Seabuckthorn**

- It's a shrub which produces an orange-yellow coloured edible berry.
- In India, it is found above the tree line in the Himalayan region, generally in dry areas such as the cold deserts of Ladakh and Spiti.
- In Himachal Pradesh, it is locally called chharma and grows in the wild in Lahaul and Spiti and parts of Kinnaur.
- According to the Seabuckthorn Association of India, around 15,000 hectares in Himachal, Ladakh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh are covered by this plant.
- The Himachal Pradesh government has decided to start planting seabuckthorn in the cold desert areas.
- As a folk medicine, seabuckthorn has been widely used for treating stomach, heart and skin problems.
- Its fruit and leaves are rich in vitamins, carotenoids and omega fatty acids, among other substances, and it can help troops in acclimatising to high-altitude.

8. b

### **Ayya Vaikunda Swamikal**

- Ayya Vaikunda (1809-1851) was a great humanist and social thinker.
- He founded 'samathva samajam' in 1836 and was considered the first socio reform movement in India.
- He is remembered as the first well known social reformer in India who critiqued the caste discrimination and religious hierarchy and fought against the practice of untouchability.
- His gave an exhortation of 'One caste, One religion, One clan, One world, One god'.
- He was against idol worship and he did not allow the portraiture to draw his figure.
- He organized 'Sama Panthi Bhojana' in each and every place of worship in the name of 'Annadanam'.

9. d

### **India's Joint space Missions**

- **LUPEX** - India and Japan are already working on a joint lunar polar exploration (LUPEX) mission.
- LUPEX aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's south pole around 2024.
- **Megha-Tropiques** - The Indo-French joint satellite mission called MEGHA-TROPIQUES was launched in 2011 for the study of the tropical atmosphere and climate related to aspects such as monsoons, cyclones, etc.
- **SARAL** - The Indo-French joint mission, named SARAL (Satellite for ALTIKA and ARGOS) for studying the ocean from space using altimetry was successfully launched in 2013.
- **NISAR** - ISRO and NASA are realizing a joint satellite mission called NISAR (NASA ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) for earth science studies.
- The mission will observe Earth and measure its changing ecosystem and masses globally.
- It is the world's most expensive imaging-satellite and the two space agencies intend to launch the satellite by 2022.
- **TRISHNA** - ISRO and the French space agency CNES have partnered in developing advanced upgradation satellites like TRISHNA to monitor the water cycle to help in finding out proper ways to utilize it.

10. b

#### **Bamiyan Buddhas**

- The Bamiyan Buddhas were great examples of a confluence of Gupta, Sassanian and Hellenistic artistic styles.
- The Bamiyan Buddhas are said to date back to the 5th century AD and were once the tallest standing Buddhas in the world.
- Salsal and Shamama, as they were called by the locals, rose to heights of 55 and 38 metres respectively.
- The Salsal means "light shines through the universe" and the Shamama is "Queen Mother".
- Bamiyan is situated in the high mountains of the Hindu Kush in the central highlands of Afghanistan.

- The valley, which is set along the line of the Bamiyan River, was once integral to the early days of the Silk Roads.
- In 2001, the Taliban began blowing up two monumental Buddha statues in Afghanistan's Bamiyan Valley.
- Recently, the Bamiyan Buddhas have been brought back to life in the form of 3D projections in an event called "A Night with Buddha".

**15-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to State Election Commission**

1. The functions of delimitation, reservation and rotation of local body election seats should be vested with the State Election Commission.
2. It should submit its annual or special reports to the Election Commission of India and to the Governor.

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

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

**2) Which of the following statement(s) is/are incorrect with respect to Index of Industrial Production**

1. It shows the growth rates in different industry groups of the economy in a fixed period of time.
2. It is only a measure on the physical volume of production.
3. It is published annually by Department of Economic Affairs under Ministry of Finance

**Select the correct answer using the codes given below:**

- a. 1 & 2 only
- b. 2 only



- c. 3 only
- d. 1 & 3 only

3) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Energy Efficiency Enterprise (E3) Certifications Programme*

1. E3 certification is an accreditation process focused on the Brick industry launched by ministry of power.
2. The certification will be provided by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

4) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Additional Tier-1 (AT1) Bonds*

1. It is a government secured bond with short term tenure with a fixed maturity date.
2. These bonds are typically used by banks to bolster their core or tier-1 capital.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5) The active *Sangay Volcano* is located in which of the following countries?

- a. Chile
- b. Indonesia
- c. Ecuador
- d. Tanzania

## Answers

1. b

### State Election Commission

- The State Election Commissioner is appointed by the concerned state Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister.
- The state election commissioner can be removed only by the President.
- He can be removed only in like manner and on the like grounds as a judge of a high court.
- The functions of delimitation, reservation and rotation of seats should be vested in a Delimitation Commission and not in the State Election Commission.
- The person to be appointed as the State Election Commissioner shall be a person:
  1. Who is or has been a judge of a High Court; or
  2. A person who has served the Government in the rank of a Commissioner for a minimum period of five years, or has served the State Government in a higher rank, namely, Financial Commissioner.
- The State Election Commissioner shall not be below the age of fifty-five years.
- The State Election Commissioner shall hold office for a period of five years from the date he assumes office;
- On ceasing to hold office, the State Election Commissioner shall not be eligible for any further appointment under the Government.
- Recently Supreme Court stated that a government employee or bureaucrat cannot be appointed as Election Commissioner.

2. c

### Index of Industrial Production

- It is compiled and published monthly by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation with base Year for IIP is 2011-2012.
- IIP is a composite indicator that measures the growth rate of industry groups classified under:

- Broad sectors, namely, Mining, Manufacturing, and Electricity.
- Use-based sectors, namely Basic Goods, Capital Goods, and Intermediate Goods.
- The eight core industries of India represent about 40% of the weight of items that are included in the IIP.
- It is used by government agencies including the Ministry of Finance, the Reserve Bank of India, etc, for policy-making purposes.
- IIP remains extremely relevant for the calculation of the quarterly and advance GDP estimates.
- IIP Data January 2021 has highlighted weak industrial growth along with rising retail inflation.

3. d

**Energy Efficiency Enterprise (E3) Certifications Programme**

- The E3 Certification Scheme is aimed at tapping huge energy efficiency potential in this sector.
- It is an initiative to recognise burnt clay brick manufacturers who adopt energy-efficient manufacturing and encourage customers to source bricks from such E3 certified manufacturing units.
- It will be awarded to Brick Manufacturing Enterprises that meet the minimum Specific Energy Consumption (SECVol) performance criteria specified in the Scheme.
- It is a shift from conventional to efficient technologies and product shift towards low density bricks with better thermal insulation.
- The adoption of the E3 Certification is currently voluntary for the Brick industry.

4. b

**Additional Tier-1 (AT1) Bonds**

- AT1 Bonds stand for additional tier-1 bonds, these are unsecured bonds which have perpetual tenure, and these bonds have no maturity date.
- AT1 bonds are subordinate to all other debt and only senior to common equity.

- Mutual funds (MFs) are among the largest investors in perpetual debt instruments, and hold over Rs 35,000 crore of the outstanding additional tier-I bond issuances of Rs 90,000 crore.
- In a recent circular, the Sebi told mutual funds to value these perpetual bonds as a 100-year instrument.
- This essentially means MFs have to make the assumption that these bonds would be redeemed in 100 years.
- The regulator also asked MFs to limit the ownership of the bonds at 10 per cent of the assets of a scheme.
- According to the SEBI, these instruments could be riskier than other debt instruments.

5. c

**Sangay Volcano**

- Sangay volcano is one of the highest (5230 m) active volcanoes in the world, erupted recently.
- Sangay is the southernmost stratovolcano, a volcano built up of alternate layers of lava and ash, in the northern volcanic zone of the Andes.
- The earliest report of a historical eruption was in 1628. More or less continuous eruptions were reported from 1728 until 1916, and again from 1934 to the present.
- Sangay has had frequent eruptions in historic times, mostly of strombolian type.
- Mount Sinabung is a Pleistocene-to-Holocene stratovolcano in the Karo plateau of North Sumatra, Indonesia.

**16-03-2021**

**1) With respect to Rakhi Garhi, consider the following statements**

- 1. It is one of the largest Harappan sites in India and the oldest in the world.**
- 2. It is located on the right bank of now dried up Palaeo-channel of Drishadvati.**

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

a. 1 only





- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

2) With respect to *Seismic Zones* in India, consider the following statements:

1. As per the seismic zoning map of India, the total area has been classified into five seismic zones.
2. Zone II is seismically the most active region, while zone V is the least.
3. There is no scientific technique available anywhere in the world to predict an earthquake precisely in terms of time, location and its magnitude.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are *incorrect*?

- a. 3 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. None of the above

3) To protect, preserve & promote various forms of folk art and ancient folk cultures throughout the country, Government of India has set up 7 Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs). With respect to the zones, consider the following pairs:

**Cultural Zone – Headquarters**

1. North Zone Cultural Centre – Patiala
2. South Zone Cultural Centre – Chennai
3. Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre – Kolkata
4. North East Zone Cultural Centre – Dispur

Which of the pair(s) given above is/are correctly matched?

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

4) *Mankidia, Lodha and Khadia Tribes* belongs to?

- a. Assam
- b. Odisha
- c. Jharkhand
- d. Madhya Pradesh

5) *Sangay Volcano*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is located in which of the following?

- a. Italy
- b. Brunei
- c. Ecuador
- d. Indonesia

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Raman thermometry*

1. It uses Raman scattering phenomena to determine the local temperature in microelectronics systems.
2. Power transmission cable can be monitored by using this method on the fibre optic cable.

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

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

7) Which of the following is *incorrect* regarding the applications of *Consumer Price Index*?

1. Macroeconomic indicator of inflation
2. Inflation targeting by government agencies
3. Inspecting price stability
4. Deflator in the national accounts

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:



- a. 1 & 2 only
- b. 2 & 4 only
- c. 1 & 3 only
- d. None of the above

d. NITI Aayog

**8) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Lachit Borphukan***

1. He was a freedom fighter from Assam who was closely associated with Subhas Chandra Bose.
2. The best passing out cadet of National Defence Academy is conferred the gold medal in his name.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Project RE-HAB***

1. It aims to thwart elephant attacks in human habitations using honey bees.
2. It is launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**10) Which of the following agency has launched *Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index (AMFFRI)***

- a. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
- b. Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC)
- c. Food Corporation of India (FCI)

## Answers

1. c

### ***Rakhigarhi***

- The ancient site of Rakhi-Khas and Rakhi-Shahpur are collectively known as Rakhigarhi.
- It is located on the right bank of now dried up Palaeo-channel of Drishadvati.
- Seven (07) mounds are located here.
- The site has yielded various stages of Harappan culture and is by far one of the largest Harappan sites in India.
- The site shows the sequential development of the Indus culture in the now dried up Saraswati basin.

2. b

### ***Earthquakes in India***

- Considering the recorded history of earthquakes in the country, a total of 59% of the land mass of India is prone to earthquakes of different intensities.
- As per the seismic zoning map of the country, the total area is classified into four seismic zones.
- Zone V is seismically the most active region, while zone II is the least.
- Approximately, 11% area falls in zone V, 18% in zone IV, 30% in zone III and remaining in zone II.
- Presently, no proven system exists in the country to provide the early warning of earthquakes.
- Moreover, there is no scientific technique available anywhere in the world to predict an earthquake precisely in terms of time, location and its magnitude.

3. a

### ***Zonal Cultural Centres - Headquarters***

1. Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre - Kolkata
2. North Central Zone Cultural Centre - Allahabad

3. North east Zone Cultural centre - Dimapur
4. North Zone Cultural centre - Patiala
5. South Central Zone Cultural Centre - Nagpur
6. South Zone Cultural Centre - Thanjavur
7. West Zone Cultural Centre - Udaipur

4. b

- The Similipal Tiger Reserve has been on fire recently.
- Mankidias, Lodhas and Khadias are the three Particularly Vulnerable Tribes (PVTGs) that have lost their livelihoods to the inferno.
- These tribals collect siali fibre and wild honey from the Similipal forest.

5. c

#### ***Sangay Volcano***

- Ecuador's Sangay volcano erupted, spewing clouds of ash.
- Sangay volcano has been in an eruptive stage since 2019.
- Ecuador, part of the Pacific Rim's "Ring of Fire" region, has eight volcanoes in its territory.
- ***Sangay volcano*** - one of the world's highest active volcanoes and one of Ecuador's most active ones - is located in the northern zone of the Andes.
- It is the southernmost stratovolcano (Stratovolcano is a volcano that comprises of the alternate layers of lava and ash.)
- It had frequently erupted in historic times, mostly of strombolian type.
- Strombolian volcanic eruption comprises of mild blasts of the lava bombs, incandescent cinders and lapilli.
- The earliest report of a historical eruption was in 1628. More or less continuous eruptions were reported from 1934 to the present.
- The constant eruptions have caused frequent changes to the morphology of the summit crater complex. The present-day volcano is built within horseshoe-shaped calderas of two previous edifices.

6. c

#### ***Raman thermometry***

- It is a thermal characterization technique which makes use of Raman scattering phenomena to determine the local temperature in microelectronics systems.
- When light is scattered off an object, say a molecule, two bands are observed, with higher and lower frequency than the original light, called the Stokes and anti-Stokes bands, respectively.
- By studying the relative intensity of the two bands, it is possible to estimate the temperature of the object which scatters the light.
- The anti-Stokes component of Raman scattering is strongly dependent on the temperature that the material is subjected to.
- Thus, by measuring the intensity of the anti-Stokes scattered light we can estimate the temperature.
- Any current flowing through a conductor would cause a temperature rise due to the Joule heating effect.
- Hence the flow of current through the power cables results in heating of the power cables.
- Recently, researchers at IIT Madras have demonstrated that power transmission cable can be monitored by using Raman thermometry on the fibre optic cable.
- They achieved this by using the optical fibres that are already embedded in the power cables for establishing optical communication.

7. d

- The change in the consumer price index over a period of time is referred to as CPI-based inflation, or retail inflation.
- The CPI is an index measuring retail inflation in the economy by collecting the change in prices of most common goods and services used by consumers.
- The CPI is calculated for a fixed list of items including food, housing, apparel, transportation, electronics, medical care, education, etc.

- The CPI specifically identifies periods of deflation or inflation for consumers in their day-to-day living expenses.
- In India, there are four consumer price index numbers, which are calculated, and these are as follows:
  1. CPI for Industrial Workers (IW)
  2. CPI for Agricultural Labourers (AL)
  3. CPI for Rural Labourers (RL) and
  4. CPI for Urban Non-Manual Employees (UNME)
- The Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation collects CPI (UNME) data and compiles it but the remaining three are collected by the Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour.

8. b

#### **Lachit Borphukan**

- Lachit Borphukan (1622 - 1672) was a commander and Borphukan (Phu-Kon-Lung) in the Ahom kingdom, located in present-day Assam.
- He died in April 1672, almost two centuries before the freedom movement began.
- Assam was a sovereign region for more than 600 years from 1228-1826.
- He is known for his leadership in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat that thwarted a drawn-out attempt by Mughal forces under the command of Ramsingh I to take over Ahom kingdom.
- On 24 November each year Lachit Divas (Lachit Day) is celebrated state-wide in Assam to commemorate his heroism.

9. a

#### **Project RE-HAB**

- It is launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).
- Reducing Elephant – Human Attacks using Bees (RE-HAB) is to thwart elephant attacks in human habitations using honey bees fences.
- It aims to reduce loss of lives of both, humans as well as elephants.

- The pilot project was launched at four locations around village Chelur in Kodagu district of Karnataka.
- These spots are located on the periphery of Nagarhole National Park and Tiger Reserve and prone to human-elephant conflicts.
- Project RE-HAB is a sub-mission under KVIC's National Honey Mission, it uses bee boxes as a fence to prevent the attack of elephants.
- The boxes are connected with a string so that when elephants attempt to pass through, a tug or pull causes the bees to swarm the elephant herds and dissuade them from progressing further.

10. d

#### **Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index (AMFFRI)**

- Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index (AMFFRI) is launched by NITI Aayog in 2016.
- The index ranks states based on the degree of reforms they have undertaken in agricultural marketing.
- AMFFRI has a score that can have minimum value "0" implying no reforms.
- It has maximum value "100" implying complete reforms in the selected areas.
- The index rank States and UTs based on the implementation of seven provisions proposed under the model APMC Act.
- These indicators reveal the ease of doing agribusiness.
- The indicators also reveal opportunities for farmers to benefit from modern trade and commerce.
- These indicators also represent competitiveness, efficiency, and transparency in agri markets.

**17-03-2021**

**1) With respect to World Air Quality Report, 2020, which was launched recently, consider the following statements:**

1. India, on the whole, had improved its average annual PM2.5 (particulate matter) levels in 2020 than in 2019.
2. Delhi is the most polluted capital city in the world.

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

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

2) With respect to *Project SAMVAD*, consider the following statements:

1. It is the world's largest survey that aims to provide base for designing national and state level programmes and policies for ageing population in India.
2. The project was led by National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in collaboration with Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
3. The project will be funded by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. None of the above

3) With respect to the *Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021*, consider the following statements:

1. The Bill provides that the term government referred to in any law made by the Legislative Assembly will imply Lieutenant Governor (LG).
2. The Bill prohibits the Legislative Assembly from making any rule to enable itself to consider the matters of day-to-day administration of the NCT of Delhi.

3. The bill states that the Lieutenant Governor's opinion must be obtained on every matters, before taking any executive action on the decisions of the Minister/ Council of Ministers.

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

- a. 3 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *TraceBioMe Project*

1. It is one of the flagship projects of the ESSO-Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (ESSO-INCOIS).
2. Under the project, a 90-day scientific cruise mission was launched recently for mapping the genetic diversity of organisms and the effect of micronutrients and trace metals on them in the Indian Ocean.

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

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020*

1. The Bill seeks to amend the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 197
2. According to the bill, abortion requires the opinion of one doctor if it is done within 12 weeks of conception, and two doctors if it is done between 12 and 20 weeks.
3. Under the bill, Pregnancy cannot be terminated at any circumstances after 24 weeks.



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

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Solution Blowing Process*

- 1. It produces fibres that are nanometres in diameter which results in better adsorption of heavy metals.
- 2. It can enable blending of natural polymers like chitosan and lignin with synthetic polymers like Nylon.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) *Bhaona*, a traditional form of entertainment belongs to which of the following Indian states?

- a. Karnataka
- b. Assam
- c. West Bengal
- d. Gujarat

8) Which of the following statements are *incorrect* with respect to *Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2021*

- 1. The Bill seeks to decrease the foreign investment limit allowed in an Indian insurance company.
- 2. It aims to regulate the relationship between an insurer, its policyholders, its shareholders, and the regulator (the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India).

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *Anti-Defection Law*

- 1. It aims to bring stability to governments by deterring MPs and MLAs from changing their political parties.
- 2. Under this law, if a nominated member of Raja Sabha joins a political party within first six months of their tenure, they lose their seat.

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

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

10) *World Energy Transitions Outlook Report* was released by?

- a. International Energy Agency
- b. International Atomic Energy Agency
- c. International Renewable Energy Agency
- d. None of the above

## Answers

1. c

### *World Air Quality Report, 2020*

- The report was launched by *IQ Air*, a Swiss air quality technology company specialising in protection against airborne pollutants, and developing air quality monitoring and air cleaning products.
- According to the report, Delhi remained the most polluted capital city in the world.

- The report, however, shows that Delhi's air quality improved by approximately 15 per cent from 2019 to 2020.
- India, on the whole, had improved its average annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> (particulate matter) levels in 2020 than in 2019.
- 22 of the world's 30 most polluted cities are from India.
- South Indian cities recorded relatively better air quality, though they remained above the daily WHO limit of 25 g/m<sup>3</sup> for most parts of 2020.

2. c

### Project SAMVAD

#### **SAMVAD - Support, Advocacy and Mental Health Interventions for Children in Vulnerable Circumstances and Diseases**

- The project, aimed at mental health outreach for children who are abandoned and orphaned, child survivors of trafficking, or in conflict with law, was led by National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS).
- The Ministry of Women and Child Development is funding the project.
- The project is being run in collaboration with Panchayati Raj Ministry at a cost of Rs.56 crore for five years.

3. b

#### **The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021**

- The Bill amends the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991.
- The Bill provides that the term "government" referred to in any law made by the Legislative Assembly will imply Lieutenant Governor (LG).

#### **Inquiry by the Assembly into administrative decisions**

- The Bill prohibits the Legislative Assembly from making any rule to enable itself or its Committees to:
  1. consider the matters of day-to-day administration of the NCT of Delhi
  2. conduct any inquiry in relation to administrative decisions

- Further, the Bill provides that all such rules made before its enactment will be void.

#### **LG's opinion for executive actions**

- The National Capital Territory of Delhi Act specifies that all executive action by the government, whether taken on the advice of the Ministers or otherwise, must be taken in the name of the LG.
- The Bill adds that **on certain matters, as specified by the LG**, his opinion must be obtained before taking any executive action on the decisions of the Minister/ Council of Ministers.

4. b

- A 90-day long expedition onboard research vessel RV Sindhu Sadhana with 30 scientists took off from Visakhapatnam recently.

#### **TraceBioMe Project**

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO), Goa, has initiated a mission recently under one of its flagship project TraceBioMe.
- CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) has been commissioned to conduct genome and proteome mapping (micro nutrients) present inside single-cell organisms in the Indian Ocean.
- The mission aims for mapping the genetic diversity of organisms and the effect of micronutrients and trace metals on them in the Indian Ocean.
- The project envisages extensive sampling of water, sediments, planktons and various organisms in different parts of the Indian Ocean to study the presence of different kinds of organisms and the trace metals and micronutrients found therein using modern state-of-the-art molecular techniques as well classical techniques.

5. a

- Parliament has recently passed the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020 that increases the time period within which an abortion may be carried out.
- The Bill amends the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 which provides for the



termination of certain pregnancies by registered medical practitioners.

- Currently, abortion requires the opinion of one doctor if it is done within 12 weeks of conception, and two doctors if it is done between 12 and 20 weeks.
- The Bill allows abortion to be done on the advice of one doctor up to 20 weeks, and two doctors in the case of certain categories of women between 20 and 24 weeks.
- The Bill states that the upper limit of termination of pregnancy will not apply in cases where such termination is necessary due to the diagnosis of substantial foetal abnormalities.
- For a pregnancy to be terminated after 24 weeks in case of substantial foetal abnormalities, the opinion of the State-level medical board is essential.

6. c

#### ***Solution Blowing Process***

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi has developed a fibrous membrane filter using a biopolymer-based material that helps to separate out the heavy metals from water samples.
- These membranes contain adsorbents materials that attract and hold the metals.
- The adsorbents contain a large amount of a biopolymer, Chitosan, derived from crab shells that is mixed with a well-known polymer, Nylon.
- While normally, the fibres used to make regular cartridge filter-assemblies are processed by a method called melt blowing, the IIT Mandi researchers have used a process called "solution blowing".
- It produces fibres that are nanometres in diameter, a hundred thousand times thinner than a single human hair.
- When the fibres get finer, their surface area increases tremendously, which results in better adsorption of heavy metals.
- The solution blowing technique could replace 40 per cent of the nylon with chitosan, which means 40 per cent less fossil-fuel-derived, polluting plastics.

- The researchers are all set to scale up the technology to industrial scales so that they could handle larger volumes of metal-contaminated water.
- The study was funded by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India.

7. b

#### ***Bhaona***

- It is a mythology-based theatrical performance that involves dialogues, songs, and dances.
- It was the creation of saint-reformer Sankardev, who started neo-Vaishnavite movement.
- It usually involves 40-50 performers wearing costumes and ornaments including those playing heavy drums and cymbals.
- The actors who perform it are known as Bhaoriya.

#### ***Other Art forms developed by Sankaradeva***

- Initially, Sankaradeva wrote his prose in Sanskrit but later used Assamese and Brajavali.
- Brajavali is a literary language limited to theatrical usage, in which Sankaradeva wrote his songs and plays to develop the following artforms
  1. Borgeet- a new form of spiritual music.
  2. Monastic dance that evolved as Sattriya - a classical dance form which acts as a medium for propagation of the Vaishnava faith.

8. a

#### ***Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2021***

- It was introduced in Rajya Sabha by the Minister of Corporate Affairs, It amends the Insurance Act, 1938.
- The Act provides the framework for functioning of insurance businesses and regulates the relationship between an insurer, its policyholders, its shareholders, and the regulator (the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India).
- At present the act allows foreign investors to hold up to 49% of the capital in an Indian

insurance company, which must be owned and controlled by an Indian entity.

- The Bill increases the limit on foreign investment in an Indian insurance company from 49% to 74%, and removes restrictions on ownership and control.
- However, such foreign investment may be subject to additional conditions as prescribed by the central government.

9. a

### **Anti-defection law**

- In 1985 the Tenth Schedule, popularly known as the anti-defection law, was added to the Constitution.
- The penalty for shifting political loyalties is the loss of parliamentary membership and a bar on becoming a minister.
- The law specifies the circumstances under which changing of political parties by MPs invite action under the law.
- The law covers three types of scenarios with respect to an MP switching parties.
- The first is when a member elected on the ticket of a political party "voluntarily gives up" membership of such a party or votes in the House contrary to the wishes of the party.
- The second possibility is when an MP who has won his or her seat as an independent candidate after the election joins a political party.
- In both these instances, the MP lose the seat in the House on changing (or joining) a party.
- The third scenario relates to nominated MPs. In their case, the law specifies that within six months of being nominated to the House, they can choose to join a political party.
- The time is given so that if a nominated MP is not a member of a political party, they can decide to join one if they want.
- But if they don't join a political party during the first six months of their tenure, and join a party thereafter, then they lose their seat in Parliament.

10. c

### **World Energy Transitions Outlook Report**

- This report, previewed at the Berlin Energy Transition Dialogue 2021, was released by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).
- It says that the Covid-19 crisis offers an unexpected opportunity for countries across the world to decouple their economies from fossil fuels and accelerate the shift to renewable energy sources.
- It proposes energy transition solutions for the narrow pathway available to contain the rise of temperature to 1.5°C and halt global warming.
- IRENA estimates that by 2050, 90% of total electricity needs would be supplied by renewables, followed by 6% from natural gas and the remaining from nuclear.

**18-03-2021**

### **1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Stop TB Partnership***

1. It is a unique international body with the power to align actors all over the world in the fight against TB.
2. It was established in the year 2000 to eliminate Tuberculosis as a public health problem by 2030.
3. Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare was recently appointed as Chairman of Stop TB Partnership Board.

**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

### **2) With respect to *Schreibersite*, sometimes seen in the news recently, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a rare iron nickel phosphide mineral that is soluble in water.



2. Schreibersites found on Earth comes only from meteorites and extraterrestrial rocks.
3. It is highly reactive and produces carbon which is capable of forming organic molecules.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

3) *State of the World's Indigenous Peoples Report* was released recently by?

- a. UN Development Programme
- b. Food and Agricultural Organization
- c. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- d. International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs

4) *Orunudo* Scheme is a monthly assistance scheme for women members of marginalised families launched in?

- a. Assam
- b. Kerala
- c. Tamil Nadu
- d. West Bengal

5) Consider the following pairs:

1. Mount Abu – Rajasthan
2. Nalabana Bird Sanctuary – Andhra Pradesh
3. Indira Sagar Polavaram Irrigation project – Karnataka

Which of the pair(s) given above is/are *incorrectly* matched?

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

- d. All of the above

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Allotment of Political Symbols*

1. Election Commission can allot reserved symbols only to recognised political party.
2. When a recognised political party splits, Supreme Court decides on assigning the symbol.

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

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Index Monitoring Cell (IMC)*

1. It was established by NITI Aayog to improve India's ranking in UNDP Human Development Index.
2. The group will also put in place a mechanism for States to come up with their own rankings of press freedom.

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

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Framework for Water quality Testing & Monitoring*

1. It mandates to setup network of Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) in every State, district and block.
2. Under this framework water quality will be tested only based on two parameters namely pH value and total dissolved solids.



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

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

9) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Special Purpose Acquisition Companies (SPACs)*

- 1. It raise money with the intention to acquire an existing company from the funds raised in the public offer.
- 2. The investors of SPACs contribute capital without any prior knowledge of how the funds will be used.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following agencies are not a part of *National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project*?

- 1. National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)
- 2. Indian Institute of Remote Sensing
- 3. National Institute for Disaster Management
- 4. Ministry of Earth Sciences
- 5. India Meteorological Department

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 & 5 only
- b. 3 & 4 only
- c. 2, 4 & 5 only
- d. None of the above

## Answers

1. b

- Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan was recently appointed as Chairman of 'Stop TB Partnership Board'.
- The Union Health Minister will hence serve a three year term, commencing July 2021, as the Chair of the Board of Stop TB Partnership.

### Stop TB Partnership

- It was established in the year 2000.
- It is a unique international body with the power to align actors all over the world in the fight against TB.
- The Secretariat is based at Geneva, Switzerland.
- It is mandated to eliminate Tuberculosis as a public health problem.
- The organization was conceived following the meeting of the First Session of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Tuberculosis Epidemic held in London in March 1998.
- In its inaugural year itself, the Stop TB Partnership through the Amsterdam Declaration gave a call for collaborative action from ministerial delegations from 20 countries that bear the highest burden of TB.
- It has 1500 partner organizations which include international, non-governmental and governmental organizations and patient groups.
- The participation of a wide range of constituencies gives this global body the credibility and the broad range of medical, social and financial expertise needed to defeat TB.

2. a

- A recent study highlighted that the lightning strikes during the first billion years after the planet's formation roughly 4.5 billion years ago may have freed up phosphorus required for the formation of biomolecules essential to life.

- On early Earth, Phosphorous, a crucial part of the recipe for life, was locked inside insoluble minerals.
- Until now, it was widely thought that meteorites that bombarded early Earth were primarily responsible for the presence of “bioavailable” phosphorus.
- Some meteorites contain the phosphorus mineral called schreibersite, which is soluble in water, where life is thought to have formed.

### Schreibersite

- Schreibersite is a rare iron nickel phosphide mineral.
- Since most schreibersite on Earth comes from meteorites, the emergence of life here has long been thought to be tied to the arrival of extraterrestrial rocks.
- But **schreibersite is also contained within the glass-like rock (fulgurites)** formed by lightning strikes in clay-rich soils.
- When a bolt of lightning strikes the ground, it can create glassy rocks called fulgurites by super-heating and sometimes vaporizing surface rock, freeing phosphorus locked inside.
- As a result, these fulgurites can contain schreibersite.
- It is highly reactive and produces phosphorous capable of forming organic molecules.

3. c

- *State of the world's indigenous peoples: Rights to Land, territories and resources Report was released recently by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA).*
- According to the report, the recognition and protection of land titles and tenure of indigenous people is crucial to attaining United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goals,
- Countries should include the recognition of indigenous land tenure in their data on secure land tenure rights in SDG reporting.
- Indigenous land title should be made powerful enough to protect first peoples' right to free,

prior and informed consent on all decisions affecting their lands and resources.

- This would prevent the widespread destruction of critical ecosystems in accordance with the SDGs, the report said.

4. a

### Orunodoi Scheme

- Under the scheme, a monthly assistance of Rs.830 is transferred to women members of marginalised families of **Assam**.
- On account of being a Direct Benefit Transfer scheme, the money is credited directly to the bank account of the woman head of a family because they are “primary caretakers of the household”.
- The applicant, a woman, has to be a permanent resident of Assam, whose composite household income should be less than Rs 2 lakh per annum.
- Families with specially-abled members and divorced/widowed/separated /unmarried women are prioritised.
- Poorer families, those without National Food Security Act (NFSA) or ration cards, are also given priority.
- Families, without any women members, MPs, MLAs (former and current), members of Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local bodies, government officials and employees of cooperative societies are excluded from the scheme.
- Families owning four-wheelers, mechanised boats, tractors or refrigerators, ACs and washing machines, or more than 15 bighas of agricultural land, are not eligible either.

5. c

1. Mount Abu – Rajasthan
2. Nalabana Bird Sanctuary – Odisha
3. Indira Sagar Polavaram Irrigation project – Andhra Pradesh

6. a

### Allotment of Political Symbols

- The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 empowers the EC to recognise political parties and allot symbols.

- The EC is also the only authority to decide issues on a dispute or a merger.
- Guidelines, to get a symbol allotted are as follows
  1. A party/candidate has to provide a list of three symbols from the EC's free symbols list at the time of filing nomination papers.
  2. Among them, one symbol is allotted to the party/candidate on a first-come-first-serve basis.
  3. When a recognised political party splits, the Election Commission takes the decision on assigning the symbol.
- As per the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) (Amendment) Order, 2017, party symbols are either:
  1. **Reserved** - Recognised political parties are given unique symbols which only the official candidates of that party can use.

Eight national parties and 64 state parties across the country have "reserved" symbols.

1. **Free** - The Election Commission also has a pool of nearly 200 "free" symbols that are allotted to the thousands of unrecognised regional parties that pop up before elections.

7. b

#### **Index Monitoring Cell (IMC)**

- It is a set up by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry in 2020.
- Its task is to improve India's ranking in the World Press Freedom Index and to evolve an objective yardstick to gauge media freedom.
- Composition of the IMC includes
  1. Director-general of the Press Information Bureau,
  2. Officials from the Registrar of newspapers of India, Bureau of outreach and communication, and from the press facilitation unit,
  - Secretary of the Press Council of India and Niti Aayog.

8. a

#### **Framework for Water quality Testing & monitoring**

- Recently Jal Shakti Ministry has launched framework for water quality testing, monitoring as a part of Jal Jeevan Mission.
- The guidelines mandate a network of the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) accredited labs to be set up in every State, district and block over the next year.
- At the panchayat level, teams of women in the village water and sanitation committees will be given field testing kits.
- Apart from voluntary tests by members of the public, officials have been mandated to do regular inspections.
- All results of testing will be fed into the Water Quality Information Management System.
- The basic water quality parameters prescribed under the guidelines are as follows
  - pH value, Total Dissolved Solids, Turbidity, Chloride, fluoride, nitrate, total alkalinity, total hardness, sulphate, iron, total arsenic, total coliform bacteria, e.coli or thermo-tolerant coliform bacteria.

9. d

#### **Special Purpose Acquisition Companies (SPACs)**

- SPACs are shell companies that raise money with the intention to acquire an existing company from the funds raised in the public offer.
- Though it has no actual commercial operations, it can solely raise capital through an initial public offering (IPO) to acquire an existing private company.
- Once the funds are raised, they will be kept in a trust, until one of two things happen.
- First, the management team of a SPAC identifies a company of interest.
- They then take the company public through an acquisition, with the capital raised in the IPO.
- Alternatively, if the SPAC fails to merge with a company or does not acquire an existing company within a deadline, the SPAC will be liquidated, and investors get their money back.

- The term “blank check company” is also used to refer to a SPAC, as investors contribute capital without any prior knowledge of how the funds will be used.

### **Initial Public Offering (IPO)**

- It refers to the process of offering shares of a private corporation to the public in a new stock issuance.
- Public share issuance allows a company to raise capital from public investors.

10. c

### **National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project**

- The objective of the Project is to undertake suitable structural and non-structural measures to mitigate the effects of cyclones in the coastal states and UTs of India.
- It is to be implemented by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) under the aegis of the Ministry of Home Affairs, along with coordination from the respective state governments and the National Institute for Disaster Management (NIDM), it is to be assisted by the World Bank.
- The Project has identified 13 cyclone prone States and Union Territories (UTs), with varying levels of vulnerability.
- These States/UT have further been classified into two categories, based on the frequency of occurrence of cyclone, size of population and the existing institutional mechanism for disaster management.
- Category I: Higher vulnerability States i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.
- Category II: Lower vulnerability States i.e. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Goa, Pondicherry, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

**19-03-2021**

1) With respect to U.S. India Artificial Intelligence (USIAI) Initiative, consider the following statements:

- It is an initiative of Indo-U.S. Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF).

- It aims to develop solar space power, an initiative that has the potential of solving humanity's energy needs and greatly mitigating climate change.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

2) With respect to Vehicle Scrapping Policy which was launched recently, consider the following statements:

- The policy proposes that the commercial vehicles must be de-registered and scrapped after 15 years from the date of registration.
- The policy proposes that all vehicles of the Central Government and State Governments will be de-registered after 15 years in case of failure to get the fitness certificate.
- The owners who scrap old vehicles were incentivized by waiving of registration fees for purchase of a new vehicle.

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

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to Government Security (G-Sec)

- They are tradeable instruments with only short term maturities less than one year.
- In India, the Central Government issues both, treasury bills and dated securities while the State Governments issue only dated securities.



3. They carry practically no risk of default and are called risk-free gilt-edged instruments.

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

- a. 2 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

4) With respect to *Great Red Spot*, sometimes seen in the news recently, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a persistent high-pressure region in the atmosphere of Mars.
- 2. It produces anticyclonic storm that is the largest in the Solar System.

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

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

5) An adjuvant is a substance added to a vaccine to improve its efficiency. The adjuvant boosts the reaction of the immune system to the antigen. Which of the following has adjuvant properties?

- a. Iron
- b. Silicon
- c. Carbon
- d. Aluminium

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Bill, 2021*

- 1. It provides all mines including coal, lignite, and atomic minerals may sell up to 80% of their annual mineral production in the open market.

- 2. The Bill provides that no mine will be reserved for particular end-use.

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

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Development Finance Institution (DFI)*

- 1. It will be set up on a capital base of Rs. 20,000 crores and will have a lending target of Rs. 5 lakh crore in three years.
- 2. Debt financing of DFI will be enabled through the infrastructure investment trust (InvIT) and real estate investment trust (REIT) routes.

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

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Appropriation Bill*

- 1. It is introduced in Lok Sabha only after discussions on Budget proposals and Voting on Demand for Grants.
- 2. Rajya Sabha has no power to recommend any amendments to the bill.
- 3. The bill has a unique feature of automatic repeal clause, whereby the Act gets repealed by itself after it meets its statutory purpose.

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

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





d. 2 and 3 only

**9) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to Digital Green Certificate**

1. It is proposed by NITI Aayog and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to facilitate the safe and free movement of citizens.
2. The certificate can be issued by authorities, including hospitals, testing centres and health authorities.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**10) Which of the following organization has released Global Wage Report?**

- a. World Trade Organization (WTO)
- b. International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- c. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- d. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

## Answers

1. a

- The Indo-US Science and Technology Forum (IUSSTF) has recently launched the US India Artificial Intelligence (USIAI) Initiative.

**US India Artificial Intelligence (USIAI) Initiative**

- The initiative aims to focus on AI cooperation in critical areas that are priorities for both countries.
- USIAI will serve as a platform to discuss opportunities, challenges, and barriers for bilateral AI research and development collaboration, enable AI innovation, help share

ideas for developing an AI workforce, and recommend modes and mechanisms for catalysing partnerships.

2. a

- Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari has recently announced the Vehicle Scrapping Policy in Lok Sabha.

## Background

- India has 51 lakh Light Motor Vehicles which are older than 20 years and 34 lakh Light Motor Vehicles which are older than 15 years.
- Around 17 lakh Medium and Heavy Commercial Vehicles are older than 15 years without valid fitness certificate.
- Older vehicles pollute the environment 10 to 12 times more than fit vehicles and pose a risk to road safety.

## Objectives

- The objectives of the policy are to reduce population of old and defective vehicles, achieve reduction in vehicular air pollutants to fulfil India's climate commitments, improve road and vehicular safety, achieve better fuel efficiency, formalize the currently informal vehicle scrapping industry and boost availability of low-cost raw materials for automotive, steel and electronics industry.

## Criteria

- The criteria for a vehicle to be scrapped is primarily based on the fitness of vehicles through Automated Fitness Centres in case of commercial vehicles and Non-Renewal of Registration in case of private vehicles.
- A Vehicle failing the fitness test or failing to get a renewal of its registration certificate may be declared as End of Life Vehicle.

## Vehicle Scrapping Policy

The Policy proposes the following:

- It is proposed that commercial vehicles be de-registered after 15 years in case of failure to get the fitness certificate. As a disincentive measure, increased fees for fitness certificate and fitness test may be applicable for commercial vehicles 15 year onwards from the date of initial registration.

- It is proposed that Private Vehicles be de-registered after 20 years if found unfit or in case of a failure to renew registration certificate. As a disincentive measure, increased re-registration fees will be applicable for private vehicles 15 year onwards from the date of initial registration.
- It is being proposed that all vehicles of the Central Government, State Government, Municipal Corporation, Panchayats, State Transport Undertakings, Public Sector Undertakings and autonomous bodies with the Union and State Governments may be de-registered and scrapped after 15 years from the date of registration.
- The scheme shall provide strong incentives to owners of old vehicles to scrap old and unfit vehicles through registered scrapping centres, which shall provide the owners with a scrapping certificate.

### Incentives

Some of these incentives include:

1. Scrap Value for the old vehicle given by the scrapping centre, which is approximately 4-6% of ex-showroom price of a new vehicle.
2. The state governments may be advised to offer a road- tax rebate of up to 25% for personal vehicles and up to 15% for commercial vehicles
3. The vehicle manufacturers are also advised for providing a discount of 5% on purchase of new vehicle against the scrapping certificate.
4. In addition, the registration fees may also be waived for purchase of new vehicle against the scrapping certificate.

3. c

- *The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to conduct simultaneous purchase and sale of Government Securities (G-Secs) under Open Market Operations (OMO) for an amount of Rs. 10,000 crore each on March 25.*

### Government Security (G-Sec)

- It is a tradeable instrument issued by the Central Government or the State Governments.
- It acknowledges the Government's debt obligation.

- Such securities are short term (usually called treasury bills, with original maturities of less than one year) or long term (usually called Government bonds or dated securities with original maturity of one year or more).
- In India, the Central Government issues both, treasury bills and bonds or dated securities while the State Governments issue only bonds or dated securities, which are called the State Development Loans (SDLs).
- G-Secs carry practically no risk of default and, hence, are called risk-free gilt-edged instruments.

4. b

- *According to a recent study, a series of smaller storms helps in maintaining the Jupiter's Great Red Spot.*

### Great Red Spot

- It is a persistent high-pressure region in the atmosphere of Jupiter, producing an anti-cyclonic storm that is the largest in the Solar System.
- It is about twice the diameter of Earth and blows at speeds of up to 54 km/hr along its periphery.

5. d

- Aluminium was first discovered to have adjuvant properties in 1926.
- Since then, several vaccines for example for hepatitis B use aluminium as an adjuvant.

6. b

### Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Bill, 2021

- The Bill provides that captive mines (other than atomic minerals) may sell up to 50% of their annual mineral production in the open market after meeting their own needs.
- The central government may increase this threshold through a notification.
- The Bill empowers the central government to specify a time period for completion of the auction process in consultation with the state government.
- If the state government is unable to complete the auction process within this period, the

auctions may be conducted by the central government.

- The Bill says that mines (other than coal, lignite, and atomic minerals), whose lease has expired, may be allocated to a government company in certain cases.
- The state government may grant a lease for such a mine to a government company for a period of up to 10 years or until the selection of a new lessee, whichever is earlier.

7. c

### **Development Finance Institution (DFI)**

- The Development Finance Institution (DFI) are organizations which are either owned by the government or by charitable institutions to finance infrastructure projects that are of national importance but may or may not meet commercial return standards.
- India will set up a new DFI called the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development.
- Categories of DFIs are as follows
  1. National Development Banks such as IDBI, SIDBI, ICICI, IFCI, IRBI, and IDFC.
  2. Sector-specific financial institutions such as TFCI, EXIM Bank, NABARD, HDFC, and NHB.
  3. Investment Institutions such as LIC, GIC and UTI.
  4. State-level institutions such as State Finance Corporations and SIDCs.
- The role of the Development Finance Institution (DFI) is to take cognizance of the gaps in institutions and markets in the country's financial sector and to act as a gap filler.

8. c

### **Appropriation Bill**

- Appropriation Bill gives power to the government to withdraw funds from the Consolidated Fund of India for meeting the expenditure during the financial year.
- The defeat of an Appropriation Bill in a parliamentary vote would lead to the

resignation of a government or a general election.

- While the Finance Bill contains provisions on financing the expenditure of the government, an Appropriation Bill specifies the quantum and purpose for withdrawing money.
- Both appropriation and finance bills are classified as money bills which do not require the explicit consent of the Rajya Sabha.
- The Rajya Sabha only discusses them and returns the bills.

9. a

### **Digital Green Certificate**

- European Commission proposed to create a Digital Green Certificate to facilitate the safe and free movement of citizens within the European Union (EU) amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A Digital Green Certificate is proof that a person has either been vaccinated against COVID-19, has received a negative test result or has recovered from COVID-19.
- The key features of the certificate are that it will be in digital or paper format complete with a QR code and will be free of charge.

10. b

### **Global Wage Report 2020-21**

- It is a flagship report of ILO which examines the evolution of real wages around the world, giving a unique picture of wage trends globally and by region.
- It is central to the analysis of wage trends and labour market developments as well as to the theoretical debate about the role of labour in the economy.
- It is an indispensable publication for economists, trade unionists, employers and the interested public.
- It analyses the latest wage statistics and provides insights on wage policies based on research projects carried out by the ILO.
- It is probably the most comprehensive worldwide database on wages and wage inequality currently available.



- The 2020-21 edition analyses the relationship of minimum wages and inequality, as well as the wage impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.
- The global wage growth fluctuated between 1.6 and 2.2 per cent in the four years preceding the COVID-19 pandemic (2016–19).
- The report highlighted that minimum wages, statutory or negotiated, exist in 90 per cent of the 187 ILO Member States.

**20-03-2021**

1) With respect to *Affordable Approaches to Cancer Initiative*, consider the following statements:

1. It aims at supporting high quality research that accelerate progress against cancer outcomes in the participating countries.
2. It is a joint initiative of India and the United Kingdom (UK).

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Gram Ujala Programme*

1. It is a customized program launched by the Ministry of Power for rural India, based uniquely and innovatively on carbon finance.
2. Under the programme, LED bulbs will be given at an affordable cost to rural consumers against submission of working Incandescent bulbs.
3. The Programme will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such programme in India.

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

- a. 3 only

- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. None of the above

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL)*

1. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL).
2. It is a joint venture of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) under the Ministry of Power.

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

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

4) Consider the following pairs

1. Mausam App - Agromet advisory
2. Meghdoot App - Lightning Warning
3. Damini App - Weather forecast & Warning

Which of the pair(s) given above is/are incorrectly matched?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. None of the above

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Participatory Notes (P - Notes)*

1. It allows foreign investors to buy stocks listed on Indian exchanges without being registered.
2. P-Notes includes investments in equity, derivatives, debt and other hybrid instruments.



3. SEBI has recently banned the new issuances of P-Notes by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs).

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Aluminium Air Batteries*

- 1. It is lower in cost and has more energy-density than Lithium-ion batteries.
- 2. The special feature is that it can be recharged very fast and can retain the power for longer than any other batteries.

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

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Diatom Test*

- 1. Diatoms are photosynthesizing algae which are found almost anywhere moist.
- 2. It is used to confirm the cause of death by drowning.
- 3. The test is considered positive only when the number of diatoms recovered from the body is more than a minimal established limit.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *King Anangpal II*

- 1. He belonged to the Rajput dynasty and ruled parts of present-day Rajasthan, Gujarat in 15th century.
- 2. His grandson was Prithviraj Chauhan, who was defeated by Mughals in the Battle of Tarain.

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

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

9) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Equinox*

- 1. The Plane of the ecliptic, i.e. equator's tilt relative to the plane of its orbit around sun is one of the reason for equinox.
- 2. During both autumn and spring equinox the lengths of the day and night are exactly same.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following state has launched *SAAMAR Campaign* to tackle malnutrition?

- a. Kerala
- b. Bihar
- c. Chhattisgarh
- d. Jharkhand



## Answers

1. d

- The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Cancer Research UK (CRUK) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a Cancer Research Initiative Affordable Approaches to Cancer in 2018.

### Affordable Approaches to Cancer Initiative

- The broad aim of the research initiative is to support high quality research to deliver innovative and translatable outputs that accelerate progress against cancer outcomes in both the countries, and which also have the potential to have major global impact.
- Under the initiative, the core challenges have been identified and seven seed grants have been awarded.
- The institutions involved from the Indian side include - Cachar Cancer Hospital & Research Centre; RTI International; Translational Health Science Technology Institute; Tata Memorial Hospital; All India Institute for Medical Sciences; Cochin Cancer Research Centre; Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute.

2. c

- Ministry of Power has recently launched the Gram Ujala Programme in Arrah, Bihar through a virtual event.

### Gram Ujala Programme

- It is a customized program for rural India, based uniquely and innovatively on carbon finance.
- Under the programme, 7 watt and 12-Watt LED bulbs with 3 years warranty will be given by Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) to rural consumers against submission of working Incandescent bulbs.
- It will be implemented in villages of the 5 districts only and consumers can exchange a maximum of 5 LED bulbs available for only Rs.10 each.
- The programme will have a significant impact on India's climate change action.
- If all 300 million lights in India were replaced, the total energy savings would be 40,743 million kWh/year, avoided peak demand of

22,743MW/year and CO<sub>2</sub> reductions of 37 million tons per year.

- Gram Ujala will not only give a fillip to our fight against climate change by increasing energy efficiency, but also usher in a better standard of life, financial savings, and better safety for the citizens in rural areas.
- Gram Ujala Programme will be financed entirely through carbon credits and will be the first such programme in India.

3. c

### Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL)

- It is a newly established subsidiary of state-owned Energy Efficiency Services Limited, itself a joint venture of public sector companies under the Ministry of Power, Government of India.
- CESL is focused on delivering clean, affordable and reliable energy.
- Convergence focuses on energy solutions that lie at the confluence of renewable energy, electric mobility and climate change.
- It builds upon the decentralized solar development experience in under-served rural communities in India, and over time, using battery energy storage, will deliver renewable energy solutions to power agricultural pumps, street lighting, domestic lighting and cooking appliances in villages.

4. c

1. Mausam App - Weather forecast & Warning
2. Meghdoot App - Agromet advisory
3. Damini App - Lightning Warning

5. a

- Investments through participatory notes (P-notes) in the Indian capital market rose to Rs.91,658 crore at February-end, making it the highest level in 33 months, suggesting growing confidence of overseas investors.

### Participatory Notes (P-Notes)

- P-Notes — also known as Offshore Derivative Instruments (ODI) — became popular between 2005 and 2007.
- They are issued by the registered foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to overseas investors

who wish to be part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly.

- P-Notes are receipts issued by FPIs against the cash they receive for stocks purchased on behalf of clients.
- The P-Notes include investments in equity, derivatives, debt and other hybrid instruments.
- Majority of the investments is in the equity space.

#### Limitations with P-Notes

- India has been trying to clamp down on the use of P-Notes in the derivative segment since 2007, since the ultimate beneficiary of these instruments is difficult to trace.
- P-Notes became infamous for their use by tax evaders and hoarders of black money.
- **SEBI has not banned new issuances of these instruments** by FPIs, fearing a massive market fall.
- SEBI has asked FPIs to directly register with it. But P-Notes continue to be in vogue from 'benami' investors who are using FPI as a vehicle in Mauritius, Singapore, Luxembourg and other tax havens.
- FPI registrations in India have crossed the 10,000 mark. P-Note investments are just around 2 per cent of the total assets under management of FPIs, which stood at more than Rs.42 lakh crore (over \$55 billion).

6. b

#### Aluminium Air Batteries

- Aluminium-air batteries utilise oxygen in the air which reacts with an aluminium hydroxide solution to oxidise the aluminium and produce electricity.
- Aluminium-air batteries are primary cells, i.e., non-rechargeable.
- Once the aluminium anode is consumed by its reaction with atmospheric oxygen at a cathode immersed in a water-based electrolyte to form hydrated aluminium oxide, the battery will no longer produce electricity.

- Therefore, large scale use of aluminium-air battery-based vehicles would require the wide availability of battery swapping stations.
- Aluminium-air battery-based electric vehicles expected to offer much greater range of 400 km or more per battery compared to lithium-ion batteries.
- Aluminium-air based batteries are also expected to be significantly cheaper than lithium-ion batteries, thereby reducing the cost of electric vehicle usage and boosting electric vehicle adoption in the country.

7. d

#### Diatom Test

- It is forensic diagnosis process that is used to confirm the cause of death by drowning.
- A body recovered from a water body does not necessarily imply that the death was due to drowning.
- If the person is alive when he enters the water, the diatoms will enter the lungs when the person inhales water while drowning.
- These diatoms then get carried to various parts of the body, including the brain, kidneys, lungs and bone marrow by blood circulation.
- If a person is dead when is thrown in the water, then there is no circulation and there is no transport of diatom cells to various organs.
- The process is reliable unless and until the deceased person has been drinking water from the same source of water before his death.
- Also, the test will be negative if the person died instantly after falling into the water.

8. d

#### King Anangpal

- He belonged to the Tomar dynasty that ruled parts of present-day Delhi and Haryana between the 8th and 12th centuries.
- He was instrumental in populating Indraprastha and giving it its present name, Delhi.
- Anangpal of the Tomar Rajputs founded Delhi between 1053 and 1109 AD.

- Anangpal Tomar was succeeded by his grandson Prithviraj Chauhan Tomar.
- The Delhi Sultanate was established in 1192 after Prithviraj Chauhan's defeat in the Battle of Tarain (present-day Haryana) by the Ghurid forces.
- In middle of 11th century, he built a fort called Lal Kot (literally Red Fort), in which the Qutb Minar stands today, and founded a town.

9. b

- When the centre of the Sun's disc perfectly crosses the equator, astronomers define this as the equinox.
  - This happens twice a year, once in late March and once in late September.
  - During equinox the lengths of the day and night aren't quite the same, and there are two reasons for this
1. **Sun' size has upper and lower edges** it affects the measure sunrise and sunset and this means that the equinox has a slightly longer day than night.
  2. **Earth's atmosphere refracts (bends) sunlight**, this bending means that upper edge of the Sun is spotted several minutes before it touches the eastern horizon, and it also means that upper edge of the Sun is spotted several minutes after the Sun has sunk under the western horizon, This adds even more time onto daylight during the equinox.
- **Equilux** - There are days around the time of the equinox, where day and night are equal length.
  - These are called equilux, and when they happens depends on latitude.

10. d

#### SAAMAR Campaign

- Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction (SAAMAR) campaign aims to tackle malnutrition in Jharkhand.
- It will identify anemic women and malnourished children and converge various departments to effectively deal with the problem in a state where malnutrition has been a major problem.

- SAAMAR has been launched with a 1000 days target, under which annual surveys will be conducted to track the progress.
- The campaign also tries to target Primarily Vulnerable Tribal Groups.
- To tackle severe acute malnutrition children, every Anganwadi Centres will be engaged to identify these children and subsequently will be treated at the Malnutrition Treatment Centres.
- In the same process the anemic women will also be listed and will be referred to health centers in serious cases.
- It will start with every panchayat which will be treated as a unit and there will be 8-10 parameters to tackle the nutritional issue.

**22-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Near-Earth Objects (NEOs)**

1. They are asteroids and comets which passes close to the Earth's orbit with perihelion distance less than 3 astronomical unit.
2. Comets are formed in the cold outer planetary system whereas rocky asteroids are formed in the warmer inner solar system between Mars and Jupiter.

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

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

**2) Which of the following statements regarding Thousand Pillar temple of Warangal is incorrect?**

- a. The temple was constructed between 1175 and 1324 AD following the orders of Kakatiya king Rudra Deva
- b. The temple was dedicated to Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Lord Surya



c. It is considered a masterpiece and its foundation was constructed using the sandbox technique

d. The temple was desecrated by the Pallava King Mahendra Varman in the 14th century after it was brought under its direct control

**3) Consider the following statements:**

1. Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign was launched on the occasion of World Water Day to take water conservation at grass-root level through people's participation.
2. Ken Betwa Link Project involves transfer of water from the Ken to the Betwa River through the construction of Daudhan Dam.

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

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

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to the Ramappa temple**

1. The temple which dates back to 1213 AD, was built by the patronage of the Kakatiya ruler Kakati Ganapathi Deva.
2. The temple got its name Ramappa because of its chief deity Ramalingeswara, a form of Lord Shiva.

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

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

**5) Mount Fagradalsfjall, sometimes seen in the news recently, is located in?**

- a. Italy

b. Tunisia

c. Iceland

d. Indonesia

**6) Consider the following statements with respect to Electoral Bond**

1. The minimum face value of this bond is Rs.1000 and its maximum limit is Rs.1 crore.
2. These bonds are only redeemable in the designated account of a registered political party.

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

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

**7) Consider the following statements with respect to Open Market Operations**

1. It is a quantitative tool under which the central bank usually purchases longer-term securities from the open market.
2. RBI uses this to smoothen the liquidity conditions through the year and minimise its impact on the interest rate and inflation rate levels.

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

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

**8) Consider the following statements with respect to Pusa Farm Sun Fridge (Pusa-FSF)**

1. It is a 100% solar-powered battery-less cold store that can preserve around 2 tonnes of freshly-harvested produce at 3-12°C.

2. It has rooftop solar panels that generate 5 kilowatt (KW) power, which helps in running air conditioning.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *World Happiness Report 2021*

- It is released by Sustainable Development Solutions Network for the United Nations.
- It is calculated based on the variables such as Poverty Rate, Social Security, Education Quality and Employability.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) Which of the following pair are matched correctly with respect to *Craft products of Assam*?

Name	Product
1. Jaapi	- Conical Bamboo Hat
2. Gamosa	- Metal Crafts
3. Xorai	- Traditional Towel

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

## Answers

1. c

- The largest asteroid predicted to pass by our planet in 2021 will be at its closest on March 21, providing astronomers a rare opportunity to get a good look at a rocky relic that formed at the dawn of our solar system.
- Called **2001 FO32**, the near-Earth asteroid will make its closest approach at a distance of about 1.25 million miles (2 million kilometers) – or 5 1/4 times the distance from Earth to the Moon.
- There is no threat of a collision with our planet now or for centuries to come.

## Near-Earth Objects (NEOs)

- Near-Earth Objects (NEOs) are comets and asteroids that have been nudged by the gravitational attraction of nearby planets into orbits that allow them to enter the Earth's neighborhood.
- Composed mostly of water ice with embedded dust particles, comets originally formed in the cold outer planetary system while most of the rocky asteroids formed in the warmer inner solar system between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.
- In terms of orbital elements, NEOs are asteroids and comets with perihelion distance (q) less than 1.3 astronomical unit (au).

2. d

- The restoration works of the ancient Thousand Pillar and Ramappa temples of Warangal have been going on for long.

## Thousand Pillar Temple

- The temple was built during the Kakatiya rule between 1175 and 1324 AD following the orders of Kakatiya king Rudra Deva.
- The temple was dedicated to Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Lord Surya.
- It is considered a masterpiece and its foundation was constructed using the sandbox technique.
- It was desecrated by the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century after it was brought under its direct control.



- The temple was profaned by the rulers of the Tughlaq Dynasty during their invasion of the Deccan region and was destroyed partially.
- It was restored by ASI in 2004.

3. c

- *Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will launch the 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain' campaign on World Water Day i.e. on 22nd March 2021.*

#### **Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain**

- The Campaign will be undertaken across the country, in both rural and urban areas, with the theme "catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls".
- It will be implemented from 22nd March 2021 to 30th November, 2021 - the pre-monsoon and monsoon period in the country.
- It will be launched as a Jan Andolan to take water conservation at grass-root level through people's participation.
- It is intended to nudge all stakeholders to create rainwater harvesting structures suitable to the climatic conditions and subsoil strata, to ensure proper storage of rainwater.

#### **Ken Betwa Link Project**

- It is the first project of the National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers.
- The agreement heralds the beginning of inter-state cooperation to implement the vision of Former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee to carry water from areas that have surplus water to drought prone and water deficit areas, through the interlinking of rivers.
- This project involves transfer of water from the Ken to the Betwa River through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers, the Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project.
- It will provide annual irrigation of 10.62 lakh ha, drinking water supply to about 62 lakh people and also generate 103 MW of hydropower.

4. a

- *The restoration works of the ancient Thousand Pillar and Ramappa temples of Warangal have been going on for long.*

#### **Ramappa temple of Warangal**

- The Ramalingeswara Temple which is popularly known as the Ramappa temple was built by Kakatiyas.
- The medieval Deccan Ramappa Temple which dates back to 1213 AD, was built by the patronage of the Kakatiya ruler Kakati Ganapathi Deva under the authority of his Chief Commander Rudra Samani at the place known as Ranakude in the Atukuru province.
- The temple got its name Ramappa because of its chief sculptor Ramappa.
- It's probably the only temple in the country to be known by the name of its sculptor.
- Another striking feature of this temple is that it is built with bricks that are so light that they can easily float on water.
- The temple which is situated in a valley took nearly 40 years to be completed.
- A volcanic eruption has recently begun in Fagradalsfjall on the Reykjanes peninsula, Iceland.
- It is a long-dormant volcano in the southwest of Iceland.
- It erupted after months of earthquakes, leading to red skies near the country's capital city.

5. c

6. a

#### **Electoral Bond**

- Electoral Bond is a financial instrument for making donations to political parties.
- The significant feature of these bond is Donor's name is not mentioned on the bond.
- The bonds are issued in multiples of Rs. 1,000, Rs. 10,000, Rs. 1 lakh, Rs. 10 lakh and Rs. 1 crore without any maximum limit.
- State Bank of India is authorised to issue and encash these bonds, which are valid for fifteen days from the date of issuance.

- The bonds are available for purchase by any person who is a citizen of India or incorporated or established in India for a period of ten days each in the months of January, April, July and October as may be specified by the Central Government.

7. b

### **Quantitative Tools**

- Quantitative tools control the extent of money supply by changing the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR), or bank rate or open market operations.
- Qualitative tools include persuasion by the Central bank in order to make commercial banks discourage or encourage lending which is done through moral suasion, margin requirement, etc.

### **Open Market Operations**

- Open Market Operations refers to buying and selling of bonds issued by the Government in the open market.
- In usual open market operations, the central bank will create money, use this money to buy short term Treasury securities from banks, individuals, institutions in the open market.
- This creates more demand for these securities. Hence their price goes up and yield goes down.
- This newly generated money goes into the banking system, with more money, banks have more cash and have more reserves.

### **Quantitative Easing**

- QE usually will be performed in a situation which is not 'typical' money supply shortage or economic activity slowdown.
- This will either happen in a crisis where aggressive boost is required or when central bank has run out of its primary weapons.
- The central bank in these situations might buy securities of different kinds which can be long term treasuries, private securities, securities in a particular area of market which, the central bank thinks, needs to be revived.
- This certainly will not just increase money into the system, but further lower the yield and ease out specific markets such as mortgage-based securities by reducing the risk spread.

8. c

### **Pusa Farm Sun Fridge (Pusa-FSF)**

- Scientists from the ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) have developed an on-farm green energy refrigeration system (Pusa-FSF).
- It can preserve around 2 tonnes of freshly-harvested produce at 3-4°C during the day and 8-12°C at nighttime.
- The solar panels power a 105-watt submersible pump circulating about 1,000 litres of water from a tank through overhead PVC pipes.
- At night, there is only passive evaporative cooling, with the water chilled during the day acting as a natural heat sink.
- All farmers with solar pumps are a potential market for the Pusa-FSF.

9. a

### **World Happiness Report 2021**

- It is released on the International Day of Happiness (20th March), which highlights the importance of happiness in the diurnal lives of people.
- The World Happiness Report ranks 149 countries by how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be.
- The rankings are based on polling (Gallup World Poll) which looks at six variables:
  1. Gross Domestic Product Per Capita (Purchasing Power Parity).
  2. Social Support.
  3. Healthy life expectancy at birth.
  4. Freedom to make life choices.
  5. Generosity.
  6. Perceptions of corruption.
- Respondents are asked to rate their own current lives on a 0-10 scale.
- Finland has been ranked as the happiest country in the world for the fourth consecutive year.
- Followed by Iceland, Denmark, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Norway.

- India has been ranked 139, out of 149 countries evaluated.

### ***Sustainable Development Network Solution***

- The SDSN, launched in 2012, mobilizes global scientific and technological expertise to promote practical problem solving for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement.
- It was established under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General.
- The SDSN and the Bertelsmann Stiftung have been publishing the annual SDG Index & Dashboards Global Report since 2016.

10. a

### ***Craft products of Assam***

- Jaapi** is a conical hat made of bamboo and covered with dried tokou (a palm tree found in rainforests of Upper Assam) leaves.
- It is made by artisans based in a cluster of villages in Nalbari district.
- Gamosa** literally translates to a cloth to wipe one's body, is omnipresent in Assam, with wide-ranging uses.
- It can be used at home as a towel (uka gamosa) or in public functions (phulam/floral gamosa) to felicitate dignitaries or celebrities.
- Xorai** is made of bell-metal, essentially a tray with a stand at the bottom, with or without a cover.
- It is primarily used to felicitate important people and guests.

**23-03-2021**

1) Consider the following statements with respect to ***National Perspective Plan (NPP) for water resources development***

- It was prepared in 1980 by the then Ministry of Irrigation.
- It aims for water resources development through inter basin transfer of water from water surplus basins to water-deficit basins.

- The plan comprises of two components namely **Himalayan Rivers Development and Peninsular Rivers Development**.

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to ***Gandhi Peace Prize***

- The award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.
- The Jury for the Prize is chaired by the Indian Prime Minister and comprises Chief Justice of India and Leader of the single largest Opposition Party in Lok Sabha as ex-officio members.
- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was the recipient of the award for the year 2020.

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

- 2 only
- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- None of the above

3) Consider the following statements with respect to ***Sperm Whales***

- They are the largest of the toothed whales and has been listed as Vulnerable under the IUCN Red List.
- They are found in all deep oceans, from the equator to the edge of Arctic and Antarctic.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only



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

4) With respect to *Helium*, consider the following statements:

1. It is colourless, odourless, tasteless, inert and a noble gas.
2. It was used mainly in Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans, in rockets and also in nuclear reactors.
3. India's Rajmahal volcanic basin is the store house of helium.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a. 2 only  
b. 1 and 2 only  
c. 2 and 3 only  
d. 1, 2 and 3

5) *World Water Development Report, 2021* was published by?

- a. UNESCO  
b. UN Environment Programme  
c. UN Development Programme  
d. Food and Agricultural Organization

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *International Pulsar Timing Array (IPTA)*

1. It is a league of international radio telescopes tracking very low-frequency gravitational waves emerging from two supermassive black holes.
2. China has become the first Asian country to be a full member of IPTA consortium.

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

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

- d. Neither 1 nor 2

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Right to Counsel in Custody*

1. It is right of an accused to be informed of the reasons for an arrest, the charges against him and the right to be provided legal assistance.
2. In police custody, officials need permission of the court for questioning while in judicial custody, the investigating authority can interrogate a person.

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

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Candida Auris*

1. It is a multidrug resistant fungus that presents a serious global threat to human health.
2. For the first time it is identified in the environment, off the coast of South Andaman in A&N islands.

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

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)*

1. It is a secure data transmission in which, if an illegitimate entity tries to read the transmission, it will disturb the qubits which are encoded on photons.

2. India is the first Asian nation to establish QKD based satellite communication.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following pair are matched correctly with respect to *Imported weapons of India*?

Weapon name Origin		Country of
1. SPICE 2000 Bomb	-	South Korea
2. Scanter 6000 Radar	-	Denmark
3. Embraer Jets	-	Brazil
4. Milan -2T	-	Russia

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 3 and 4 only
- d. All of the above

## Answers

1. d

### National Perspective Plan (NPP)

- It was formulated in 1980 by the then Ministry of Irrigation (now Ministry of Jal Shakti).
- It envisages inter-basin transfer of water from surplus basins to deficit ones with a view to minimize the regional imbalances and optimally utilize the available water resources.
- National Perspective Plan comprises of two components viz. Himalayan Rivers Development and Peninsular Rivers Development.

- Under the NPP, the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) has identified 30 links (16 under Peninsular Component and 14 under Himalayan Component) for preparation of Feasibility Reports (FRs).
- The Government has also taken up the inter-linking of rivers (ILR) program in a consultative manner for relief to the people suffering from floods and droughts.

2. b

- The Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 is being conferred on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

### Gandhi Peace Prize

- It is an annual award instituted by Government of India since 1995, the 125th Birth Anniversary commemoration year of Mahatma Gandhi.
- The award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.
- The Jury for Gandhi Peace Prize is chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sh Narendra Modi, and comprises of two ex-officio members, namely the Chief Justice of India and Leader of the single largest Opposition Party in Lok Sabha.
- Two eminent members are also part of the Jury, namely Shri Om Birla, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and Shri Bindeshwar Pathak, Founder of Sulabh International Social Service Organization.
- The award carries an amount of Rs. 1 crore, a citation, a plaque and an exquisite traditional handicraft/ handloom item.

3. c

### Sperm Whales

- They are the largest of the toothed whales and have one of the widest global distributions of any marine mammal species.
- They are found in all deep oceans, from the equator to the edge of the pack ice in the Arctic and Antarctic.
- They are named after the waxy substance, spermaceti, found in their heads. Spermaceti was used in oil lamps, lubricants, and candles.



- They have the largest brain of any creature known to have lived on Earth.
- It has been listed as Vulnerable under the IUCN Red List.

4. d

- *Every year, India imports helium worth Rs.55,000 crores from the U.S. to meet its needs.*
- *The United States of America (USA) is planning to switch off export of helium from 2021.*
- Qatar is a possible exporter but acute political and diplomatic wrangles have made Qatar unreliable.

### Helium

- Helium is colourless, odourless, tasteless, inert and a noble gas.
- Yet, it finds many applications, mainly in magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans, in rockets and in nuclear reactors.
- The U.S. became the most important exporter of helium across the world and also the biggest store house of helium.
- India imports helium for its needs, and with the U.S. appearing set to cut off exports of helium since 2021, Indian industry stands to lose out heavily.
- India's Rajmahal volcanic basin is the store house of helium trapped for billions years, since the very birth of our Earth from the Sun.
- At present, we are mapping the Rajmahal basin extensively for future exploration and harnessing of helium.

5. a

- United Nations World Water Development Report was recently published by UNESCO on behalf of UN Water on March 22, 2021 observed as World Water Day.
- According to the report, built water reservoir capacity per person is decreasing globally as reservoir expansion has not been able to keep pace with population growth.

6. a

### International Pulsar Timing Array (IPTA)

- IPTA's goal is to detect and characterize the low-frequency gravitational wave universe through timing a global array of approximately 100 millisecond pulsars using the largest radio telescopes in the world.
- IPTA comprises European Pulsar Timing Array (EPTA), North American Nano hertz Observatory for Gravitational Waves (NANOGrav) and Parkes Pulsar Timing Array (PPTA) from Australia.
- Recently, India has become the first Asian country to be a full member of IPTA consortium.
- By this The Indian Pulsar Timing Array (InPTA) and the Giant Metre wave Radio Telescope (uGMRT) are likely to play significant roles in the detection of Nano-hertz GWs and gravitational astronomy with gravitational ways in the future.

7. b

### Right to Counsel in Custody

- In India, the safeguards available to a person in such circumstances are enshrined in the Constitution.
- Article 20 (3) states that no person accused of any offence shall be compelled to be a witness against himself.
- Article 22 states that a person cannot be denied the right to consult and to be defended by a legal practitioner of his choice.
- It includes provisions that grant an accused the "right to consult" a lawyer.
- Unlike in some countries, the lawyers in India are not allowed to be with an accused throughout their investigation.

### Police v/s judicial custody

- **Police custody** means that the person is confined at a lock up or remains in the custody of the officer.
- The magistrate may remand an accused person to custody of police for a period not more than 15 days as a whole
- After lapse of 15 days or the police custody period granted by the magistrate, the person may be further remanded to judicial custody.

- In police custody, the person has the right to legal counsel, right to be informed of the grounds which the police have to ensure.
- **Judicial custody** means that the person is detained under the purview of the judicial magistrate is lodged in central or state prison.
- In judicial custody, the person can apply for a bail as per the CrPC chapter 33 pertaining to the bails and bonds.
- The judicial custody can extend up to 60 or 90 days as a whole, depending upon the maximum punishment prescribed for the offence.
- In the judicial custody in jails, while the person under responsibility of the magistrate, the Prison Manual comes into picture for routine conduct of the person.
- Thus in police custody, the investigating authority can interrogate a person while in judicial custody, officials need permission of the court for questioning.

8. c

#### **Candida Auris**

- Candida Auris belongs to the Superbug Candida Auris of the Metschnikowiaceae family of the order Saccharomycetales.
- It was first identified in 2009 in a patient in Japan.
- The C.auris' thermal and salinity tolerance is because of its adaptation to global warming, which makes the human body more susceptible as a host.
- For the first time the fungus has been found in tropical marshes and marine environments, outside hospital environments.
- The fungus is deadly when it enters the bloodstream, or inhabits the body of a patient suffering from a serious disease such as cancer.

9. a

#### **Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)**

- Quantum key distribution (QKD) is a secure communication method which implements a cryptographic protocol involving components of quantum mechanics.

- It enables two parties to produce a shared random secret key known only to them, which can then be used to encrypt and decrypt messages.
- Quantum computing uses qubits as basic resources, similar to how bits are used as basic resources in classical computing.
- The QKD is designed in a way that if an illegitimate entity tries to read the transmission, it will disturb the qubits which are encoded on photons.
- This will generate transmission errors, leading to legitimate end-users being immediately informed.
- Recently Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) demonstrated quantum key sharing in free space over a distance of 300 metres for the first time in the country.
- The demonstration included a live video-conferencing with quantum key encrypted signals between two line-of-sight buildings at Space Application Centre in Ahmedabad.
- This experiment can form the basis for a future quantum key encrypted data transmission between satellites and ground stations.
- India is not the first Asia nation to establish QKD based space transmission, in 2020 Chinese satellite Micius became world's first quantum communications satellite.

10. b

#### **India's Imported Weapons**

- According to data from SIPRI for the period 2015-19, India acquired military hardware from other countries, such as
1. Scanter-6000 radars from Denmark,
  2. Embraer ERJ-145 jets from Brazil,
  3. ACTAS sonar systems from Germany,
  4. Super Rapid 76mm naval guns from Italy
  5. K-9 Thunder 155mm artillery guns from South Korea.
  6. Milan-2T Warhead Anti-Tank Guided Missile of MBDA Missile Systems, France.
  7. SPICE 2000 Bombs are manufactured by the Israeli defence technology company Rafael.



**24-03-2021**

**1) PRANIT is an e-Tendering Portal launched recently by?**

- a. Ministry of Coal
- b. Ministry of Mines
- c. Ministry of Power
- d. Ministry of Steel

**2) With respect to Resolution on Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka, consider the following statements:**

- 1. The resolution was recently adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).
- 2. India has recently voted in favour of this resolution which is against Sri Lanka for war crimes against Tamils.

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

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

**3) Consider the following statements:**

- 1. The senior most judge of the Supreme Court should alone be appointed as the Chief Justice of India (CJI) was decided in the Third Judges Case (1998).
- 2. The Constitution has not prescribed a minimum age for appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court.

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

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

**4) Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary is located in which of the following states?**

- a. Kerala
- b. Gujarat
- c. Karnataka
- d. Maharashtra

**5) Turahalli Forest, often seen in the news recently, is an urban forest located in?**

- a. Goa
- b. Telangana
- c. Maharashtra
- d. None of the above

**6) Consider the following statements with respect to Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC)**

- 1. It will be headed by former RBI Deputy Governor Shyamala Gopinath, for evaluating applications for universal banks and Small Finance Banks (SFBs).
- 2. The financial and secretarial support to the committee would be provided directly by department of economic affairs under ministry of finance.

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

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

**7) Consider the following statements with respect to Climate Financing**

- 1. Green Climate Fund (GCF) established under the Cancun Agreement is a milestone of Climate financing.
- 2. In India Climate Change Finance Unit (CCFU) in the Ministry of Finance, is the nodal agency for all climate change financing matters.

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

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Exercise Pabbi Anti-Terror 2021*

1. It is a joint anti-terror exercise which will include India, Pakistan, China and other members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
2. It would be the first time that Pakistan forces will travel to China for any military exercise.

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

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Parosmia*

1. It is a condition on loss of smell and taste, a well-known symptom of COVID-19.
2. Some common triggers of the condition includes roasted, toasted or grilled foods, coffee, chocolate and etc.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) *Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure* was launched during which of the following event?

- a. COP 21 Paris
- b. COP 25 Madrid
- c. India-Africa Summit 2015
- d. UN Climate Action Summit

## Answers

1. c

- Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a central PSU under Ministry of Power has recently established an e-Tendering Portal-PRANIT.
- The portal will lead to less paperwork and ease of operation, making the tendering process more transparent.
- It has been certified by Standardisation, Testing and Quality Certification Directorate (STQC), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.
- With this, POWERGRID is now the only organization in India to have an eProcurement solution on SAP Supplier Relationship Management (SRM), complying with all applicable requirements relating to security and transparency as stipulated by STQC.

2. a

- India along with 13 other countries abstained from voting on a resolution against Sri Lanka for war crimes against Tamils at United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva.
- The resolution titled 'Promotion of Reconciliation Accountability and Human Rights in Sri Lanka' was adopted by the UNHRC after 22 members out of 47 voted in favour of it.
- Sri Lanka was earlier defeated at three consecutive resolutions at the UN rights body.

3. b

- Chief Justice of India Justice S A Bobde has recommended Union Government to appoint the senior most Supreme Court Judge Justice N V Ramanna as the next Chief Justice of India.

- Traditionally, the sitting Chief Justice writes a recommendation for his likely successor.

### Qualifications of Judges

- A person to be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court should have the following qualifications:
  - He should be a citizen of India.
  - (a) He should have been a judge of a High Court (or high courts in succession) for five years; or (b) He should have been an advocate of a High Court (or High Courts in succession) for ten years; or (c) He should be a distinguished jurist in the opinion of the President.
- From the above, it is clear that the Constitution has not prescribed a minimum age for appointment as a judge of the Supreme Court.

### Appointment of CJI

- From 1950 to 1973, the practice has been to appoint the seniormost judge of the Supreme Court as the chief justice of India.
- This established convention was violated in 1973 and 1977.
- This discretion of the government was curtailed by the Supreme Court in the Second Judges Case (1993), in which the Supreme Court ruled that the seniormost judge of the Supreme Court should alone be appointed to the office of the chief justice of India.

4. a

- The annual faunal survey of the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary has resulted in sightings of five new birds and three new butterflies for the first time in the biodiversity hotspot.
- The four-day endeavour undertaken by the Forest Department in association with the Travancore Natural History Society witnessed 187 butterfly, 167 bird, 49 odonate, and 43 spider species in the 171 sq. km. sanctuary.

### Bird Species

- Jerdon's bush lark (*Mirafra affinis*)
- White browed fantailed flycatcher (*Rhipidura aureola*)
- Wire tailed swallow (*Hirundo smithii*)

- Greater spotted eagle (*Clanga clanga*)
- Grey-breasted prinia (*Prinia hodgsonii*)
- Chestnut-winged cuckoo (*Clamator coromandus*)
- Banded bay cuckoo (*Cacomantis sonneratii*)
- Grey bellied cuckoo (*Cacomantis passerius*)

### Butterfly Species

- Small cupid (*Chilades parrhasius*)
  - Hampson's hedgeblue (*Acytolepis lilacea*)
  - Broad tailed royal (*Creon cleobis*)
5. d
- The Karnataka State government has recently announced, under Bengaluru Mission 2022, plans to establish two mega tree parks in the suburbs and has identified Turahalli forest to be made a part of the tree park.
  - The residents protest against the plan and demanded that the forest be kept in its pristine, natural form.

### Turahalli Forest

- The forest was created due to a people's movement.
- Decades ago, it was a mere scrubland with a few rocky outcrops facing the harsh sun in summers and rains thereafter.
- It was the residents of the area who planted saplings, took meticulous care of them and turned the area into a green patch.
- It was at their behest that the Forest Department surveyed the area later and designated it as an urban forest and put up a board declaring it a 'mini-forest'.

6. a

### Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC)

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC), it will have a tenure of three years.
- The secretarial support to the committee would be provided by RBI's Department of Regulation.



- The Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) will be comprising eminent persons with experience in banking, financial sector and other relevant areas.
- The applications for universal banks and SFBs will first be evaluated by the RBI to ensure prima facie eligibility of the applicants, after which the SEAC will evaluate the applications.

#### **Small Finance Banks (SFBs)**

- Small Finance Banks are the financial institutions which provide financial services to the unserved and unbanked region of the country.
- They are registered as a public limited company under the Companies Act, 2013.

7. c

#### **Climate Financing**

- It is in accordance with the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities”.
- The UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement call for financial assistance from countries with more financial resources to those that are less endowed and more vulnerable.
- Through the Cancun Agreements in 2010 developed countries committed to a goal of mobilizing jointly USD 100 billion per year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries.
- Under the Paris Agreement in 2015, developed countries confirmed this goal and agreed that prior to 2025, a new collective quantified goal from a floor of USD 100 billion per year shall be set.
- The largest source of climate financing in India is public funding, which is routed through budgetary allocation and several funds and schemes related to climate change established by the Government of India such as National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF) and National Adaptation Fund (NAF).
- The Government of India also provides funding through eight missions established under the National Action Plan for Climate Change.

8. a

#### **Exercise Pabbi Anti-Terror 2021**

- The exercise was announced recently during the 36th meeting of the Council of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.
- It aims to improve cooperation between the competent authorities of the SCO member states in identifying and suppressing channels that finance terrorist activities.
- It would be the first time that Indian forces will travel to Pakistan for any military exercise.

#### **RATS**

- Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), it is a permanent organ of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), headquartered in Tashkent.
- It serves to promote cooperation of member states against terrorism, separatism and extremism.

9. b

#### **Parosmia**

- Anosmia is loss of smell and taste and it is a well-known symptom of COVID-19.
- While parosmia is characterised by a change in perception of odours.
- A person with parosmia is able to detect certain odours, but they might experience the smell of certain things as different and often unpleasant.
- For instance, to someone with parosmia, coffee may smell like burnt toast.
- These unpleasant smells are often described by people as being similar to that of chemicals, burning, faeces, rotting flesh and mould.
- This abnormality is typically experienced by those people who are recovering their sense of smell following loss from a virus or an injury.
- It is likely that parosmia manifests itself due to the damage caused to the olfactory neurons when “the delicate and complex structure in the nose is attacked by a virus.”

10. d

#### **Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure**



- It is India by launched at the UN Climate Action Summit 2019, headquartered in New Delhi.
- It aims to promote the resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks in support of sustainable development.
- It has 22 member countries and 7 organisations.
- International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) is the annual international conference of the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) in partnership with member countries, organizations and institutions to strengthen the global discourse on disaster and climate resilient infrastructure.
- The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) is a multi-stakeholder global partnership of national governments, UN agencies and programmes, multilateral development banks and financing mechanisms, the private sector, and knowledge institutions.
- International Solar Alliance (ISA) was conceptualised during India-Africa Summit 2015.

**25-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Suez Canal**

1. It is an artificial waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea.
2. The canal was jointly controlled by the British and the French Government.

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

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to Zabarwan Hills**

1. It is a sub-mountain range between Pir Panjal and Great Himalayan Range.
2. Asia's largest Tulip Garden is located at the foothills of Zaberwan range.

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

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

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021**

1. The Bill seeks to amend the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
2. The bill increases the functions of District Magistrate as supervising authority of the District Child Protection Unit.
3. A person will not eligible to be a member of the Child Welfare Committees (CWC), if he/she is part of the management of a child care institution in a district.

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

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

**4) Who among the following are eligible for postal ballot under the Conduct of Elections (Amendment) Rules 2020?**

1. Overseas electors
2. Senior citizens above 80 years of age
3. COVID 19 suspect or affected persons

**4. Persons with disability flagged in the electoral roll**

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 and 3 only
- b. 3 and 4 only
- c. 2, 3 and 4 only
- d. All of the above

**5) Tsugaru Strait is a strait connecting which of the following?**

- a. East China Sea and Yellow Sea
- b. Sea of Japan and Pacific Ocean
- c. Sea of Okhotsk and Bering Sea
- d. South China Sea and Philippine Sea

**6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Permanent Indus Commission (PIC)***

- 1. It is bilateral commission between India and Pakistan, created to implement and manage goals of the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960.
- 2. The commission shall meet every 5 years in any third country other than India and Pakistan.

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

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

**7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Shigmo Festival***

- 1. It is the celebration of a rich, golden harvest of paddy by the tribal communities of Goa.
- 2. It last over a fortnight in the months of Phalgun-Chaitra months of the Hindu calendar

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

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

**8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) Index***

- 1. It measures government policies and actions in three areas such as Public services, Taxation and Worker rights.
- 2. It is released annually by United Nations Development Programme.

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

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

**9) Which of the following statement(s) is/are incorrect with respect to *VISHWAS Project***

- 1. It aims to establish synchronised system of CCTV surveillance for crime detection with forensic analysis.
- 2. It is implemented by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) and Ministry of Home Affairs.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

**10) *Satkosia Tiger Reserve* is located in which of the following states?**

- a. Madhya Pradesh

- b. Chhattisgarh
- c. Maharashtra
- d. Odisha

## Answers

1. a

- *The Suez Canal has been blocked after a large cargo ship ran aground while passing through it, bringing traffic on the busy trade route to a halt.*

### Suez Canal

- It is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.
- The canal separates the African continent from Asia, and it provides the shortest maritime route between Europe and the lands lying around the Indian and western Pacific oceans.
- It is one of the world's most heavily used shipping lanes.

2. c

- Asia's largest Tulip Garden was recently opened in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The tulip garden is located at the foothills of Zabarwan range with an overview of Dal Lake.

### Zabarwan Range

- It is a sub-mountain range between Pir Panjal and Great Himalayan Range in the central part of the Kashmir Valley in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in India.

3. d

### Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021

- The Bill amends the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
- The Act prescribes the procedure for the adoption of children by prospective adoptive parents from India and abroad.
- On the acceptance of the child by prospective adoptive parents, a specialised adoption

agency applies to a civil court to obtain the adoption order.

- The adoption order issued by the court establishes that the child belongs to the adoptive parents.

### Changes in the bill

- The Bill provides that instead of the court, the District Magistrate (including Additional District Magistrate) will issue such adoption orders.

### Additional functions of the District Magistrate includes:

1. supervising the District Child Protection Unit, and
2. conducting a quarterly review of the functioning of the Child Welfare Committee.
- The Bill specifies certain additional criteria for the appointment of Child Welfare Committee (CWC) members.

It provides that a person will not eligible to be a member of the CWC if he/she

1. has any record of violation of human rights or child rights
2. has been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude, and such conviction has not been reversed
3. has been removed or dismissed from service of the central government, or any state government, or an undertaking owned by the government
4. is part of the management of a child care institution in a district.

4. c

- Government of India has recently said it will not be possible to extend postal ballot facility to overseas electors in the upcoming assembly elections.
- The matter is still under discussions with the External Affairs Ministry to iron out the logistical challenges involved in the implementation of the proposal.
- Notification for Conduct of Elections (Amendment) Rules 2020 extends the Postal Ballot Facility for Covid+ve patients under home/institutional quarantined.



5. b

- North Korea has recently fired two ballistic missiles into the Sea of Japan.
- Japan, however said, no debris has fallen within its territorial waters.
- The test comes after few days after North Korea reportedly fired two non-ballistic missiles into the Yellow Sea.
- Meanwhile UN Security Council resolutions have already banned North Korea from testing ballistic missiles which are considered threatening weapons.
- **Tsugaru Strait** connects the Sea of Japan with North Pacific Ocean.

6. a

#### **Permanent Indus Commission (PIC)**

- The Commission, according to the treaty, shall meet regularly at least once a year, alternately in India and Pakistan.
- The functions of the Commission include:
  1. To study and report to the two Governments on any problem relating to the development on the waters of the rivers.
  2. To undertake, once in every five years, a general tour of inspection of the Rivers for ascertaining the facts.
  3. To take necessary steps for the implementation of the provisions of the treaty.
- The 115th meeting of the PIC was held in Lahore in August, 2018.
- The 116th Meeting of Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) between India and Pakistan is underway in New Delhi.
- The first day of the Meeting coincided with the National Day of Pakistan (marks Lahore Resolution of 23rd March, 1940).

7. c

#### **Shigmo Festival**

- Agricultural communities including the Kunbis, Gawdas and Velips celebrate the festival that also marks the onset of spring.
- The festival begins with 'Naman' that is the invocation of the local folk deities on the

village 'maand' or the village stage to the beats of percussion instruments like the Ghumat, Dhol, Mhadle and Tashe by the male folk.

- This is called the 'romta mell' that moves from one village to another.
- The celebration is replete with traditional, colourful costumes, mythological installations, painted faces and costumes of various hues.
- Folk dances like Ghodemodini (a dance of equestrian warriors), Gopha and Phugadi are among the many dances performed by the participating communities.

8. a

#### **Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) Index**

- It is published by UK based Oxfam International.
- The 2020 edition is the third edition of the Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) Index, which ranks 158 governments across the world on their commitment to reducing inequality.
- It measures government policies and actions in three areas that are proven to be directly related to reducing inequality:
  1. Public services (health, education and social protection)
  2. Taxation,
  3. Workers' rights
- Each pillar now contains three levels of indicator:
  1. **Policy commitment indicators** - These measure the commitment of governments through their policies (which may not always be implemented in practice).
  2. **Coverage or implementation indicators** - These look at who is covered (or not) as a result of policy actions, or how well a government puts policies on paper into practice.
  3. **Impact indicators** - These measure the impact of policy actions on levels of inequality.

9. b

#### **VISHWAS Project**



- Video Integration and State Wide Advanced Security (VISHWAS) project is an initiative of Gujarat Police launched in January 2020.
- Under this project, there is a plan to set up more than 60,000 cameras at 41 locations, including six pilgrimage sites and Kevadiya Colony.
- The camera footage will be manned in a pyramid style structure starting from a state command and control centre at the top, which will control 34 District Command and Control Centres.
- The Gujarat Police is aiming at introducing CCTV surveillance system to detect illegal parking, traffic violation, crowd detection, unattended bag detection, head counting, and camera tampering and intrusion detection.

#### **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)**

- The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) is an office within the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of the Government of India.
- It is the nodal agency to deal with cyber security threats like hacking and phishing.
- It strengthens security-related defence of the Indian Internet domain.

10. d

#### **Satkosia Tiger Reserve**

- Satkosia Tiger Reserve is located where the Mahanadi River passes through a 22 km long gorge in the Eastern Ghats mountains.
- It was designated in 2007, and comprises the Satkosia Gorge Wildlife Sanctuary and the adjacent Baisipalli Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The tiger reserve is located in the Eastern Highlands moist deciduous forests ecoregion.
- It has no Tiger population at present for which India's first Interstate tiger relocation project under National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was carried out here.
- NTCA had approved the transfer of six tigers from the wild of Madhya Pradesh's Kanha National Park to Satkosia Tiger Reserve in Odisha, but has suspended the tiger

translocation project pending a detailed review.

- The decision was taken after the first big cat, a male Royal Bengal tiger that had been translocated from Kanha tiger reserve in MP to Satkosia, was found dead in core area of the forest.

**26-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Equalisation Levy***

- 1. It is a direct tax on business that have a close nexus with Indian market through their digital operations.**
- 2. Goods and Services listed on a foreign marketplace and owned or provided by an Indian resident are not liable of equalisation levy.**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are incorrect?**

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Allied and Healthcare Professions***

- 1. Allied health professional includes a diagnosis technician who must poses at least 5-year degree with 2 years of work experience.**
- 2. Healthcare professional includes a scientist or therapist, who must obtain a degree with a duration of 3-6 years.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2



3) Consider the following statements with respect to *UN Institute for Training & Research (UNITAR)*

1. It was created in 1963 to train and equip young diplomats from newly-independent UN Member States.
2. It is a project-based organization and does not receive any funds from the regular United Nations budget.

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

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

4) Which of the following statement(s) is/are incorrect with respect to *Indus Water Treaty, 1960*

1. According to the treaty, waters from Eastern rivers had been allocated to India, waters from Western rivers are allocated to Pakistan.
2. The treaty gives Pakistan the right to raise concerns on the design of Indian hydroelectric projects on western rivers.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5) *Lahore Resolution of 1940* was passed by which of the following political organization?

- a. Hindustan Socialist Republican Association
- b. All India Congress
- c. All India Muslim League
- d. Hindu Mahasabha

## Answers

1. d

### Equalisation Levy

- Equalisation Levy was introduced in India in 2016, with the intention of taxing the digital transactions i.e., the income accruing to foreign e-commerce companies from India.
- Equalisation levy aims to give effect to one of the recommendations of the BEPS (Base Erosion and Profit Shifting) Action Plan.
- Currently the applicable rate of tax is 6%.
- Equalisation Levy is a direct tax, which is withheld at the time of payment by the service recipient.
- The two conditions to be met to be liable to equalisation levy:
  1. The payment should be made to a non-resident service provider.
  2. The annual payment made to one service provider exceeds Rs. 1,00,000 in one financial year.
- Services Covered Under Equalisation Levy
  1. Online advertisement,
  2. Any provision for digital advertising space or facilities/ service for the purpose of online advertisement,
  3. As and when any other services are notified will be included with the aforesaid services.

2. b

### Allied and Healthcare Professions

- Recently, the Lok Sabha has passed the National Commission for allied and Healthcare Professions Bill after it was passed in Rajya Sabha.
- **Allied health professional** - It includes an associate, technician, or technologist trained to support the diagnosis and treatment of any illness, disease, injury, or impairment.
- Such a professional should have obtained a diploma or degree under this Bill.



- The duration of the degree /diploma should be at least 2,000 hours (over a period of two to four years).
- **Healthcare professional** - It includes a scientist, therapist, or any other professional who studies, advises, researches, supervises, or provides preventive, curative, rehabilitative, therapeutic, or promotional health services.
- Such a professional should have obtained a degree under this Bill.
- The duration of the degree should be at least 3,600 hours (over a period of three to six years).

3. c

### **UN Institute for Training & Research (UNITAR)**

- It was created in 1963 to train and equip young diplomats from newly-independent UN Member States with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate through the diplomatic environment.
- It is governed by a Board of Trustees and is headed by an Executive Director.
- It is financed entirely from voluntary contributions derived mainly from UN Member States, other UN agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, foundations NGOs and the private sector.
- Its framework is aligned with the 2030 Agenda and is structured around five pillars that correspond to four of the five thematic pillars of the 2030 Agenda: Peace, People, Planet and Prosperity.
- The Institute originally had its headquarters based in New York and a European Office in Geneva but in 1993, UNITAR's headquarters were transferred to Geneva.

4. d

### **Indus Water Treaty, 1960**

- It is a treaty brokered by the World Bank and signed by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistan's President Ayub Khan which administers how the waters of the Indus

and its tributaries that flow in both the countries will be utilised.

- According to the treaty, waters of the eastern rivers — Sutlej, Beas and Ravi had been allocated to India, while the western rivers — the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab to Pakistan.
- Under the treaty, India has been given the right to generate hydroelectricity through a run of the river projects on the western rivers subject to specific criteria for design and operation.
- It also gives Pakistan the right to raise concerns on the design of Indian hydroelectric projects on western rivers.
- The Treaty also provides an arbitration mechanism to solve disputes amicably.
- Though Indus originates from Tibet, China has been kept out of the Treaty.
- If China decides to stop or change the flow of the river, it will affect both India and Pakistan.

5. c

### **Lahore Resolution 1940**

- A historic session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Lahore in March 1940.
- Muhammad Ali Jinnah explained how Hindus and Muslims cannot co-exist peacefully.
- An epoch-making resolution was moved at that session demanding that areas of the subcontinent of India in which the Muslims were numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones, should be grouped to constitute independent States.
- Having regard to the place of its adoption, the resolution was originally referred to as the Lahore Resolution.
- The Hindu Press, however, dubbed it as the Pakistan Resolution and eventually, in popular parlance, it came to be called as such.
- Within eight years of its adoption the India was partitioned and Pakistan appeared as an independent sovereign State on its map.

### **Lahore Session 1929**

- The Indian National Congress, on 19 December 1929, passed the historic 'Purna

Swaraj' (total independence) resolution at its Lahore session.

- In 1929, Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy of India, made a vaguely announced Irwin Declaration that India would be granted dominion status in the future.

**29-03-2021**

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Indo-Korean Friendship Park*

1. It acts as a monument to India's contributions, as part of 21 countries, which participated in Korean war 1950-53, under the aegis of the United Nations.
2. The Indo-Korean Friendship Park has been established recently in New Delhi.

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

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

2) Which of the following is/are the salient features of Saguna Rice Technique, often seen in the news, recently?

1. Zero till conservation agriculture
2. Ample oxygen supply to root zone
3. Prevent fertility loss during puddling
4. Not dependent on erratic behavior of rain

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

3) *Sentry Impact Risk Table*, is associated with?

- a. Mutant Virus Research Unit
- b. Earth Quake Monitoring System
- c. List of Active Volcanoes in Earth
- d. Asteroid Impact Monitoring System

4) Consider the following statements with respect to TB Elimination in India

1. Budget allocation for TB in India has witnessed a fourfold increase in the last 5 years.
2. The Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar has been recently declared as TB Free on World TB Day, 2021.
3. India aims to eliminate tuberculosis by 2035, five years ahead of global target 2040.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

5) *Global Gender Gap Index Report, 2020*, was published by?

- a. UNESCO
- b. World Bank
- c. World Economic Forum
- d. International Monetary Fund

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR)*

1. It will encourage businesses to go beyond regulatory financial compliance and report on their social and environmental impacts.
2. It is released by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and will supplement Business Responsibility Report (BRR).



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

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

7) *Earth Hour* is an annual Initiative of which of the following organisations?

- a. International Solar Alliance (ISA)
- b. World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)
- c. UN - Environment Programme (UNEP)
- d. The Nature Conservancy

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)*

- 1. The term of office of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and each member is three years from the date of assumption of charge.
- 2. The conditions of service and tenure of office of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson are determined by the President of India.
- 3. The Chairperson has been given the rank of Union Cabinet Minister, and the Vice-Chairperson that of a Minister of State.

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

9) Which of the following statement(s) is/are incorrect with respect to *Khajuraho Group of Temples*?

- 1. It was built by the Chandella rulers between AD 900 and 1130.

- 2. These temples belong to both Hinduism & Jainism, and are famous for their Nagara-style architectural symbolism.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following statement(s) is/are incorrect with respect to *Savannah Elephant and African Forest Elephants*?

- 1. Forest elephants are larger in size than savannah elephants, and are largest subspecies of elephant.
- 2. Both of the species were listed under least concern status now they are moved to Vulnerable status under IUCN.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

## Answers

1. c

- India's First Indo-Korean Friendship Park was jointly inaugurated by Mr Suh Wook, Hon'ble Minister of National Defence, Republic of Korea and Shri Rajnath Singh, Hon'ble Raksha Mantri, at Delhi Cantonment recently.
- The park's significance is not only because of it being a symbol of strong India-South Korea friendly relations, but also as a monument to India's contributions as part of 21 countries which participated in Korean war 1950-53, under the aegis of the United Nations.

2. d

**Saguna Rice Technique**



- It is a unique new method of cultivation of rice and related rotation crops without ploughing, puddling and transplanting (rice) on permanent raised beds.
- This is a zero till, Conservation Agriculture (CA) type of cultivation.

### **Salient Features of Saguna Rice Technique**

- Ample oxygen supply to root zone
- Optimum moisture condition
- Reduces treacherous labor by 50%
- Reduction in cost of production by 40%
- Prevent fertility loss during puddling
- Stops emission of greenhouse gases
- Not dependent on erratic behavior of rain

3. d

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has ruled out the possibility of a planet-threatening event in 2068.
- Discovered in 2004 and named after an Egyptian God of chaos, **asteroid 99942 Apophis** was earlier predicted to pass by uncomfortably close to Earth.
- However, the new set of data and analysis suggests that the asteroid is not a threat to Earth for at least 100 years.
- The greatly improved knowledge of its position in 2029 provides more certainty of its future motion and are advised to remove it from the risk list.

### **Sentry Impact Risk Table**

- It is a highly automated impact prediction system operated by the JPL Center for NEO Studies (CNEOS) since 2002.
- It continually monitors the most current asteroid catalog for possibilities of future impact with Earth over the next 100+ years.
- Whenever a potential impact is detected it will be analyzed and the results immediately published by the Near Earth Object Program.

4. a

- In fulfilment of the cherished goal of a “TB Mukht Bharat” envisioned by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare recently launched the “Tribal TB Initiative”.
- A Guidance Note on Joint Action Plan for Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination, a Special Edition of Tribal Ministry’s Publication ‘ALEKH’ on TB, and a document on Tribal Tuberculosis (TB) Initiative was also released at the event.

### **TB elimination in India**

- India aims to eliminate tuberculosis by 2025, five years ahead of global target 2030.
- Budget allocation for TB in India has witnessed a fourfold increase in the last 5 years.
- Lakshadweep (UT) and the district of Budgam (J&K) were declared TB free recently on World TB Day, 2021.

5. c

### **Global Gender Gap Index Report, 2020**

- India ranks 112 out of 153 countries in terms of gender gap, with a score of 0.668 out of 1, according to the Global Gender Gap Index Report, 2020 released by the **World Economic Forum**.
- In the 2018 report, India’s score was 0.665 and the country ranked 108 out of 149.

6. a

### **Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR)**

- BRSR, which is from an Environmental, Social and Governance (“ESG”) perspective, is intended to enable businesses to engage more meaningfully with their stakeholders.
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has decided to introduce new requirements for business sustainability reporting by listed entities.
- This new report will be called the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) and will replace the existing Business Responsibility Report (BRR).

- SEBI, in 2012, mandated the top 100 listed entities by market capitalisation to file Business Responsibility Reports (BRR) as per the disclosure requirement emanating from the 'National Voluntary Guidelines on Social, Environmental and Economic Responsibilities of Business' (NVGs).
- The BRSR will be applicable to the top 1000 listed entities (by market capitalization), for reporting on a voluntary basis for FY 2021 – 22 and on a mandatory basis from FY 2022 – 23.

7. b

**Earth Hour**

- It is an annual initiative that began in 2007, held every year on the last Saturday of March.
- It encourages people from more than 180 countries to switch off the lights from 8.30 pm to 9.30 pm as per their local time.
- The idea is to refrain from the use of non-essential lighting to save energy in a symbolic call for environmental protection.
- Earth Hour has become a catalyst for positive environmental impact, driving major legislative changes by harnessing the power of the people and collective action.

8. d

**National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**

- It was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003.
- The amendment has bifurcated erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes into two separate Commissions namely
  1. The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and
  2. The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)
- Function of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) involves the following
  1. To investigate & monitor matters relating to safeguards provided for STs under the

Constitution or under other laws or under Govt. Order, to evaluate the working of such Safeguards.

2. To inquire into specific complaints relating to Rights & Safeguards of STs;
3. To participate and advise in the Planning Process relating to Socio-economic development of STs, and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State.

9. d

**Khajuraho Group of Temples**

- Khajuraho Temples in Madhya Pradesh are medieval monuments situated within Vindhya Mountain range in Central India.
- It is presumed that every Chandella ruler has built at least one temple in his lifetime.
- So, all Khajuraho Temples are not constructed by any single Chandella ruler, rather building Temples was a tradition of Chandella rulers and followed by almost all rulers of Chandella dynasty.
- The Khajuraho group of temples belongs to Vaishnavism School of Hinduism, Saivism School of Hinduism and Jainism.

10. c

**Savanna Elephants (*Loxodonta africana*)**

- These are the largest subspecies of elephant and are easily distinguished by their very large ears which allow them to radiate excess heat and front legs which are noticeably longer than the hind legs.
- They are found throughout the grassy plains and bushlands of Africa.
- Savanna elephants live in eastern and southern Africa, where the highest densities are found in Botswana, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Namibia, Mozambique and South Africa.
- It was a vulnerable species but now moved to endangered species under IUCN Red list, due to increased poaching.

**African Forest Elephants (*Loxodonta cyclotis*)**

- Forest elephants are an elusive subspecies of African elephants and inhabit the densely wooded rainforests of west and central Africa.



- Their preference for dense forest habitat prohibits traditional counting methods such as visual identification.
- Forest elephants are smaller than savanna elephants, the other African elephant subspecies.
- Their ears are more oval-shaped ears and their tusks are straighter and point downward (the tusks of savanna elephants curve outwards).
- Forest elephants are found most commonly in countries with relatively large blocks of dense forest such as Gabon, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and etc.
- Africa's forest are now 'critically endangered' due to population declines caused primarily by poaching and habitat loss, earlier it was listed as vulnerable under IUCN.

- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

### 3) How is Adjournment different from Prorogation?

1. Adjournment is done by the Presiding officer of the House whereas prorogation is done by the President of India.
2. Adjournment does not affect the bills or any other business pending before the House whereas all bills and any other business pending before the House will lapse on prorogation.

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

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

**30-03-2021**

### 1) Which of the following statements regarding Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process (HoA-IP), is incorrect?

- a. It is a regional initiative of Afghanistan and the Republic of Turkey launched in 2011 at Istanbul
- b. It provides a platform for sincere and result-oriented regional cooperation by placing Afghanistan at its center
- c. India co-hosted the 9th Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference at Amritsar, Punjab in 2021
- d. HoA-IP comprises a Permanent chair and a Co-chair and Afghanistan will be the permanent chair

### 2) Consider the following statements with respect to International Ranger Award

1. The award was created in 2020 to felicitate the extraordinary work that rangers do in protected and conserved areas worldwide.
2. The award was created by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA).

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

- a. 1 only

### 4) Arrange the following lakes in Suez Canal from North to South?

1. Lake Timsah
2. Lake Manzala
3. Little Bitter Lake
4. Great Bitter Lake

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 4-3-2-1
- b. 2-1-4-3
- c. 1-2-3-4
- d. 3-4-1-2

### 5) With respect to Aroma Mission, consider the following statements:

1. The mission aims to bring more area under captive cultivation of aromatic cash crops particularly targeting rain-fed/degraded lands.



2. The mission has been implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

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

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ad-Hoc Judges*

- 1. President can appoint duly qualified persons as additional judges of a high court for a temporary period not exceeding two years.
- 2. The procedures for appointing Ad-hoc judges of Supreme Court and high court is nowhere mentioned in constitution, it is decided only by collegium.

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

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

7) *World Development Report 2021* is released by which of the following organizations?

- a. World Trade Organization
- b. International Monetary Fund
- c. World Bank
- d. Asian Development Bank

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Maharaja Chhatrasal*

- 1. He was a Mughal warrior who fought under the banner of Emperor Aurangzeb.
- 2. He was father of Mastani, the wife of the Maratha Peshwa Baji Rao.

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

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Rejection of RTI Requests*?

- 1. A Cooperative Society, or an Institution that is not substantially financed or controlled by the Government can deny to disclose information under RTI.
- 2. Information related to physical safety of any person, commercial confidence, Personal information which has no relationship to any public activity are not exempted from disclosure.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Garhwal Forts*?

- 1. It dates back to 8th century which are built at diverse altitude zones and in the Garhwal Himalayas.
- 2. These are well networked forts, believed to be built either during or after the downfall of the Katyuri dynasty.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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



## Answers

1. c

- External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar will participate in the 9th Ministerial Conference of Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process on Afghanistan in Dushanbe, Tajikistan recently.

### Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process (HoA IP)

- It is a regional initiative of **Afghanistan and the Republic of Turkey**, which was launched on 2 November 2011 in Istanbul.
- The process aims to promote regional security, economic and political cooperation **centered on Afghanistan** through dialogue and confidence building measures (CBMs).
- It was founded in recognition of the fact that a secure and stable Afghanistan is vital to the prosperity of the Heart of Asia region.
- Since its inception in 2011 the HOA – IP has held 9 ministerial conferences hosted by different countries of the Heart of Asia region.
- HoA IP, has two chairs, Permanent chair and a Co-chair.
- Afghanistan is the permanent chair.
- The co-chairing shifts among the member states.
- Each year one-member state volunteer to co-chair the process with Afghanistan.
- India co-hosted the 6th Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference in Amritsar, Punjab in December 2016.

2. c

- Mahinder Giri, range officer of Rajaji Tiger Reserve has recently won the prestigious **International Ranger Award** for his contribution towards conservation.
- He is the only ranger from Asia to win the award.

### International Ranger Award

- The award aims to highlight and felicitate the extraordinary work that rangers do in protected and conserved areas worldwide.

- The award was created in 2020 by IUCN and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) in collaboration with International Ranger Federation, Global Wildlife Conservation, and Conservation Allies.
- Winners of the International Ranger Award will receive a unique uniform patch along with a US\$10,000 (Rs 7,26,150) for their **associated organisation to support their work**.
- This can include purchasing essential supplies or equipment, providing training, providing insurance, supporting the family of a deceased ranger, or other ranger welfare activities.

3. a

- President Ram Nath Kovind has recently prorogued the fifth session of 17th Lok Sabha.

### Adjournment Vs Prorogation

- Adjournment only terminates a sitting and not a session of the House whereas, Prorogation not only terminates a sitting but also a session of the House.
- Adjournment is done by presiding officer of the House whereas, Prorogation is done by the president of India.
- Adjournment does not affect the bills or any other business pending before the House and the same can be resumed when the House meets again.
- Similarly, Prorogation also does not affect the bills or any other business pending before the House.
- However, all pending notices (other than those for introducing bills) lapse on prorogation and fresh notices have to be given for the next session.
- In Britain, prorogation brings to an end all bills or any other business pending before the House.

4. b

### Lakes in Suez Canal from North to South

1. Lake Manzala
2. Lake Timsah
3. Great Bitter Lake
4. Little Bitter Lake





5. a

- **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu announced phase 2 of purple revolution under Aroma Mission, after the success of the phase 1 in Doda, Jammu.
- Under the purple revolution, the farmers in Doda district had their incomes quadrupled after shifting from maize to lavender cultivation.

#### **Aroma Mission**

- In 2016, the Centre launched Aroma Mission to boost cultivation of plants for essential oils which have aromatic medicinal properties.
- The mission supports domestic aromatic crop based agro economy to move from imported aromatic oils to homegrown varieties.
- Nodal laboratory - CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP), Lucknow.

#### **Objectives of the mission**

- Bring about 5500 ha of additional area under captive cultivation of aromatic cash crops particularly targeting rain-fed /degraded land across the country
- Provide technical and infrastructural support for distillation and value-addition to farmers/growers all over the country
- Enabling effective buy-back mechanisms to assure remunerative prices to the farmers/growers
- Value-addition to essential oils and aroma ingredients for their integration in global trade and economy

6. a

#### **Ad-Hoc Judges**

- Article 128 talks about “attendance of a retired judge” as the judge of the Supreme Court.
- It states that the Chief Justice of India at any time, with the previous consent of the President, may request any person who has held the office of a judge of the Supreme Court or the high court to sit and act as a judge of the Supreme Court.

- Under Article 224A, the retired high court judges can be appointed as ad-hoc judges to HCs.

- The President can appoint duly qualified persons as additional judges of a high court for a temporary period not exceeding two years when:

1. There is a temporary increase in the business of the high court; or

2. There are arrears of work in the high court.

- The President can also appoint a duly qualified person as an acting judge of a high court when a judge of that high court (other than the chief justice) is:

1. Unable to perform the duties of his office due to absence or any other reason; or

2. Appointed to act temporarily as chief justice of that high court

- An acting judge holds office until the permanent judge resumes his office.

- The Constitution provides that both the additional or acting judge cannot hold office after attaining the age of 62 years.

- Recently, the Supreme Court has suggested that appointing ad-hoc judges in high courts would overcome the vacancy crisis in the judiciary and reduce the number of pending cases.

7. c

#### **World Development Report 2021**

- The report categorizes countries as developed and least developed, the countries with high income per capita, countries with high gross domestic product (GDP) per capita would be described as developed countries.

- Another economic criterion is industrialisation, countries in which the tertiary and quaternary sectors of industry dominate would thus be described as developed.

- The basic difference between Human Development Report (HDR) and World development report (WDR) are as follows

1. HDR includes literacy rate, infant mortality rate etc, to determine the status of

development of a particular area or country.

2. WDR includes GDP, national income and per capita income.
- The World Development Report 2021 provides a blueprint on how to harness the power of data for development, to ensure no one is left behind.

8. b

### **Maharaja Chhatrasal**

- He was a medieval Indian warrior from the Bundela Rajput clan who fought against the Mughal Empire.
- He was a descendant of Rudra Pratap Singh of Orchha and his ancestors were vassals of the Mughal emperor.
- Chhatrasal was 12 when his father Champat Rai of Mahoba was killed by the Mughals.
- Inspired by Chhatrapati Shivaji's ideals he travelled to Maharashtra and sought guidance from him.
- Chhatrasal raised the banner of revolt against the Mughals in Bundelkhand at the age of 22, with an army of 5 horsemen and 25 swordsmen, in 1671.
- Chhatrasal was 79 years old when he led his army against Muhammad Khan Bangash, after a severe battle Chhatrasal was defeated and was forced to retreat to his fort at Jaitpur in 1728.
- The Maratha Peshwa Baji Rao I's second wife Mastani was Chhatrasal's daughter born from his Muslim concubine.
- Chhatrasal was a patron of literature, his eulogies written by Kavi Bhushan, Lal Kavi, Bakhshi Hansaraj and other court poets helped him gain lasting fame.

9. a

### **Rejection of the RTI Requests**

- **Section 8(1)** deals with the exemption from disclosure of information:
1. If it is related to the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State, relation with

foreign State or lead to incitement of an offence,

2. Information including commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property,
  3. Information, the disclosure of which would endanger the life or physical safety of any person,
  4. Information which would impede the process of investigation or prosecution of offenders,
  5. Information which relates to personal information the disclosure of which has no relationship to any public activity or interest.
- Of the permissible grounds for rejection, Section 8(1) was used in around 46% of the cases.
  - **Section 9** - It empowers the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer to reject a request for information which involves an infringement of copyright.
  - **Section 24** - It exempts information related to security and intelligence organisations except allegations of corruption and human rights violations.
  - Around one in five (20%) permissible rejections coming under this category.
  - **Rejection without Reason** - Almost 40% of these rejections did not include any valid reason, as they did not invoke one of the permissible exemption clauses in the Right to Information (RTI) Act.
  - These rejections are classified under the 'Others' category in the CIC data.

10. c

### **Garhwal Forts**

- A majority of medieval forts in the Garhwal Himalayas of Uttarakhand were strategically built to form clusters.
- The forts, dating back to the 8th century Common Era (CE), were built at diverse altitude zones like valleys, along the ridges and prominent hilltops, some standing more than 3,000 metres above Mean Sea Level (MSL) in the Garhwal Himalayas.
- Geographically, the forts were built away from one another.

- But the ruler's back then ensured that they were surrounded with smaller fortalices, which primarily functioned as watchtowers.
- These fortalices were erected and positioned around 15 km periphery of a major fort.
- Fire, smoke or similar light signals could have been the common means to convey messages.

### **Katyuri Dynasty**

- The Katyuri kings were a medieval ruling clan of present-day Uttarakhand, India.
- They ruled over the region now known as Kumaon from 700 to 1200 CE.
- The Katyuri dynasty was founded by Vashudev Katyuri (sometimes spelled Vasu Dev or Basu Dev).
- At its peak, the Katyuri dynasty of Kumaon extended from Sikkim in the east to Kabul, Afghanistan in the west, before fragmenting into numerous principalities by the 12th century.
- By the 15th century, King Ajaypal, the 37th king of the Parmar dynasty, consolidated all these multiple chiefdoms in the region into a single state that is present day Garhwal.

**31-03-2021**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Development Finance Institutions (DFIs)***

1. It is an institution promoted or assisted by the Government mainly to provide development finance to one or more sectors or sub-sectors of the economy.
2. There is no specific use of the term DFI in either the RBI Act, 1934 or the Companies Act, 1956 or various statutes establishing DFIs.

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

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

**2) Which of the following fields of Biology deals with the Study of moths and butterflies?**

- a. Sepentology
- b. Batrachology
- c. Zoophytology
- d. Lepidopterology

**3) With respect to *Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP) scheme*, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme that aims to provide remunerative and fair prices to tribal gatherers of forest produces.
2. It is a flagship scheme of Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
3. The scheme will be applicable only to the scheduled areas in eight states and for 12 minor forest produces (MFPs) only.

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

- a. 2 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

**4) *Mahendragiri Biosphere Reserve* was recently proposed as the second biosphere reserve of which of the following states?**

- a. Odisha
- b. Telangana
- c. Tamil Nadu
- d. Andhra Pradesh

**5) Consider the following statements:**

1. The city, which was popularly called the Athens of the East, was visited by Greek explorer, Megasthenes in 3rd century BC.



2. The city, once traded with ancient Rome, preserves its distinct character in various arts and textiles that have been bestowed by the Pandian kings.
3. The city, which is situated on the banks of the river Vaigai, was popularly called 'Thoonga Nagaram,' the city that never sleeps.

Identify the city that correctly matches with the above description?

- a. Hampi
- b. Madurai
- c. Thanjavur
- d. Malappuram

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Dust storms*

1. Cyclonic circulation over Rajasthan and high temperatures over the northwest India can cause this phenomenon in Delhi.
2. Dust storms can transport iron and phosphorous to parts of the ocean that lack them.

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

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

7) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Gelatin Sticks*

1. These are expensive explosive materials which can be used without a detonator.
2. In India only licensed explosive manufacturers can make gelatin sticks, which is regulated by Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO).

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Hypnea variants of seaweeds*

1. *Hypnea indica* was discovered from Diu island of Daman and Diu.
2. *Hypnea bullata* was discovered in Somnath Pathan and Sivrajpur in Gujarat.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Culex Mosquitoes*

1. They are known carriers of Japanese encephalitis that causes "acute inflammation" of the brain.
2. They breed in clean water during rainy and winter seasons.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Small and Minority Shareholders*

1. Small shareholders, according to the Companies Act, is a shareholder or group of shareholders who hold shares of nominal value of not more than Rs 20,000.
2. Minority shareholders are given not more than 10% shares for the limited purpose or minimum hundred

**shareholders whichever is less is with share capital.**

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

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

## Answers

1. c

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has recently said that India is going to set up a new Development Financial Institution (DFI) with initial paid-up capital of around 3 billion Dollars with a lending target of 69 billion Dollars in next three years.

### Development Financial Institutions (DFIs)

- The vehicle for extending development finance is called development financial institution (DFI) or development bank.
- A DFI is defined as "an institution promoted or assisted by Government mainly to provide development finance to one or more sectors or sub-sectors of the economy.
- The institution distinguishes itself by a **judicious balance** as between **commercial norms of operation**, as adopted by any private financial institution, and **developmental obligations**.
- It emphasizes the **project approach** - meaning the viability of the project to be financed – against the **collateral approach**.

### DFIs in India

- There is no specific use of the term 'DFI' in either the RBI Act, 1934 or the Companies Act, 1956 or various statutes establishing DFIs.
- While the RBI Act defines the term 'Financial Institution' (FI), the Companies Act has categorised certain institutions as Public Financial Institutions (PFIs).
- While the various FIs including PFIs vary from each other in terms of their business

specifications, some of them perform the role of DFIs.

2. d

- A group of lepidopterists have added a species to the expanding list of butterflies in India.
- The discovery of the species *Nacaduba sinhala ramaswamii* Sadasivan, 2021 in the Agasthyamalais in the Western Ghats a decade ago has now found place in the Journal of Threatened Taxa.

### Various study

- Batrachology - Study of frog
- Serpentology (Ophiology) - Study of snakes
- Lepidopterology - Study of moths and butterflies
- Zoophytology - Study of drifting micro-organisms such as diatoms

3. b

- TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs has recently entered a Memorandum of Understanding with the Administration of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu for the implementation of the MSP for MFP Scheme and the Van Dhan Yojana.

### MSP for MFP Scheme

- It is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- It aims to provide remunerative and fair prices to tribal gatherers of forest produces.
- The fair prices provided is almost three times higher than what is available to them otherwise and trebles their overall income.
- Over the last year, it has succeeded in injecting 3000 crores in the tribal economy and has emerged as a beacon of change for the tribals.
- Earlier, the scheme was extended only to Scheduled Areas in eight states and fixed MSPs for 12 MFPs.
- Later expanded to all states and UTs.
- Total number of MFPs covered under the list include 49.

### Van Dhan Yojana (VDY)





- It is a programme for value addition, branding & marketing of MFPs by establishing Van Dhan Kendras to facilitate creation of sustainable livelihoods for the forest-based tribes is a component of the same scheme.

4. a

- The Odisha government has recently proposed a second biosphere reserve in the southern part of the state at Mahendragiri, a hill ecosystem having rich biodiversity.
- The 5,569-square kilometre Similipal Biosphere Reserve is Odisha's first such reserve and was notified May 20, 1996.
- The hill ecosystem acts as a transitional zone between the flora and fauna of southern India and the Himalayas, making the region an ecological estuary of genetic diversities.
- The area of the proposed Mahendragiri Biosphere Reserve is around 470,955 hectares and is spread over Gajapati and Ganjam districts in the Eastern Ghats.

5. b

- *The Ministry of Tourism's Dekho Apna Desh Webinar series held its 82nd webinar, titled "Stories of Madurai", recently.*

**Madurai**

- It is one of the oldest living cities in India and the most spectacular of these is the Meenakshi-Sundareswarar Temple.
- Madurai once traded with ancient Rome and it preserves its distinct character in various arts and textiles that have been bestowed by the Pandian kings (4th century-16th century).
- Earlier known as Madhurapuri and Thoonga Nagaram, meaning a city that never sleeps, Madurai grew around the Meenakshi Amman Temple, which was constructed 2,500 years ago by Pandian king, Kulasekhara.
- Popularly called the Athens of the East, it was visited by Greek explorer, Megasthenes in 3rd century BC.
- Other famous travellers who visited this ancient south Indian city included Pliny in 77 AD, Ptolemy in 140 AD, Marco Polo in 1203 AD and Ibn Batuta (1333 AD).

6. c

**Dust storms**

- Sand or dust or desert storms occur typically in the dry places of the world, where the particles of dirt are loosely bound to the surface.
- They are mostly created with the help of extremely strong winds—produced by thunderstorms.
- In the dry region, winds can easily lift dust rested on the ground, which swirls up to form a dust storm.
- Extreme dust storms may also severely impact the yield of crops, damage plant tissue, which may reduce photosynthetic activity.
- The dust deposits may lead to the filling of irrigation canals, disrupting transportation routes and polluting the river and stream water quality.
- However these storms are among the best natural sources of micro-nutrients for several tropical ecosystems as they transport iron and phosphorous to parts of the ocean that lack them.
- In this way, they help marine biomass production, Saharan dust particles are thought to fertilize even the Amazon rainforest.
- Recently a strong desert storm whipped over the parts of Egypt's Sinai Desert, which is said to have triggered the Suez Canal crisis.

7. b

**Gelatin Sticks**

- Gelatin sticks are cheap explosive materials used by industries for the purpose of mining and construction related work, like building structures, roads, rails and tunnels etc.
- They cannot be used without a detonator.
- Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO), formerly known as Department of Explosives, is the nodal agency for regulating safety of hazardous substances such as explosives, compressed gas and petroleum, these substances include gelatin sticks.
- The PESO comes under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and carries out administration work of the Explosive Act 1884 and Explosives Rules 2008 etc.

- As of now pack of gelatin sticks are barcoded and loose sticks are not bar coded.
- The government has recently introduced a rule that individual explosives should also be barcoded.

8. d

### ***Hypnea variants of Seaweeds***

- The genus Hypnea consists of calcareous, erect, branched red seaweeds.
- Recently, two new red algal seaweed species have been discovered along India's coastline.
- They grow in the intertidal regions of the coast, namely the area that is submerged during the high tide and exposed during low tides.
- Hypnea variants of seaweeds can fetch good monetary value if commercial-scale cultivation is taken up.
- Hypnea contains Carrageenan, a biomolecule commonly used in the food industry.
- They are the primitive, marine non-flowering marine algae without root, stem and leaves, play a major role in marine ecosystems.
- Hypnea indica was discovered in Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu, and Somnath Pathan and Sivrajpur in Gujarat.
- Hypnea bullata was discovered from Kanyakumari and Diu island of Daman and Diu.

9. a

### ***Culex Mosquitoes***

- Culex mosquitoes can fly up to a distance of 1-1.5 km.
- Unlike Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, which spread dengue and chikungunya and breed in clean water, culex mosquitoes breed in unclean stagnant water.
- The ideal condition for mosquitoes to breed is when the temperature is between 10 degrees Celsius and 40 degrees Celsius.
- Warmer temperatures are the main reason for the appearance of these mosquitoes.
- In NCR their presence is especially felt more in areas around floodplains in East and South Delhi as it is an ideal condition of breeding.

10. c

### ***Small and Minority Shareholders***

- Unlike Small shareholders definitions of minority shareholders are not mentioned under the Companies Act, 2013.
- However under Section 235 (Power to acquire shares of the dissenting shareholders) and under Section 244 (Right to apply for the oppression and mismanagement) of Companies Act, 2013 the provisions of minority shareholders are mentioned.
- The minority shareholders are given 10% of shares or minimum hundred shareholders, whatsoever, is less with share capital and 1/3 of the total number of its members in case of companies without the share capital.
- Thus Minority could be defined as holding not more than 10% shares for the limited purpose of agitating their rights before the appropriate forum.
- In its judgment that upheld Tata Group's decision to remove Cyrus Pallonji Mistry as the Executive Chairman of Tata Sons, the Supreme Court has also held that minority shareholders do not automatically get a right to a seat on the board.
- Private companies, which have minority shareholders, are free to make an enabling provision to do so if they wish to, but are under no statutory obligation to do so.
- The issue of minority shareholders and their rights came into the question on allegations raised by the Mistry family and the Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) Group that removal of Cyrus Mistry meant oppression of minority shareholders.