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1. Polity

- 1) The Preamble is used by the Courts in constitutional interpretation because
1. It contains the objective and philosophy of the Constitution makers.
 2. It is the source of all constitutional powers and limitations on authority of the government.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

The Preamble of the Constitution like the preamble of any statute furnish the key to open the mind of the makers of the Constitution more so because the Constituent Assembly took great pains in formulating it so that it may reflect the essential features and basic objectives of the Constitution.

The Preamble does not grant any power but it gives direction and purpose to the Constitution. It outlines the objective of the whole Constitution. The Preamble contains the fundamentals of constitution. It serves several important purposes like

- It contains the enacting clause which brings the Constitution into force.
- It declares the basic type of government and polity which is sought to be established in the country.
- It declares the great rights and freedom which the people of India intended to secure to its entire citizen.

- 2) Consider the following statements regarding Right to Property.

1. Forcible dispossession of a person of his private property without due process of law is a human right violation.
2. The State is permitted to perfect its title over the land by invoking the doctrine of adverse possession to acquire the property of its own citizens.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

A citizen's right to own private property is a human right. The state cannot take possession of it without following due procedure and authority of law, the Supreme Court has held in a judgment.

The state cannot trespass into the private property of a citizen and then claim ownership of the land in the name of 'adverse possession', the court said.

The State cannot be permitted to perfect its title over the land by invoking the doctrine of adverse possession to grab the property of its own citizens.

Under "doctrine of adverse possession", a person who is not the original owner becomes the owner because of the fact that he has been in possession of the property for a minimum of 12-years, within which the real owner did not seek legal recourse against him.

- 3) Consider the following statements.

1. The Constitution of India does not define the term minority.
2. As per notification of the Government of India, there are 6 notified linguistic minority communities in India till date.

3. Minority Educational Institutions are out of purview of reservation policy under Article 15 of the Constitution.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

The Constitution of India does not define the term minority. The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI) Act defines minority means a community notified as such by the Central Government. As per notification of the Government of India, there are **6 notified religious minority communities** - Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, Parsis and Jain.

No linguistic minority has been notified by the Central Government till date. Thus, linguistic minorities are outside the purview of the NCMEI.

Minority Educational Institutions are out of purview of reservation policy under Article 15.

4) The Constitution lays down which of the following qualifications for a person to be chosen a member of the state legislature:

- 1. He must be a citizen of India.
- 2. He must be not less than 25 years of age in the case of the legislative council and legislative assembly.
- 3. He must make and subscribe to an oath or affirmation before the person authorised by the Election Commission.

4. A person to be elected to the legislative assembly must be an elector for an assembly constituency in the concerned state.

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 3
- b) 1, 2, 3
- c) 1, 3, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: c)

The Constitution lays down the following qualifications for a person to be chosen a member of the state legislature.

(a) He must be a citizen of India.

(b) He must make and subscribe to an oath or affirmation before the person authorised by the Election Commission for this purpose. In his oath or affirmation, he swears

- (i) To bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India
- (ii) To uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India

(c) He must be not less than 30 years of age in the case of the legislative council and not less than 25 years of age in the case of the legislative assembly.

(d) He must possess other qualifications prescribed by Parliament.

Accordingly, the Parliament has laid down the following additional qualifications in the Representation of People Act (1951):

(a) A person to be elected to the legislative council must be an elector for an assembly constituency in the concerned state and to be qualified for the governor's nomination, he must be a resident in the concerned state.

(b) A person to be elected to the legislative assembly must be an elector for an assembly constituency in the concerned state.

(c) He must be a member of a scheduled caste or scheduled tribe if he wants to contest a seat reserved for them. However, a member of scheduled castes or scheduled tribes can also contest a seat not reserved for them.

5) Consider the following statements regarding mandamus.

1. In India, the Supreme Court and High courts can issue prerogative writs under Article 32 of the Constitution.

2. The writ of mandamus cannot be issued unless the legal duty is of public nature, and to whose performance the applicant of the writ has a legal right.

3. Mandamus cannot be granted against the President or Governor of a State.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The Supreme Court has ruled that reservation in the matter of promotions in public posts **is not a fundamental right**, and a state cannot be compelled to offer the quota if it chooses not to.

“There is no fundamental right which inheres in an individual to claim reservation in promotions. No mandamus can be issued by the court directing state governments to provide reservations,”

Mandamus is among the “prerogative writs” in English common law — meaning the extraordinary writs or orders granted by the Sovereign when ordinary legal remedies are inadequate. These are habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, certiorari, and quo warranto.

In India, the Supreme Court can issue prerogative writs under Article 32 of the Constitution, and the High Courts under Article 226.

Mandamus literally means ‘we command’. When issued to a person or body, the writ of mandamus demands some activity on their part. It orders the person or body to perform a public or quasi-public duty, which they have refused to perform, and where no other adequate legal remedy exists to enforce the performance of that duty. The writ cannot be issued unless the legal duty is of public nature, and to whose performance the applicant of the writ has a legal right.

The remedy is of a discretionary nature — a court can refuse to grant it when an alternative remedy exists. However, for enforcing fundamental rights, the alternative remedy argument does not hold as much weight, since it is the duty of the Supreme Court and the High Courts to enforce fundamental rights.

When a public officer or government does an act that violates the fundamental right of a person, the court would issue a writ of mandamus against such authorities so that the person’s rights are not infringed.

The writ can also be issued against inferior courts or other judicial bodies when they have refused to exercise their jurisdiction and perform their duty.

Under Article 361, mandamus cannot be granted against the President or Governor of a State, “for the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of his office or for any act done or purporting to be done by him in the exercise and performance of those powers and duties”.

The writ also cannot be issued against a private individual or body, except where the State is in collusion with the private party for contravening a provision of the Constitution or a statute.

6) The Indian Constitution mandates that the Indian State be secular. The objective behind such a mandate is:

- 1. To ensure some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community
- 2. To ensure one religious community does not dominate another
- 3. To ensure that State does not enforce any particular religion
- 4. To ensure that State does not take away the religious freedom of individuals.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 2, 3
- b) 1, 2
- c) 2, 3, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: d)

The Indian Constitution mandates that the Indian State be secular. According to the Constitution, only a secular State can realise its objectives to ensure the following:

1. that one religious community does not dominate another;
2. that some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community;
3. that the State does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals.

The Indian State works in various ways to prevent the above domination. First, it uses a strategy of distancing itself from religion. The Indian State is not ruled by a religious group and nor does it support any one religion. In India, government spaces like law courts, police stations, government schools and offices are not supposed to display or promote any one religion.

7) Which of the following are close to direct democracy?

1. Decisions taken by the Gram Sabha
2. Decisions taken by the legislative Assembly of a state
3. Decisions taken in the Board of Directors of a corporation

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: d)

The Board of directors consist of either direct representatives or nominees. So it is an example of indirect democracy. Same can be said of the legislative Assembly of a state.

In the case of Gram Sabha, it is the most direct decision-making directly by the people.

8) Article 142 of the Indian Constitution, sometimes in news is related to

- a) Original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court
- b) Measures taken by the Supreme Court to do complete justice.
- c) Appellate jurisdiction of Supreme Court in appeals from High Courts
- d) Conferment on the Supreme Court of powers to issue certain writs

Solution: b)

Article 142 “provide(s) a unique power to the Supreme Court, to do “complete justice” between the parties, i.e., where at times law or statute may not provide a remedy, the Court can extend itself to put a quietus to a dispute in a manner which would befit the facts of the case.

Source

9) Consider the following statements regarding National Human Rights Commission.

1. National Human Rights Commission was established by a Government resolution, for the protection and promotion of human rights.
2. The Commission has its own investigating staff for investigation into complaints of human rights violations.
3. It has no power to punish the violators of human rights.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1, 2
- b) 1, 3
- c) 2, 3

d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: c)

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India was given a **statutory basis by the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 (PHRA)**. The NHRC is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights, defined by the Act as "Rights Relating To Life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India."

The Commission has its own investigating staff headed by a Director General of Police for investigation into complaints of human rights violations.

While inquiring into complaints under the Act, the Commission shall have all the powers of a civil court trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.

It has no power to punish the violators of human rights. It has no power to award any monetary relief.

Source

10) Consider the following statements about Double Jeopardy.

1. It means that no person shall be prosecuted and punished for the same offence more than once.
2. The Constitution bars double punishment for the same offence.
3. A partial protection against double jeopardy is a Fundamental Right.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Article 20(2) says that no person shall be prosecuted and punished for the same offence more than once. This is called Doctrine of Double Jeopardy.

The objective of this article is to avoid harassment, which must be caused for successive criminal proceedings, where the person has committed only one crime.

Constitution bars double punishment for the same offence. The conviction for such offence does not bar for subsequent trial and conviction for another offence and it does not matter even if some ingredients of these two offences are common.

A partial protection against double jeopardy is a Fundamental Right guaranteed under Article 20 (2) of the Constitution of India, which states "No person shall be prosecuted and punished for the same offence more than once".

The Supreme Court of India has ruled that the bar of double jeopardy does not arise if an accused was discharged of a criminal offence, even before the commencement of trial, on the basis of an invalid sanction for prosecution.

11) Consider the following statements

1. Beginning of Parliamentary System in India can be traced back to Indian Council Act, 1861
2. Charter Act of 1833 recommended for the appointment of Macaulay Committee on Indian Civil Service.
3. Charter Act of 1833 deprived the governor of Bombay and Madras of their legislative powers. The Governor General of India was given exclusive legislative powers for the entire British India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

- c) 3 only
- d) None

Solution: c)

Beginning of Parliamentary System in India can be traced back to Charter Act of 1853. It separated, for the first time, the legislative and executive functions of the Governor General's council. It provided for addition of six new members called legislative councillors to the council.

Charter Act of 1853 recommended for the appointment of Macaulay Committee on Indian Civil Service.

12) The constitution upholds the rights of labour and ensures labour welfare in which of the following ways via Directive principles?

1. It makes provision for just and humane conditions for work and maternity relief.
2. It exhorts the government to take steps to secure the participation of workers in the management of industries.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Statement 1: Acts like Maternity Benefit Act or its recent amendment have been enacted in the spirit of the DPSP (Article 42).

Statement 2: These are socialist principles which draw their moorings from the history of economic thought in India. India upholds an economic system based on the principles of equity, fairness and justice, and therefore, such rights (provisions) are crucial to ensure labour welfare.

13) Which of the following ideally should not be features of a democratic polity?

1. Censorship of the press
2. Military can take over civilian institutions if they fail to deliver on democratic hopes
3. The Government should not be run by non-elected individuals.

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: a)

Democracy is a form of government that allows people to choose their rulers. In a democracy: only leaders elected by people should rule the country, and people have the freedom to express views, freedom to organise and freedom to protest. Option 1 and 2 go against these two basic tenets.

14) Consider the following statements about the office of the governor as mentioned in the constitution of India:

1. His office is constitutionally under the control and subordinate to the Central government.
2. The Governor of a particular state should not belong to that state.
3. The President of India must consult the Chief Minister of the concerned state before making the appointment of the Governor of that state.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1, 2
- b) 2, 3
- c) 1, 3

d) None of the above

Solution: d)

The governor holds an independent office under the constitution.

The Constitution lays down only two qualifications for the appointment of a person as a governor. These are:

1. He should be a citizen of India.
2. He should have completed the age of 35 years.

Additionally, two conventions have also developed in this regard over the years. First, he should be an outsider, that is, he should not belong to the state where he is appointed, so that he is free from the local politics. Second, while appointing the governor, the president is required to consult the chief minister of the state concerned, so that the smooth functioning of the constitutional machinery in the state is ensured. However, both the conventions have been violated in some of the cases.

15) When a bill is sent to the Governor after it is passed by state legislature, he can

1. Withhold his assent to the bill
2. Return the bill, including a money bill, for reconsideration of the state legislature
3. Reserve the bill for the consideration of the President

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: c)

When a bill is sent to the governor after it is passed by state legislature, he can:

- (a) Give his assent to the bill, or
- (b) Withhold his assent to the bill, or
- (c) Return the bill (if it is not a money bill) for reconsideration of the state legislature. However, if the bill is passed again by the state legislature with or without amendments, the governor has to give his assent to the bill, or
- (d) Reserve the bill for the consideration of the president. In one case such reservation is obligatory, that is, where the bill passed by the state legislature endangers the position of the state high court. In addition, the governor can also reserve the bill if it is of the following nature:
 - (i) Ultra-vires, that is, against the provisions of the Constitution.
 - (ii) Opposed to the Directive Principles of State Policy.
 - (iii) Against the larger interest of the country.
 - (iv) Of grave national importance.
 - (v) Dealing with compulsory acquisition of property under Article 31A of the Constitution.

16) Article 110 of the Constitution deals with the definition of money bills. It states that a bill is deemed to be a money bill if it contains 'only' provisions dealing with all or any of which of the following matters?

1. Abolition of a tax by a local authority
2. Appropriation of money out of the Consolidated Fund of India
3. Regulation of the borrowing of money by the Union government

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: b)

Article 110 of the Constitution deals with the definition of money bills. It states that a bill is deemed to be a money bill if it contains 'only' provisions dealing with all or any of the following matters:

1. The imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax;
2. The regulation of the borrowing of money by the Union government;
3. The custody of the Consolidated Fund of India or the contingency fund of India, the payment of moneys into or the withdrawal of money from any such fund;
4. The appropriation of money out of the Consolidated Fund of India;
5. Declaration of any expenditure charged on the Consolidated Fund of India or increasing the amount of any such expenditure;
6. The receipt of money on account of the Consolidated Fund of India or the public account of India or the custody or issue of such money, or the audit of the accounts of the Union or of a state; or
7. Any matter incidental to any of the matters specified above.

However, a bill is not to be deemed to be a money bill by reason only that it provides for:

1. the imposition of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or
2. the demand or payment of fees for licenses or fees for services rendered; or
3. the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax by any local authority or body for local purposes.

17) The Speaker of Lok Sabha can be removed on

1. A resolution passed by majority of all the membership of Lok Sabha
2. A resolution passed by special majority in Lok Sabha
3. An enquiry by the Supreme Court
4. An order of the President

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: a)

Speaker has to vacate his office earlier in any of the following three cases:

- o if he ceases to be a member of the Lok Sabha;
- o if he resigns by writing to the Deputy Speaker; and
- o if he is removed by a resolution passed by a majority of all the members of the Lok Sabha. Such a resolution can be moved only after giving 14 days advance notice.

When a resolution for the removal of the Speaker is under consideration of the House, he cannot preside at the sitting of the House, though he may be present. However, he can speak and take part in the proceedings of the House at such a time and vote in the first instance, though not in the case of an equality of votes.

It should be noted here that, whenever the Lok Sabha is dissolved, the Speaker does not vacate his office and continues till the newly- elected Lok Sabha meets.

18) Consider the following statements with reference to the Office of the Speaker.

1. She holds office during the pleasure of the President.
2. She need not be a member of the House at the time of her election.
3. She is elected jointly by both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2, 3
- c) 1, 3
- d) None of the above

Solution: d)

Speaker holds office as long as she enjoys the confidence of the house. She can be removed only by the Lok Sabha through impeachment.

The Speaker is elected from among its members by a simple majority of members present and voting in the House. As such, no specific qualifications are prescribed for being elected the Speaker. The Constitution only requires that **Speaker should be a member of the House.**

Rajya Sabha plays no role in her election. But, both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha play a role in choosing the Presiding officer of Rajya Sabha, i.e. the Vice-President.

19) Which of the following schedules of the constitution gives a clear constitutional recognition to the existence of the system of "political parties" in India?

- a) Ninth Schedule
- b) Tenth Schedule
- c) Seventh Schedule
- d) Third Schedule

Solution: b)

The Tenth Schedule of the Constitution (which embodies the anti-defection law) is designed to prevent the evil or mischief of political defections motivated by the lure of office or material benefits or other similar considerations. Since the **anti-defection provisions clearly mention the existence of political parties** (and members being disqualified on leaving its membership), the Tenth schedule recognizes the system of political parties.

20) Consider the following statements.

- 1. A Bill originating in the Lok Sabha and pending in the Lok Sabha lapses.
- 2. A bill passed by the Lok Sabha but pending in the Rajya Sabha does not lapse.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

- 1. A bill pending in the Lok Sabha lapses (whether originating in the Lok Sabha or transmitted to it by the Rajya Sabha).
- 2. A bill passed by the Lok Sabha but pending in the Rajya Sabha lapses.
- 3. A bill not passed by the two Houses due to disagreement and if the president has notified the holding of a joint sitting before the dissolution of Lok Sabha, does not lapse.
- 4. A bill pending in the Rajya Sabha but not passed by the Lok Sabha does not lapse.
- 5. A bill passed by both Houses but pending assent of the president does not lapse.
- 6. A bill passed by both Houses but returned by the president for reconsideration of Houses does not lapse.

2. Geography

1) Which of the following minerals are mainly classified as metallic minerals.

1. Manganese
2. Copper
3. Mica
4. Bauxite
5. Graphite

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: b)

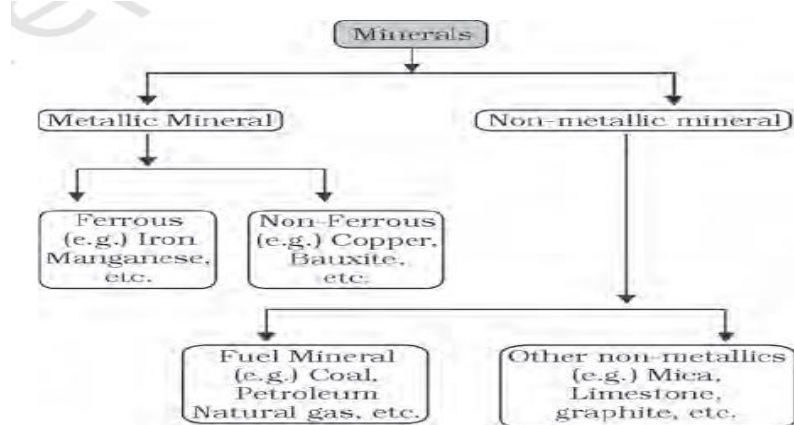


Fig. 7.1 : Classification of Minerals

2) Consider the following statements regarding Distribution of Minerals in India.

1. Most of the metallic minerals in India occur in the peninsular plateau region in the old crystalline rocks.
2. Over 95 per cent of coal reserves occur in the valleys of Damodar, Sone, Mahanadi and Godavari.
3. Most of the major mineral resources occur to the west of a line linking Mangaluru and Kanpur.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

Most of the metallic minerals in India occur in the peninsular plateau region in the old crystalline rocks. Over 97 per cent of coal reserves occur in the valleys of Damodar, Sone, Mahanadi and Godavari. Petroleum reserves are located in the sedimentary basins of Assam, Gujarat and Mumbai High i.e. off-shore region in the Arabian Sea. New reserves have been located in the Krishna-Godavari and Kaveri basins. Most of the major mineral resources occur to the east of a line linking Mangaluru and Kanpur.

3) Consider the following statements

1. The soil is developed in the region of high temperature
2. They are poor in organic matter
3. They are cut as bricks for construction
4. They are commonly found in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh

The above statements are related to:

- a) Red Soil
- b) Black Soil
- c) Laterite Soil
- d) Arid Soil

Solution: c)

Laterite Soil:

The laterite soils develop in areas with high temperature and high rainfall. Humus content of the soil is removed fast by bacteria that thrives well in high temperature. These soils are poor in organic matter, nitrogen, phosphate and calcium, while **iron oxide and potash are in excess**.

Laterite soils are widely cut as bricks for use in house construction. These soils have mainly developed in the higher areas of the Peninsular plateau. The laterite soils are commonly found in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and the hilly areas of Odisha and Assam.

4) Consider the following statements

- 1. Deepest ocean depth is measured at Mariana Trench located east of Japan's coast.
- 2. Oceanic trenches are formed due to collision of oceanic and continental crust.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

Mariana Trench is at east of Philippine coast.

Along a convergent boundary two lithospheric plates collide against each other. When one of the plates is an **oceanic plate**, it gets embedded in the softer asthenosphere of the **continental plate**, and as a result, **trenches are formed at the zone of subduction**.

5) December and January are the coldest months in the northern plain. The reasons for the excessive cold in north India are:

- 1. Far away from the sea.
- 2. Snowfall in the nearby Himalayan ranges
- 3. Cold winds coming from Taklamakan Desert and Plateau of Tibet.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

There are three main reasons for the excessive cold in north India during this season:

- (i) States like Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan being far away from the moderating influence of sea experience continental climate.
- (ii) The snowfall in the nearby Himalayan ranges creates cold wave situation; and
- (iii) Around February, the cold winds coming from the **Caspian Sea and Turkmenistan bring cold wave** along with frost and fog over the north-western parts of India.

6) Consider the following statements.

1. The Easterly Jet stream is responsible for the burst of monsoon in India.
2. The shift in the ITCZ from equator towards the north Indian plains during summer withdraws the Westerly Jet streams.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: d)

During April and May when the sun shines vertically over the Tropic of Cancer, the large landmass in the north of Indian ocean gets intensely heated. This causes the formation of an **intense low pressure in the northwestern part of the subcontinent**. Since the pressure in the Indian Ocean in the south of the landmass is high as water gets heated slowly, the low-pressure cell attracts the southeast trades across the Equator. These conditions help in the **northward shift in the position of the ITCZ**. The shift in the position of the ITCZ is also related to the phenomenon of the withdrawal of the westerly jet stream from its position over the north Indian plain, south of the Himalayas. **The easterly jet stream sets in along 15°N latitude only after the western jet stream has withdrawn itself from the region**. This easterly jet stream is held responsible for the burst of the monsoon in India.

7) Consider the following statements about Neelakurinji.

1. It is a shrub that is found only in the shola forests of the Western Ghats.
2. Neelakurinji blossoms during September-October every year.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Kurinji or Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthianus*) is a shrub that is found in the shola forests of the Western Ghats in South India.

Nilgiri Hills, which literally means the blue mountains, got their name from the purplish blue flowers of **Neelakurinji that blossoms only once in 12 years**.

Besides the Western Ghats, Neelakurinji is also seen in the Shevroys in the Eastern Ghats, Anamalai hills Idukki district and Agali hills in Palakad in Kerala and Sanduru hills of Bellary district in Karnataka.



[Source](#)

8) Consider the following statements:

1. Equatorial oceanic waters have lower salinity than average salinity of the oceans because of heavy daily rainfall and high relative humidity.

2. The temperature of the oceans varies vertically with increasing depth.
3. The ocean currents move in anti-clockwise direction in the northern hemisphere.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

On an average, **salinity decreases from equator towards the poles**. It may be mentioned that the highest salinity is seldom recorded near the equator though this zone records high temperature and evaporation, but high rainfall reduces the relative proportion of salt. Thus, the equator accounts for only 35^{0}_{00} salinity.

The temperature of the oceans varies vertically with increasing depth. Refer the graph on temperature and depth.

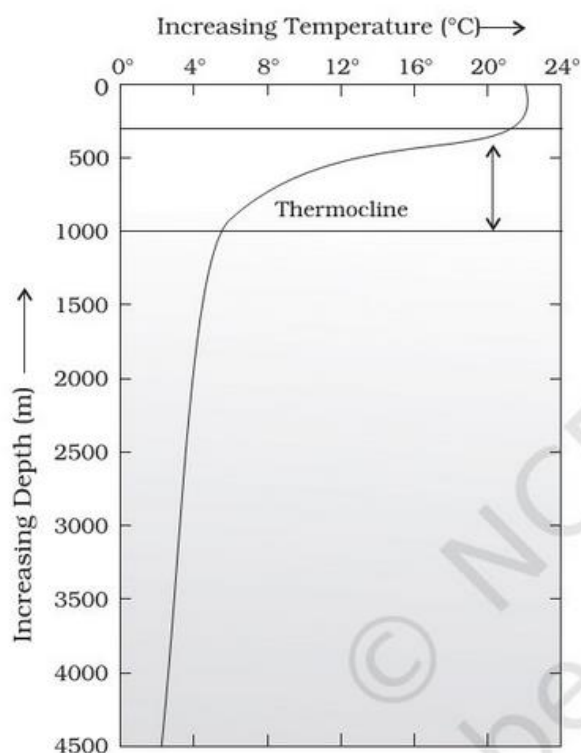


Figure 13.3 : Thermocline

The ocean currents move in clockwise direction in the northern hemisphere.

9) Consider the following statements regarding Palaeochannel.

1. A palaeochannel is a remnant of an inactive river or stream channel that has been filled or buried by younger sediment.
2. It reveals the course of rivers that have ceased to exist.
3. Palaeochannels can host ore deposits of uranium, lignite and precious metals.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

A palaeochannel is a remnant of an inactive river or stream channel that has been filled or buried by younger sediment.

These palaeochannels reveal the course of rivers that have ceased to exist.

A palaeochannel is distinct from the overbank deposits of currently-active river channels, including ephemeral water courses that do not regularly flow because the river bed is filled with sedimentary deposits unrelated to the normal bed load of the current drainage pattern.

Palaeochannels are important to geology for a number of reasons:

- Understanding movements of faults, which may redirect river systems and so form stranded channels that are, in essence, palaeochannels.
- Preserving Tertiary, Eocene and Holocene sediments and fossils within them.
- Preserving sedimentary records, which is useful for understanding climatic conditions

Palaeochannels can host economic ore deposits of uranium, lignite, precious metals such as gold and platinum, heavy minerals such as tin, tungsten, and iron ore preserved as paleo-placer deposits.

The Union Water Ministry has excavated an old, dried-up river in Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad) that linked the Ganga and Yamuna rivers.

10) Indira Point is located at

- South Andaman
- Little Andaman
- Great Nicobar
- Car Nicobar

Solution: c)

Indira Point is a village in the Nicobar district at Great Nicobar Island of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

11) Consider the following statements regarding oil palm cultivation in India.

- Maharashtra stands first in the country in oil palm cultivation and production.
- Oil palm consumes much less water than paddy and sugarcane.
- In India, majority of the oil palm is grown on irrigated land.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- 1, 2
- 1, 3
- 2, 3
- 2 only

Solution: c)

Oil palm growers in Andhra Pradesh are facing big trouble as plantations in the northern part of the State, particularly in East and West Godavari districts, have been hit by **white fly infestation**.

Vast stretches of oil palm plantation in the State have been hit by white fly, which reportedly crossed over from infected coconut groves in the vicinity. The attack left the farmers poorer by 35-40 per cent in yields last year.

Andhra Pradesh accounts for the bulk of oil palm fruit production in India. Of the two lakh hectares under oil palm cultivation in the country, Andhra Pradesh accounts for 1.5 lakh acres.

Whitefly sucks out all the nutrients from the leaves, resulting in yield losses.

“Oil palm doesn’t require much water. It consumes much less water than paddy and sugarcane. But what it requires is timely supply of water,”

While Malaysia and Indonesia, which dominate the world's oil palm production, grow the crop in rain-fed conditions, **India grows it on irrigated land**. This disadvantage sees India having to settle for far lesser yields.

"In Malaysia, you see oil palm plantations spread over hundreds of acres. But in India, we are saddled with small holdings, making it difficult to increase the acreage and operationalise the holdings,"

[Source](#)

12) Which of the following are the characteristics of Submergent coastlines

1. Drowned river valleys
2. Wave cut platform
3. Presence of fjords

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: b)

Submergent Coasts are those that have been flooded by ocean waters because of a relative rise in the elevation of sea level at that location. The rise in sea level can be either the result of an increase in the volume of water in the ocean basins or the result of the land surface sinking, both of which create an apparent rise in the elevation of sea level. **Features of a submergent coastline are drowned river valleys or rias and drowned glaciated valleys or fjords.**

Estuaries are often the drowned mouths of rivers.

The Western Coastal Plains of the Indian subcontinent are examples of submergent coastline.

Emergent coasts are a result of local tectonic uplift of the land surface or a fall in the elevation of sea level because of a reduction in the water volume of ocean basins. Quite often, emergent coasts have rocky coastlines with cliffs and nearly flat platforms that extend inland where older coastal plains have been tectonically raised and are now elevated above the modern land and water interface.

The emergent coastline may have several specific landforms:

- Raised beach
- Wave cut platform
- Sea cave

13) Consider the following statements.

1. The South-Western Peninsular Plateau have more diversified mineral deposits compared to the north-eastern Peninsular Plateau.
2. The minerals in the North-Western part of Peninsular Plateau are associated with Dharwar system of rocks.
3. Minerals like copper, lead, zinc, cobalt and tungsten are known to occur in the Himalayan region.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Most of the metallic minerals in India occur in the peninsular plateau region.

The **North-Eastern Plateau Region**: This belt covers Chhotanagpur (Jharkhand), Odisha Plateau, West Bengal and parts of Chhattisgarh. It has variety of minerals viz. iron ore, coal, manganese, bauxite, mica.

The **South-Western Plateau Region**: This belt extends over Karnataka, Goa and contiguous Tamil Nadu uplands and Kerala. This belt is rich in ferrous metals and bauxite. It also contains high grade iron ore, manganese and limestone. This belt packs in coal deposits except Neyveli lignite. **This belt does not have as diversified mineral deposits as the north-eastern belt.** Kerala has deposits of monazite and thorium.

The **North-Western Region**: This belt extends along Aravali in Rajasthan and part of Gujarat and minerals are associated with Dharwar system of rocks. Copper, zinc have been major minerals. Rajasthan is rich in building stones i.e. sandstone, granite, marble. Gypsum and Fuller's earth deposits are also extensive. Dolomite and limestone provide raw materials for cement industry.

The Himalayan belt is another mineral belt where copper, lead, zinc, cobalt and tungsten are known to occur.

14) Which among the following has the highest Albedo

- a) Lithosphere
- b) Atmosphere
- c) Hydrosphere
- d) Cryosphere

Solution: d)

The cryosphere is those portions of Earth's surface where water is in solid form, including sea ice, lake ice, river ice, snow cover, glaciers, ice caps, ice sheets, and frozen ground. Snow has high albedo.

15) Arrange the following states in the decreasing order of population density according to Census 2011.

- 1. Bihar
- 2. West Bengal
- 3. Karnataka
- 4. Punjab

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: b)

STATE :	Population Density (Persons per sq Km)
Bihar	1,102
West Bengal	1,029
Punjab	550
Karnataka	319

16) Consider the following statements regarding Soybean production in India.

- 1. Soybean is primarily a Rabi crop and rain fed.
- 2. Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra contribute to more than 80% of Soybean production in India.
- 3. Soybean leads in the total oilseeds production in India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1, 2
- b) 1, 3
- c) 2, 3

d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: c)

Soybean is primarily a Kharif crop and rain fed, like pulses. Production of soybean in India is dominated by Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh which contribute to 89 per cent of the total Soybean production in country. Soybean leads in the total oilseeds production in India.

17) The largest Wheat and Rice producing state in India are

- a) Punjab and West Bengal
- b) Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal
- c) Punjab and Uttar Pradesh
- d) Uttar Pradesh and Punjab

Solution: b)

Madhya Pradesh has overtaken Punjab to become the second highest producer of Wheat in the country, after Uttar Pradesh as per 3rd advance estimates of production of major crops for 2019-20.

West Bengal is the largest producer of rice in India.

18) Consider the following statements regarding Cotton cultivation.

- 1. Cotton is a Kharif crop and a tropical as well as subtropical crop.
- 2. Successful cultivation of cotton requires a long frost-free period, plenty of sunshine, and a moderate rainfall.
- 3. India is the world's largest cotton producer.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Cotton is considered as a fiber crop and its seed is used as vegetable oil. Cotton is a Kharif crop and a tropical as well as subtropical crop.

It is usually grown in temperatures of 21-30 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 50-100 cm of rainfall. The major producers of cotton in terms of states include Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Orissa. Gujarat is the highest of all. India is the world's largest cotton producing country.

19) Continental shelf is formed due to:

- 1. Rise in sea level
- 2. Submergence of a part of a continent
- 3. Sedimentary deposits brought down by rivers

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

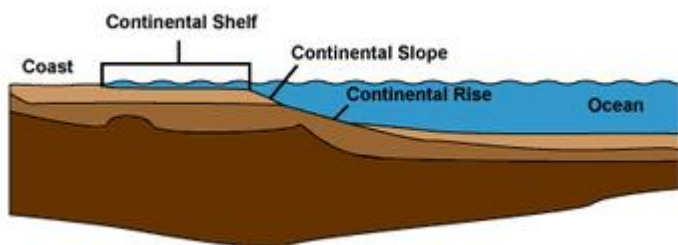
- a) 1, 2
- b) 2, 3
- c) 1, 3
- d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: d)

Continental Shelf is the submerged edge of a continent which is a gently sloping plain that extends into the Ocean. The typical gradient is less than 1° . The average width of continental shelves is about 80 km. The largest continental shelf is the Siberian Shelf in the Arctic Ocean, which stretches to 1,500 kilometres in width. Because of the gentle slope, the continental shelf is influenced by the changes in the sea level.

The shelf is formed mainly due to

- **Rise in sea level**
- Submergence of a part of a continent
- Sedimentary deposits brought down by rivers



20) Consider the following statements:

1. Yellow sea separates China and Korean Peninsula.
2. Sea of Japan separates Japan and China.

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: a)



21) Consider the following statements regarding Pangong Tso Lake.

1. Pangong Tso Lake is an endorheic lake in the Himalayas.
2. It is part of the Indus river basin area.
3. It is under the Ramsar Convention as a wetland of international importance.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Pangong Tso Lake is an **endorheic lake in the Himalayas** situated at a height of about 4,350 m. It is 134 km (83 mi) long and extends from India to the Tibetan Autonomous Region, China. **Approximately 60% of the length of the lake lies within the Tibetan Autonomous Region.**

During winter the lake freezes completely, despite being saline water. **It is not a part of the Indus river basin area and geographically a separate landlocked river basin.**

The lake is in the process of being identified under the Ramsar Convention as a wetland of international importance. This will be the first trans-boundary wetland in South Asia under the convention.

22) Which of the following is/are the drawbacks of coal found in India?

- 1. Low calorific value
- 2. High ash content
- 3. Majority of the reserves are lignite type

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: b)

Majority of the coal found in India are of bituminous type. A small amount of Lignite found in Nyveli region of Tamil Nadu.

23) Consider the following statements.

- 1. The second highest peak in the world, Mount Godwin Austen is situated in the Karakoram Range.
- 2. Pat Koi, Nagai and Lushai ranges are part of Western Himalayas.
- 3. Cape Comorin is the southernmost point of India's territory.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

In the north of Kashmir is Karakoram Range. The second highest peak in the world, Mount Godwin Austen is situated here (K2 also known as Mount Godwin-Austen).

In the east, the Himalayas extend up to Assam. The important mountains in this region are Pat Koi, Nagai and Lushai ranges.

Indira Point in the Nicobar district at Great Nicobar Island of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is the southernmost point of India's territory.

Kanyakumari (distorted to Cape Comorin by colonialists) is the southernmost city of peninsular/contiguous India.

24) Which of the following best describes the 'Marine upwelling'?

- a) Periodic rise and fall of the ocean due to gravitational attraction of the moon.
- b) Rise in the sea level due to the global warming.
- c) Rise of deep cold water towards the surface of the ocean.
- d) Storm surges hitting the coast due to cyclonic activity.

Solution: c)

Winds blowing across the ocean surface push water away. Water then rises up from beneath the surface to replace the water that was pushed away. This process is known as "upwelling."

Upwelling occurs in the open ocean and along coastlines. The reverse process, called "downwelling," also occurs when wind causes surface water to build up along a coastline and the surface water eventually sinks toward the bottom.

Water that rises to the surface as a result of upwelling is typically colder and is rich in nutrients. These nutrients "fertilize" surface waters, meaning that these surface waters often have high biological productivity. Therefore, good fishing grounds typically are found where upwelling is common.

25) "Climate is extreme, rainfall is scanty and the people used to be nomadic herders." The statement best describes which of the following regions?

- a) African Savannah
- b) Central Asian Steppe
- c) North American Prairie
- d) Siberian Tundra

Solution: b)

A steppe is a dry, grassy plain. Steppes occur in temperate climates, which lie between the tropics and Polar Regions. Climate is continental with extremes of temperature. The summers are hot and the winters are cold. Steppes receive 25 to 50 centimetres of rain each year. The mid-latitude (Central Asian) grassland were once home to pastoral nomads like Kirgiz, Kazakh and Kalmuks.

In Siberian Tundra, rainfall is scanty and climate is extreme. But the people were not nomadic herders. Their primary occupation is hunting or gathering.

In North American Prairies rainfall is scanty and climate is extreme. The farmers here use mechanised equipment and do wheat cultivation on large scale.

3. Economy

- 1) RBI has around \$480 billion of Forex reserves. It is acquired by the RBI for which of the following reasons
1. To import essentials for economic and social security
 2. To gain external account security
 3. To deter speculations
 4. To enjoy favourable credit rating

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2, 3
- b) 1, 3, 4
- c) 2, 3, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: d)

India's foreign exchange (Forex) reserves stand at around \$480 billion. It is acquired by the RBI for the following reasons:

1. To defend the rupee when needed
2. To gain external account security
3. To enable country to globalise further
4. To import essentials for economic and social security
5. To deter speculations
6. To enjoy favourable rating by sovereign credit rating agencies.

- 2) Phantom FDI sometimes in news is described as

- a) Investments done by high net worth individuals
- b) Investments done in green field projects
- c) Investments that pass through empty corporate shells
- d) None of the above

Solution: c)

About \$15 trillion, or 38 per cent, of the world's foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2017 was "phantom capital" that was tailor-made to trim tax bills of multinational corporations, and tax havens were being used to funnel these investments, according a study put out by the International Monetary Fund.

Roughly a half of the phantom FDI — "investments that pass through empty corporate shells" with no real business activity — passes through just Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

[Source](#)

- 3) Consider the following statements regarding 'Treasury Bills'

1. T-bills are short term securities issued on behalf of the government by the RBI and are used in managing short term liquidity needs of the government.
2. T-Bills are issued on discount to face value, while the holder gets the face value on maturity.
3. T-Bills are issued by both Central government and State government in India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

T-bills are short term securities issued on behalf of the government by the RBI and are used in managing short term liquidity needs of the government.

- T-Bills are issued on discount to face value, while the holder gets the face value on maturity. The return on T-Bills is the difference between the issue price and face value.
- Thus, return on T-Bills depends upon auctions. When the liquidity position in the economy is tight, returns are higher and vice versa.
- Individuals, Firms, Trusts, Institutions and banks can purchase T-Bills. The commercial and cooperative banks use T-Bills for fulfilling their SLR requirements.
- Treasury Bills are issued only by the central government in India. The State governments do not issue any treasury bills.

The secondary market of T-Bills is very active so they have a higher degree of tradability.

- 4) In an open economy without government intervention, trade deficit can be financed by
- a) Foreign institutional investment
 - b) Domestic consumption
 - c) Monetary expansion
 - d) All of the above

Solution: a)

Total balance of payments consists of current account (includes trade, invisibles, remittances etc) as well as capital account.

Capital inflows like FDI, FII help bridge the trade deficit and neutralize BoP.

High consumption expenditure will further inflate the import bill and cause trade deficit. And, so will monetary expansion – pushes up demand and thus imports in the short-term aggravating the BoP.

- 5) A closed economy is likely to have which of the following characteristics?
- a) Fiscal deficit would be zero.
 - b) The central bank does not control money supply.
 - c) The government does not have a right to print currency.
 - d) Balance of Payments is zero.

Solution: d)

A closed economy is self-sufficient, meaning that no imports are brought in and no exports are sent out. The goal is to provide consumers with everything that they need from within the economy's borders. A closed economy is the opposite of an open economy, in which a country will conduct trade with outside regions.

So, if no capital or goods/services are imported, exported, the BoP will be zero.

In this case, the fiscal deficit need not be zero since a developing country may adopt expansionary fiscal policy to tackle poverty and unemployment.

- 6) A Hard currency is the one which
- a) does not change its value relative to movements in the international market
 - b) is considered as a strong currency with high levels of liquidity
 - c) is abundant in the foreign exchange market
 - d) is not convertible to Special Drawing Rights (SDR)

Solution: b)

It is the international currency in which the highest faith is shown and is needed by every economy. The strongest currency of the world is one which has a high level of liquidity, i.e. people are easily willing to sell or buy it due to the high confidence shown in it.

Basically, the economy with the highest as well as highly diversified exports that are compulsive imports for other countries (as of high-level technology, defence products, life-saving medicines and petroleum products) will also create high demand for its currency in the world and become the hard currency. It is always scarce.

Upto the second world war, the best hard currency was the Pound Sterling (£) of the UK, but soon it was replaced by the US Dollar. Some of the hard currencies are Yen, Euro and Sterling Pound

7) Consider the following statements about 'Fiat Money'.

1. It is a currency that a government has declared to be legal tender.
2. It is backed by a physical commodity.
3. Its value increases during hyperinflation.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: b)

Fiat money is currency that a government has declared to be legal tender, but it is not backed by a physical commodity. The value of fiat money is derived from the relationship between supply and demand rather than the value of the material from which the money is made. Because fiat money is not linked to physical reserves, it risks becoming worthless due to hyperinflation.

8) Stressed Assets is a powerful indicator of the health of the banking system. It includes

1. Non-performing Assets
2. Restructured Loans
3. Written off Assets

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: d)

The most important scale of asset quality is Non Performing Assets (NPA). But NPA alone doesn't tell the whole story of bad asset quality of loans given by banks. Hence a new classification is made in the form of stressed assets that comprises restructured loans and written off assets besides NPAs.

Restructured asset or loan are that assets which got an extended repayment period, reduced interest rate, converting a part of the loan into equity, providing additional financing, or some combination of these measures.

Written off assets are those the bank or lender doesn't count the money borrower owes to it. The financial statement of the bank will indicate that the written off loans are compensated through some other way.

9) The year-long slowdown in the Indian economy, has been termed cyclical by the government and other economists. Which of the following factors can lead to cyclical slowdown?

1. Over-investment in capital assets and in inventory.
2. The production of final goods is not absorbed leading to lower prices and lower economic activity.
3. Changing demographics and change in consumer behaviour.

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: b)

Many economists are struggling to classify the Indian economic slowdown. Should it be called "cyclical" or "structural"? Typically, a cyclical slowdown is caused by an excess of investment demand—over-investment in capital assets (residential and non-residential) and in inventory. The production of final goods generated by excess investment is not absorbed, leading to inventory reduction, lower prices, lower economic activity, and some loss in employment. When this is accompanied by excess debt, the cyclical slowdown can be prolonged or it may become structural.

A structural slowdown, on the other hand, is a more deep-rooted phenomenon that occurs due to a one-off shift from an existing paradigm. The changes, which last over a long-term, are driven by disruptive technologies, changing demographics, and/or change in consumer behaviour.

Source Source

10) Consider the following statements regarding Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

1. Bank for International Settlements (BIS) is an international financial institution owned by central banks which fosters international monetary and financial cooperation and serves as a bank for central banks.
2. The BIS hosts the Secretariat of the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision and with it has played a central role in establishing Basel III framework.
3. Reserve Bank of India is the member of BIS.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) is an international financial institution owned by central banks which "fosters international monetary and financial cooperation and serves as a bank for central banks".

It also provides banking services, but only to central banks and other international organizations. It is based in Basel, Switzerland, with representative offices in Hong Kong and Mexico City.

The BIS hosts the Secretariat of the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision and with it has played a central role in establishing the Basel Capital Accords of 1988, Basel II framework in 2004 and more recently Basel III framework.

Sixty-two central banks and monetary authorities are currently members of the BIS and have rights of voting and representation at general meetings. Reserve Bank of India is the member of BIS.

11) Which of the following is disadvantageous to developing countries' international trade?

- a) Protection to domestic industries from dumping
- b) Establishing regional trading blocs
- c) Export of primary articles and import of manufactured goods
- d) Free trade with other developing nations

Solution: c)

The present integration of global markets favours the more competitive product from a more competitive country.

Developed countries have an edge over manufactured goods due to advance in physical as well as human capital. Developing countries are preferred for exporting primary articles because they have an abundance of it.

This affects their competitiveness in the long-run as they miss out on the chance to build a manufacturing base, and remain a primary producer backward economy.

12) Which of the following can be a form of economic “Protectionism” by India?

1. Entry restrictions for foreign nationals
2. Preferential market access policies for domestic industries
3. Increasing custom duties on imported goods and services

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: d)

Protectionism can be any attempt to protect domestic industries from global competition. Restricting movements of people (labour), goods, services will all be considered under economic protectionism.

Preference to domestic industries creates barriers for other MNCs that desire investing in India.

Increasing custom duties on imported goods and services renders Indian goods to be more competitive than goods imported from abroad.

13) Which of the following can lead to an increase and saving in forex reserves in India?

1. Rise in investment by foreign portfolio investors in Indian stocks and foreign direct investments (FDIs).
2. Fall in crude oil prices
3. Fall in overseas remittances and foreign travels from India
4. Cut corporate tax rates in India

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2, 3
- b) 2, 3, 4
- c) 1, 3, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: d)

Why are forex reserves rising despite the slowdown in the economy?

The major reason for the rise in forex reserves is the rise in **investment in foreign portfolio investors** in Indian stocks and foreign direct investments (FDIs). Foreign investors had acquired stakes in several Indian companies in the last two months. According to the data released by RBI, while the FDI inflow stood at \$4 billion in March, it amounted to \$2.1 billion in April.

After pulling out Rs 60,000 crore each from debt and equity segments in March, Foreign Portfolio Investments (FPIs), who expect a turnaround in the economy later this financial year, have now returned to the Indian markets and bought stocks worth over \$2.75 billion in the first week of June. Forex inflows are set to rise further and cross the \$500 billion as Reliance Industries subsidiary, Jio Platforms, has witnessed a series of foreign investments totalling Rs 97,000 crore.

On the other hand, the **fall in crude oil prices** has brought down the oil import bill, saving precious foreign exchange. Similarly, **overseas remittances and foreign travels have fallen steeply** – down 61 per cent in April from \$12.87 billion.

The sharp jump in reserves seen over the last nine-months started with the finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman’s announcement to **cut corporate tax rates** on September 20. Since then the forex reserves have grown by \$73 billion.

[Source](#)

14) Consider the following statements.

1. The Reserve Bank of India functions as the custodian and manager of forex reserves.
2. Majority of India's foreign currency reserves are deposited in foreign central banks.
3. Under the Liberalised Remittances Scheme, individuals from India are allowed to remit up to \$25000

every year to another country for investment and expenditure.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: c)

The **Reserve Bank functions as the custodian and manager of forex reserves**, and operates within the overall policy framework agreed upon with the government. The RBI allocates the dollars for specific purposes. For example, under **the Liberalised Remittances Scheme, individuals are allowed to remit up to \$250,000 every year**. The RBI uses its forex kitty for the orderly movement of the rupee. It sells the dollar when the rupee weakens and buys the dollar when the rupee strengthens. Of late, the RBI has been buying dollars from the market to shore up the forex reserves. When the RBI mops up dollars, it releases an equal amount in rupees. This excess liquidity is sterilised through issue of bonds and securities and LAF operations.

The **RBI Act, 1934 provides the overarching legal framework for deployment of reserves in different foreign currency assets and gold** within the broad parameters of currencies, instruments, issuers and counterparties. As much as **64 per cent of the foreign currency reserves are held in securities like Treasury bills of foreign countries, mainly the US**, 28 per cent is deposited in foreign central banks and 7.4 per cent is also deposited in commercial banks abroad, according to the RBI data.

The return on India's forex reserves kept in foreign central banks and commercial banks is negligible. While the RBI has not divulged the return on forex investment, analysts say it could be around one per cent, or even less than that, considering the fall in interest rates in the US and Euro zone. There was a demand from some quarters that forex reserves should be used for infrastructure development in the country. However, the RBI had opposed the plan.

Another issue is the **high ratio of volatile flows** (portfolio flows and short-term debt) to reserves which is around 80 per cent. This money can exit at a fast pace.

[Source](#)

15) Consider the following statements regarding Financial Sector Regulatory Appointment Search Committee (FSRASC).

1. FSRASC recommends names for the appointment of RBI Governor and chairman of SEBI.
2. FSRASC is headed by Finance Secretary.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

As per the procedure for the appointment of regulator heads, the candidates will be shortlisted by the **Financial Sector Regulatory Appointments Search Committee (FSRASC) headed by the Cabinet Secretary**.

The shortlisted candidates are interviewed by a panel comprising Economic Affairs Secretary and three external members having domain knowledge.

Based on the interaction, **FSRASC recommends name to the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet** headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for approval.

[Source](#)

16) Under 'Import substitution'

1. Government protects the domestic industries from foreign competition
2. Exports are discouraged since they reduce domestic consumption and thus production.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

This policy of Import substitution is aimed at replacing or substituting imports with domestic production.

For e.g. in India, the government protected the domestic industries from foreign competition, so that the same goods that are now imported can be produced domestically.

Protection from imports can take two forms: tariffs and quotas.

The best example would be 'Make In India' rather than 'Import to India'. Firms that used to export goods and services like mobile phones would manufacture in India itself after FDI. This would reduce imports and build domestic manufacturing base.

17) Consider the following about Special Drawing Right (SDR).

1. The SDR is an international reserve asset created and administered by the IMF.
2. SDRs can be exchanged for freely usable currencies.
3. A Gold backing is mandatory for a nation to increase SDR deposits.
4. The SDR is a financial claim on the IMF as it is accepted by most international organizations.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1, 2
- b) 2, 3, 4
- c) 1, 3
- d) 1, 2, 4

Solution: a)

The SDR was created by the IMF in 1969 as a supplementary international reserve asset, in the context of the Bretton Woods fixed exchange rate system. A country participating in this system needed official reserves—government or central bank holdings of gold and widely accepted foreign currencies—that could be used to purchase its domestic currency in foreign exchange markets, as required to maintain its exchange rate.

The value of the SDR is based on a basket of five major currencies—the US dollar, the euro, the Chinese renminbi (RMB), the Japanese yen, and the British pound sterling. No gold backing is needed.

The **SDR is neither a currency, nor a claim on the IMF**. Rather, it is a potential claim on the freely usable currencies of IMF members. Holders of SDRs can obtain these currencies in exchange for their SDRs in two ways: first, through the arrangement of voluntary exchanges between members; and second, by the IMF designating members with strong external positions to purchase SDRs from members with weak external positions.

18) Which of the following statements best describes 'fiscal consolidation'?

- a) Strategy of the government to disinvest public sector enterprises to meet deficit.

- b) Policies undertaken by Governments to reduce their deficits and accumulation of debt stock.
- c) Scheduled banks action plan to recover the loans from non-performing assets.
- d) Government agenda to reform loan disbursal mechanism of scheduled banks.

Solution: b)

Fiscal Consolidation refers to the policies undertaken by Governments (national and sub-national levels) to reduce their deficits and accumulation of debt stock.

FISCAL CONSOLIDATION is a process where government's FISCAL health is getting improved and is indicated by reduced FISCAL deficit. Improved tax revenue realization and better aligned expenditure are the components of FISCAL CONSOLIDATION as the FISCAL deficit reaches at a manageable level.

19) Consider the following statements regarding Non-Banking Financial Companies.

1. NBFCs do not form part of the payment and settlement system and cannot issue cheques drawn on itself.
2. NBFCs can accept demand deposits.
3. Deposit insurance facility of Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation is not available to depositors of NBFCs.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

NBFCs lend and make investments and hence their activities are akin to that of banks; however, there are a few differences as given below:

- i. **NBFC cannot accept demand deposits;** (The NBFCs are allowed to accept/renew public deposits for a minimum period of 12 months and maximum period of 60 months. They cannot accept deposits repayable on demand.)
- ii. NBFCs do not form part of the payment and settlement system and cannot issue cheques drawn on itself;
- iii. deposit insurance facility of Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation is not available to depositors of NBFCs, unlike in case of banks.

[Source](#)

20) Consider the following statements regarding Recession.

1. A recession is a macroeconomic term that refers to a significant decline in general economic activity in a designated region.
2. A significant fall in spending generally leads to a recession.
3. India had been into recession only once since independence i.e., before Liberalisation.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

A recession is a macroeconomic term that refers to a significant decline in general economic activity in a designated region. It had been typically recognized as **two consecutive quarters of economic decline**, as reflected by GDP in conjunction with monthly indicators such as a rise in unemployment.

Governments usually respond to recessions by adopting expansionary macroeconomic policies, such as increasing money supply or increasing government spending and decreasing taxation.

India's fourth recession since independence, the first since liberalisation and perhaps the worst to date, is here, CRISIL said as it predicted the economy to shrink by 5 per cent in the current fiscal because of Covid-19 lockdown. "The first quarter (April to June 2020) will suffer a staggering 25 per cent contraction," it said in its assessment of India's GDP.

In the past 69 years, India has seen a recession only thrice – as per available data – in fiscals 1958, 1966 and 1980. The reason was the same each time – a monsoon shock that hit agriculture, then a sizeable part of the economy.

[Source](#)



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4. Art and Culture

1) With reference to art and archaeological history of India, which of the following are associated with the reign of Ashoka?

1. Rock-cut Elephant at Dhauri
2. Lomus Rishi caves
3. Badami Caves
4. Udayagiri Caves

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2
- b) 3, 4
- c) 1, 3
- d) 2, 4

Solution: a)

Rock-cut Elephant at Dhauri was created during Ashoka's reign (272-231 BC). It is the earliest Buddhist sculpture of Odisha.

Lomus Rishi caves: Located in the Barabar and Nagarjuni hills of Jehanabad district in Bihar, this rock-cut cave was carved out as a sanctuary. It was built during the Ashokan period of the Maurya Empire in the 3rd century BC, as part of the sacred architecture of the Ajivikas.

The Badami cave temples are a complex of Hindu and Jain cave temples located in Bagalkot district in northern part of Karnataka. The caves are considered an example of Indian rock-cut architecture, especially Badami Chalukya architecture, which dates from the 6th century.

Udayagiri Caves: It is a Hindu cave and was made during the Gupta reign. It contains the famous Varaha sculpture.

2) With reference to the religious history of India, the "Sautrantika" sect belongs to

- a) Jainism
- b) Sikhism
- c) Hinduism
- d) Buddhism

Solution: d)

Sautrāntika, ancient school of Buddhism that emerged in India about the 2nd century BC as an offshoot of the Sarvāstivāda ("All-Is-Real Doctrine"). The school is so called because of its reliance on the sutras, or words of the Buddha, and its rejection of the authority of the Abhidharma, a part of the canon.

The Sautrāntika sometimes is characterized as a transitional school that led to the development of the Mahāyāna tradition, and many of its views influenced later Yogācāra thought.

3) Consider the following statements regarding Sangam age.

1. Agriculture was the chief occupation of the people and Land revenue was the chief source of state's Income.
2. Ship building and ornaments making was prominent.
3. The main exports were cotton fabrics, spices and ivory products.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Sangam age Economy:

Agriculture was the chief occupation and Rice was the common crop. Land revenue was the chief source of state's income while custom duty was also imposed on foreign trade. The handicrafts of the Sangam period were popular. ship building and ornaments making was prominent. The main exports were cotton fabrics, spices, ivory products, pearls and precious stones. While gold, horses and sweet wine were the chief imports.

4) Karla is one of the most famous centres of early rock-cut architecture and has received much attention of scholars and commoners alike. What is important about Karla caves?

1. The grand Chaitya griha of Karla is the largest of all the chaitya-grihas of India.
2. The rock-cut cave was completed without accepting any financial donation from individuals apart from their voluntary labour.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

The chaityagriha at Karla is the biggest of its type in the whole of India. The hall measures around thirty-eight m deep from door to back. The object of worship is the stupa at the rear end of the chaityagriha.

The caves were caused from the donations and support of a group of assorted individuals. This includes a prince of Maharathi family; merchants, monks etc.

The inscriptions of Usavadata and Vasisthiputra Pulumavi mention donation of land to the Veluraka Samgha for this.

5) The Group of Monuments at Mamallapuram is a collection of 7th- and 8th-century CE religious monuments. It includes

1. Shore Temple
2. Pancharathas
3. Arjuna's Penance
4. Stone Chariot
5. Varaha Cave

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: c)

Architectural heritage of Mamallapuram include:

- Pancha Rathas
- Varaha Cave
- Shore Temple
- Arjuna's Penance: It is also known as the "Descent of the Ganges".

Stone Chariot is at Hampi, Karnataka.

6) Earliest Viharas were built for Buddhist monks and nuns because

1. It served as a permanent shelter for the wandering monks and nuns during rainy season.

2. It was planned to serve as a centre for propagation of Buddhism.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

Buddhist monks went from place to place throughout the year, teaching people. The only time they stayed in one place was during the rainy season, when it was very difficult to travel. Then, their supporters built temporary shelters for them in gardens, or they lived in natural caves in hilly areas.

As time went on, many supporters of the monks and nuns, and they themselves, felt the need for more permanent shelters and so monasteries were built. These were known as viharas.

There was no Buddhism when the earliest Viharas were made. Buddhism, as an organized religion, came into being after the death of the Buddha.

So, the purpose of preaching dhamma was a later purpose, and not the reason for establishing viharas.

7) Consider the following statements regarding Tantrism in India.

1. There are no references of Tantrism in Harappan Civilization.

2. It was intended to satisfy the material desires of the devotees for physical possessions and to cure the day-to-day diseases and injuries.

3. Tantrism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Saivism and Vaishnavism.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The origin of Tantrism can be dated to the Harappan Civilization, which existed between approximately 2,700 and 1,750 B.C.E.

• However, it was the most -remarkable development in the religious field in India from about the sixth century A.D. was the spread of tantrism.

• Tantrism admitted both women and lower castes into its ranks.

They were intended to satisfy the material desires of the, devotees for physical possessions and to cure the day-to-day diseases and injuries. Tantrism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Saivism and Vaishnavism.

8) Consider the following statements regarding Sohrai Khovar painting.

1. The Sohrai Khovar painting has been practiced in parts of Jharkhand.

2. It is a traditional and ritualistic mural art being practised by local tribal women during local harvest and marriage seasons using local, naturally available soils of different colours.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Jharkhand's Sohrai Khovar painting was given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag recently.

The Sohrai Khovar painting is a traditional and ritualistic mural art being practised by local tribal women during local harvest and marriage seasons using local, naturally available soils of different colours in the area of Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand.

The Sohrai Khovar painting is primarily being practised only in the district of Hazaribagh. However, in recent years, for promotional purposes, it has been seen in other parts of Jharkhand.

Traditionally painted on the walls of mud houses, they are now seen on other surfaces, too. The style features a profusion of lines, dots, animal figures and plants, often representing religious iconography. In recent years, the walls of important public places in Jharkhand, such as the Birsā Munda Airport in Ranchi, and the Hazaribagh and Tatanagar Railway Stations, among others, have been decorated with Sohrai-Khovar paintings.



Source

9) Poompugar, a port city, submerged under Sea 1000 years ago is being digitally reconstructed under Indian Digital Heritage project. Poompugar is located in

- a) Kerala
- b) Maharashtra
- c) Tamil Nadu
- d) Andhra Pradesh

Solution: c)

Poompuhar, a port city in Tamilnadu, submerged under Sea 1000 years ago is being digitally reconstructed under Indian Digital Heritage project. Poompuhar (Puhar or Kaveripattinam) served Early Chola Dynasty around 600 BC to 300 BC.

It is located at the mouth of Cauvery river.



10) Consider the following statements:

1. There was no evidence of musical instruments found at the sites of Indus valley civilization.
2. Jaimini Brahmana speaks collectively of dance and music
3. In Hindustani music, Dhrupad is the pure music without distraction of words.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Solution: b)

Musical instruments like seven-holed flute and Ravanahatha, have been recovered from the sites of Indus Valley Civilization.

The Jaimini Brahmana speaks collectively of dance and music.

Dhrupad is pure music without distraction of words.

11) Consider the following statements regarding the characteristic features of Ashokan pillars?

1. Constructed in pieces by a mason
2. Top portion of the pillar was usually carved with capital figures like that of a bull or lion
3. The stone pillars were erected all over the Mauryan Empire with inscriptions engraved on them

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

The tradition of constructing pillars is very old and it may be observed that erection of pillars was prevalent in the Achaemenian Empire as well. This can be contrasted with the Mauryan pillars which were different from the Achaemenian pillars.

The Mauryan pillars are rock-cut pillars thus displaying the carver's skills, whereas the Achaemenian pillars are constructed in pieces by a mason.

Stone pillars were erected all over the Mauryan Empire with inscriptions engraved on them. The top portion of the pillar was carved with capital figures like the bull, the lion, the elephant, etc.

All the capital figures are vigorous.

12) The Mauryan pillar capital symbolising Dhammachakrapravartana is found at

- a) Sarnath
- b) Vaishali
- c) Nalanda
- d) Rajgir

Solution: a)

Found at Sarnath and popularly known as the Lion Capital is the finest example of Mauryan sculptural tradition.

It is also our national emblem. It is carved with considerable care—voluminous roaring lion figures firmly standing on a circular abacus which is carved with the figures of a horse, a bull, a lion and an elephant in vigorous movement, executed with precision, showing considerable mastery in the sculptural techniques.

This pillar capital symbolising Dhammachakrapravartana (the first sermon by the Buddha) has become a standard symbol of this great historical event in the life of the Buddha.

13) Consider the following statements about Nalanda Mahavihara.

1. It was originally built by Emperor Kumaragupta I of Gupta Dynasty.
2. Post the Gupta period Nalanda was destroyed by several kings, particularly during the 7th century under the reign of emperor Harsha of Kannauj.
3. Both Chinese Pilgrims Huien Tsang and Fa-hien studied at Nalanda.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Nalanda was a Mahavihara, a large and revered Buddhist monastery, in the ancient kingdom of Magadha (modern-day Bihar) in India. Originally built by Emperor Kumaragupta I of Gupta Dynasty; Expansion works continued during and after Gupta period. Post the Gupta period Nalanda continued to develop under the auspices of several kings, particularly during the 7th century under the reign of emperor Harsha of Kannauj. The Chinese Pilgrims Huien Tsang and Fa-hien studied at Nalanda and have left account of the settlement and its life.

14) Which of the following are an important ancient port cities?

1. Kanchi
2. Madura
3. Kadalkol
4. Muziris

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2, 3
- b) 2, 3, 4
- c) 1, 2, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: c)

Kanchi, known as Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu, it was here around 600 BC to 300 BC that the Chinese used to come in foreign ships to purchase pearls, rare stones and glass in return they sold gold and silk.

Madura (Madurai) in Tamil Nadu: It was the capital of the Pandayas who controlled the pearl fisheries of the Gulf of Mannar.

Muziris was an ancient Indo-Roman port of Muziris or Musiri on the Malabar Coast, Kerala dating back to 1st century BC.

The **Chola Dynasty port city in Tamil Nadu** that vanished from maritime history around 1,000 years ago will be digitally reconstructed by a consortium led by the Department of Science and Technology.

DST officials said there are exhaustive narrations in works of Sangam Tamil literature to infer that the city, located 30 km from the existing Poompuhar town in southern TN, was submerged due to "*kadalkol*" or rising sea levels.

15) Which of the following are the Neolithic sites in India?

1. Burzahom
2. Brahmagiri
3. Tekkalkota
4. Chirand

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2, 3
- b) 2, 3, 4
- c) 1, 3, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: d)

One of the most important Neolithic agricultural settlements in Indian subcontinent is Mehrgarh. It is located on the Bolan River, a tributary of the Indus, at the eastern edge of the Baluchistan plateau.

Other important Neolithic sites include Gufkral and Burzahom in Kashmir; *Mahagara, Chopani Mando*, and *Koldihwa* in Belan valley in Uttar Pradesh; *Chirand* in Bihar etc.

In South India, the important Neolithic sites include Kodekal, Utnur, Nagatjunikonda, Palavoy in Andhra Pradesh; Tekkalkolta, Maski, Narsipur, Sangankallu, Hallur, and Brahmagiri in Karnataka; Pariamlpalli in Tamil Nadu etc.

16) Consider the following statements regarding Megaliths in India.

1. Megaliths were constructed either as burial sites or commemorative memorials.
2. In India, archaeologists trace the majority of the megaliths to the Iron Age.
3. Megaliths are spread across the Indian subcontinent, though the bulk of them are found in Northern India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

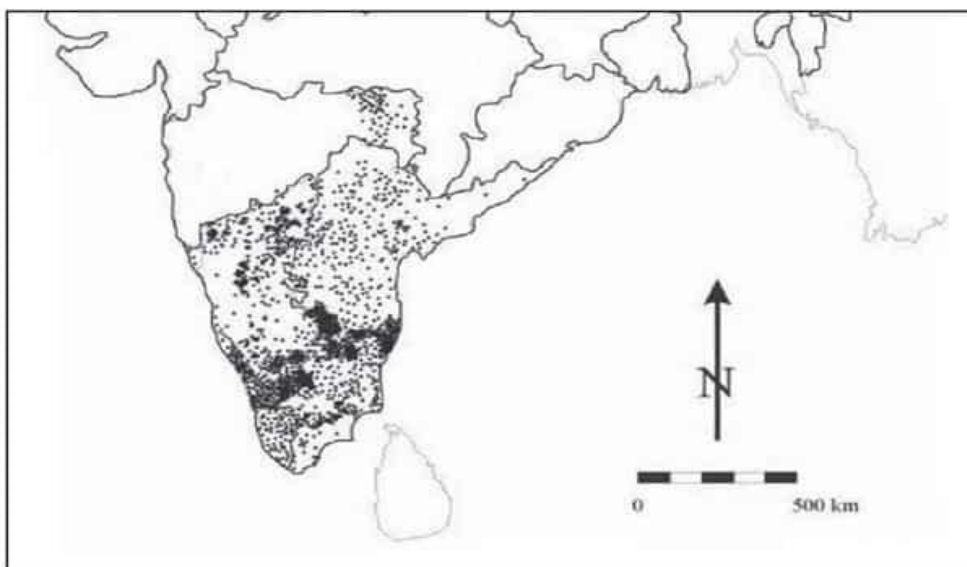
Solution: a)

Megaliths were constructed either as burial sites or commemorative (non-sepulchral) memorials.

Megalithic culture, one which lasted from the Neolithic Stone Age to the early Historical Period (2500 BC to AD 200) across the world. In India, archaeologists trace the majority of the megaliths to the Iron Age (1500 BC to 500 BC), though some sites precede the Iron Age, extending up to 2000 BC.

Megaliths are spread across the Indian subcontinent, though the bulk of them are found in peninsular India, concentrated in the states of Maharashtra (mainly in Vidarbha), Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

According to archaeologists, around 2,200 megalithic sites can be found in peninsular India itself, most of them unexcavated. Even today, a living megalithic culture endures among some tribes such as the Gonds of central India and the Khasis of Meghalaya.



Map 1. Distribution of Megalithic sites in Peninsular India.

17) Which among the following is the oldest and the most recent linguistic groups in India?

- a) Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman.
- b) Austro-Asiatic and Indo-Aryan.
- c) Indo-Aryan and Austro-Asiatic.
- d) Tibeto-Burman and Dravidian.

Solution: b)

There are four linguistic groups in India: Austro-Asiatic (the oldest), Tibeto-Burman, Dravidian and Indo-Aryan (the most recent).

18) Lauria Nandangarh is famous for

- 1. A large excavated Stupa belonging to the Ashokan period
- 2. A monolithic iron pillar of the Mauryan period that was used to propagate Dharma to Sri Lanka

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

Lauria Nandangarh is a historical site located in West Champaran district of Bihar. Remains of Mauryan period have been found here.

On excavation, Nandangarh turned out to be stupendous Stupa with a polygonal or cruciform base; with its missing dome which must have been proportionately tall, the Stupa must have been one of the highest in India. This thirty-two-foot-tall column has an almost fifty-ton seated lion capital placed on its top, an engineering feat worth admiring.

The bull capital from Rampura is also another fine example of Mauryan sculpture.

The village draws its name from a pillar (laur) of Ashoka standing there and the stupa mound Nandangarh (variant Nanadgarh) about 2 km south-west of the pillar.



19) It is the earliest form of dance which forms the basis of all stylised dances in Manipur with its roots in the pre-Vaishnavite period. Priests and priestesses re-enact the theme of the creation of the world in this dance which is?

- a) Dashavatar
- b) Krishnattam

- c) Lai Haraoba
- d) Sankirtana

Solution: c)

Lai Haraoba is one of the main festivals still performed in Manipur which has its roots in the pre-Vaishnavite period. **Lai Haraoba** is the earliest form of dance which forms the basis of all stylised dances in Manipur. Literally meaning - the merrymaking of the gods, it is performed as a ceremonial offering of song and dance. The principal performers are the **maibas** and **maibis** (priests and priestesses) who re-enact the theme of the creation of the world.

20) With reference to Madhubani paintings, consider the following statements.

1. It finds mention in the ancient Indian text of Ramayana.
2. Brushes are extensively used to create the paintings.
3. These are folk paintings that originated in Central India.
4. The paintings are largely secular in nature and depiction of objects.
5. Since the paintings have been confined to a limited geographical range, the themes as well as the style are more or less, the same.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: d)

Madhubani which means 'forest of honey', is a style of folk painting old enough to find mention in some of the ancient Indian texts like Ramayana. It is also known as Mithila, for its origin in the Mithila region in Bihar. Instead of contemporary brushes, objects like twigs, matchsticks and even fingers are used to create the paintings.

Since the paintings have been confined to a limited geographical range, the themes as well as the style are more or less, the same.

Madhubani is now found on apparel, paper, canvas, and other products, which boast of designs inspired by Hindu deities such as Krishna, Rama, Lakshmi, Shiva, Durga, Saraswati, all of whom have been painted in Madhubani since ancient times.

5. History

- 1) Which of the following statements about the administration under the Vijayanagara Empire is incorrect?
- The King was the highest court of appeal.
 - The king enjoyed absolute authority in executive, judicial and legislative matters.
 - The king was assisted by a council of ministers in his day to day administration.
 - The succession to the throne was on the principle of merit.

Solution: d)

The succession to the throne was hereditary. However, sometimes usurpation to the throne took place as Saluva Narasimha came to power by ending the Sangama dynasty.

The Empire was divided into different administrative units called Mandalams, Nadus, sthalas and finally into gramas. The governor of Mandalam was called Mandaleswara or Nayak. Vijayanagar rulers gave full powers to the local authorities in the administration.

- 2) The amaram lands in the Vijayanagar Empire were
- State forest Reserves
 - Land granted to army officers
 - Donations made to the temple sites
 - Lands dedicated for industries

Solution: b)

The Vijayanagar army was well-organized and efficient. It consisted of the cavalry, infantry, artillery and elephants.

The top-grade officers of the army were known as Nayaks or Poligars. They were granted land in lieu of their services. These lands were called amaram. Soldiers were usually paid in cash.

- 3) Gandhiji was the editor of three English weeklies, these included
1. Indian Opinion
 2. Harijan
 3. Heritage India
 4. Navjivan

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2
- b) 2, 3, 4
- c) 1, 4
- d) 1, 3, 4

Solution: a)

These were Indian Opinion (in South Africa during 1903-1915), Young India (1919- 1931), and Harijan (1933-1942 and 1946-January 1948).

- 4) The Swadeshi movement that spanned over several decades in India
1. Followed 'moderate' methods as well boycotts of institutions
 2. Was also called vande mataram movement
 3. Was based on Gandhian ideals

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: b)

L. M. Bhole identifies five phases of the Swadeshi movement.

- 1850 to 1904: developed by leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale, Ranade, Tilak, G.V. Joshi and Bhaswat.K.Nigoni. This was also known as First Swadeshi Movement.
- 1905 to 1917: Began with and because of the partition of Bengal in 1905 by Lord Curzon.
- 1918 to 1947: Swadeshi thought shaped by Gandhi, accompanied by the rise of Indian industrialists.
- 1948 to 1991: Widespread curbs on international and inter-state trade. India became a bastion of obsolete technology during the licence-permit raj.
- 1991 onwards: liberalization and globalization. Foreign capital, foreign technology, and many foreign goods are not excluded and doctrine of export-led growth resulted in modern industrialism.

The second Swadeshi movement started with the partition of Bengal by the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon in 1905 and continued up to 1911. It was the most successful of the pre-Gandhian movement.

5) Whitley Commission established in British India was mandated to report on

- a) Financial reforms needed in British administration
- b) Police and military reforms needed in the wake of the 1857 mutiny
- c) Trade and commerce within the princely states
- d) Existing conditions of labour and to make recommendations

Solution: d)

The Royal Commission on Labour or the Whitley Commission on Labour was set up in 1929 to inquire into the existing conditions of labour in industrial undertakings and plantations in India. The Commission was chaired by John Henry Whitley. The commission submitted its report in 1931. The report surprised many by concurring with the criticisms of Mahatma Gandhi and others that poverty was the cause of India's social and industrial problems. It was also critical of British employers' role in perpetuating the problems.

6) Consider the following statements regarding the taxation system of Krishnadevaraya, the ruler of Vijayanagara Empire.

1. The tax rate on land was fixed depending on the quality of the land.
2. Private owners of workshops paid an industries tax.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Land revenue was the chief source of income. Land was divided into four categories for purposes of assessment: wet land, dry land, orchards and woods. Usually the share was one sixth of the produce. Land revenue could be paid in cash or kind. The rates varied according to the type of the crops, soil, method of irrigation, etc.

Besides land tax, many professional taxes were also imposed. They were on shopkeepers, farm servants, workmen, postmen, shoemakers, musicians etc. There was also a tax on property. Grazing and house taxes were also imposed. Private owners of workshops paid an industries tax.

7) Which of the following factors led to the decline of the Vijayanagara Empire?

1. Strain in the imperial structure following the death of Krishnadeva Raya's
2. Rebelliousness in military chiefs
3. Invasion of the Mughals

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: a)

Strain began to show within the imperial structure following Krishnadevaraya's death in 1529 as his successors were troubled by rebellious nayakas or military chiefs. By 1542 control at the centre had shifted to another ruling lineage, that of the Aravidu, which remained in power till the end of the seventeenth century. During this period, as indeed earlier, the military ambitions of the rulers of Vijayanagara as well as those of the Deccan Sultanates resulted in shifting alignments.

Eventually this led to an alliance of the Sultanates against Vijayanagara. In 1565 Rama Raya the chief minister of Vijayanagara, led the army into battle at Rakshasi Tangadi (also known as Talikota), where his forces were routed by the combined armies of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golconda. The victorious armies sacked the city of Vijayanagara. The city was totally abandoned within a few years.

Invasion of the Mughals is not a reason for the decline of Vijayanagar empire in South.

8) Consider the following regarding the Revolt of 1857.

- 1. It was during the reign of Governor General Canning.
- 2. Mangal Pandey led the Mutiny.
- 3. It started from Delhi.
- 4. The mutiny did not spread to South India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1, 2
- b) 1, 3
- c) 2, 3
- d) 1, 4

Solution: d)

The revolt of 1857 was held during the reign of Governor General Lord Canning.

The immediate cause of the revolt of 1857 was that Mangal Pandey killed two British officers on parade at Barrackpore.

This revolt spread in Lucknow, Ambala and Meerut cantonments. On May 10, 1857 soldiers at Meerut refused to touch the new Enfield rifle cartridges. The soldiers along with other group of civilians, went on rampage.

They marched to Delhi, seized the city and proclaimed the Bahadur Shah Zafar as the emperor of India. Due to the lack of unity and organisation this revolt failed.

9) Given are the reasons below why rebels failed in attaining their goal during the 1857 revolt. Which of them are correct?

- 1. They were poorly served by their leaders with the exception of few
- 2. The rebels had no political perspective or a definite vision of the future
- 3. Almost half the Indian soldiers fought against their own countrymen

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: d)

Although the rebels received the sympathy of the people, the country as a whole was not behind them. The merchants, intelligentsia and Indian rulers not only kept aloof, but actively supported the British. Meetings were

organized in Calcutta and Bombay by them to pray for the success of the British. Despite the Doctrine of Lapse, the Indian rulers who expected their future to be safer with the British liberally provided them with men and materials. Indeed, the sepoys might have made a better fight of it if they had received their support. Almost half the Indian soldiers not only did not Revolt but fought against their own countrymen. Apart from some honourable exceptions like the Rani of Jhansi, Kunwar Singh and Maulvi Ahmadullah, the rebels were poorly served by their leaders. Most of them failed to realize the significance of the Revolt and simply did not do enough. Bahadur Shah and Zeenat Mahal had no faith in the sepoys and negotiated with the British to secure their safety. Most of the taluqdars tried only to protect their own interests. Some of them, like Man Singh, changed sides several times depending on which side had the upper hand. Apart from a commonly shared hatred for alien rule, the rebels had no political perspective or a definite vision of the future. They were all prisoners of their own past, fighting primarily to regain their lost privileges. Unsurprisingly, they proved incapable of ushering in a new political order.

10) Consider the following statements regarding Sedition Law in India.

1. Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which deals with sedition, was drafted by Thomas Babington Macaulay.
2. Mahatma Gandhi was never held under the sedition trial during freedom movement.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

Famous sedition trials during freedom movement:

The first is the trial of Jogendra Chandra Bose in 1891. Bose, the editor of the newspaper, Bangobasi, wrote an article criticizing the Age of Consent Bill for posing a threat to the religion and for its coercive relationship with Indians.

The other most well-known cases are the sedition trials of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the trial of Mahatma Gandhi in 1922. Mahatma Gandhi for his articles published in Young India.

11) With reference to certain works of Medieval period, consider the following statements.

1. Al-Biruni's Kitab-ul-Hind deals with a variety of subjects, inter alia, philosophy, alchemy, social life, laws and metrology.
2. Ibn Battuta's book of travels, called Rihla, written in Arabic, is a source of information about the social and cultural life in the Indian subcontinent of the Medieval period.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Al-Biruni's Kitab-ul-Hind, written in Arabic, is simple and lucid. It is a voluminous text, divided into 80 chapters on subjects such as **religion and philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology**.

Ibn Battuta's book of travels, called Rihla, written in Arabic, provides extremely rich and interesting details about the social and cultural life in the subcontinent in the fourteenth century.

Unlike most other members of his class, Ibn Battuta considered experience gained through travels to be a more important source of knowledge than books. He just loved travelling, and went to far-off places, exploring new worlds and peoples.

12) According to Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858

1. British Crown assumed the sovereignty and control over all princely states and their subjects.
2. The crown would gradually introduce responsible government in India where subjects would be the source of power.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

As per the proclamation, **all treaties and agreements made with the Indian native princes under the authority of the East India company did not cease to exist** but were there to stay and accepted by the crown.

The declaration expressed **faith and the rights, dignity and status of the native princes**. The Indian public was given an assurance that there would be no extension of the current territorial possessions.

The most important result was that now onwards the Indian Sepoys were enlisted in the regular service in the British Army and participated in the world wars in the next century.

13) Which of the following were involved in reducing or eliminating unjust social discrimination in pre-colonial India?

1. Buddhism
2. Bhakti movement
3. Sufi movement

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: d)

A lot of social evils had plagued Indian society. The well-known issues are that of sati, child marriage, widow remarriage and caste discrimination. It is not that attempts were not made to fight social discrimination in pre-colonial India. They were central to Buddhism, to Bhakti and Sufi movements. Going ahead, what marked the post-colonial 19th century social reform attempts was the modern context and mix of ideas. It was a creative combination of modern ideas of western liberalism and a new look on traditional literature.

14) Consider the following statements about Tattvabodhini Sabha.

1. It was a splinter group of the Brahmo Samaj.
2. It was founded by Debendranath Tagore.
3. It opposed the Vedantic views of Hinduism.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

As per some commentators, "Their view, at least in the early years, was that the world is created by God, and all things within it are pathways to knowledge of Brahman, the Ultimate Self, and the ultimate goal.

Similarly, they saw that material wealth, if made and possessed with the correct intention - that of helping society and others – was in fact not only ethically sound, but an utter necessity for harmonious society."

In 1859, the Sabha was dissolved back into the Brahmo Samaj by Debendranath Tagore.

15) Consider the following statements about Quit India Movement.

1. Quit India Movement was a corollary of the failure of the Cabinet Mission Plan.
2. The first half of the movement was peaceful with demonstrations and processions.
3. A significant feature of the Quit India Movement was the emergence of what came to be known as parallel governments in some parts of the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

It was in 1942 when the world was going through the havoc caused by World War II. India too was facing the heat and after the **Cripps Mission** had failed, and on 8 August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi made a Do or Die call through the Quit India movement.

On August 8, 1942, Mahatma Gandhi made a Do or Die call in his Quit India speech which was delivered in Bombay at the Gowalia Tank Maidan.

Even though the speech caused some turmoil within the party and even leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad were apprehensive and critical of the call, but backed it and stuck with Gandhi's leadership until the end.

Other key facts:

- o Several national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Abdul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were arrested.
- o The Congress was declared an unlawful association, leaders were arrested and its offices all over the country were raided and their funds were frozen.
- o The **first half of the movement was peaceful with demonstrations and processions**. The peaceful protest was carried till Mahatma Gandhi's release.
- o The **second half of the movement was violent with raids and setting fire** at post offices, government buildings and railway stations. Lord Linlithgow adopted the policy of violence.

A significant feature of the Quit India Movement was the **emergence of what came to be known as parallel governments in some parts of the country**. The first one was proclaimed in Ballia, in East UP, in August 1942 under the leadership of Chittu Pande. In Tamluk in the Midnapur district of Bengal, the Jatiya Sarkar came into existence on 17 December, 1942 and lasted till September 1944. Satara, in Maharashtra, emerged as the base of the longest lasting and effective parallel government.

16) During the Mughal period of Indian history, the term Parwana refer to

- a) Order of a member of the royal family
- b) Proceedings of the provincial court.
- c) Orders issued by higher authorities.
- d) Order of the emperor.

Solution: c)

Nishan- order of a member of the royal family.

Farman- order of the emperor.

Parwana- orders issued by higher authorities.

Siyaha huzur- proceedings of the provincial court.

17) The inscriptions of the Cholas mention various kinds of taxes. Which of these is the most frequently mentioned tax in these inscriptions?

- a) Ladamol
- b) Vetti

- c) Surnam
- d) Rumolna

Solution: b)

Their inscriptions refer to more than 400 terms for different kinds of taxes.

The most frequently mentioned tax is vetti, taken not in cash but in the form of forced labour, and kadamai, or land revenue.

There were also taxes on thatching the house, the use of a ladder to climb palm trees, a cess on succession to family property, etc.

18) Chola inscriptions mention several categories of land. Among them vellanvagai was a land

- a) given for the maintenance of a school
- b) donated to Jaina institutions
- c) belonging to non-Brahmana peasant proprietors
- d) left for fallow cultivation

Solution: c)

These were the major categories:

Vellanvagai: land of non-Brahmana peasant proprietors

Brahmadeya: land gifted to Brahmanas

Shalabhoga: land for the maintenance of a school

Devadana, tirunamattukkani: land gifted to temples

Pallichchhandam: land donated to Jaina institutions

19) Consider the following statements regarding Young Bengal Movement.

1. It attacked old traditions and decadent customs
2. It advocated women's rights and their education
3. It organized debates against idol worship

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Henry Vivian Derozio was the founder of the Young Bengal Movement. He taught in the Hindu College, Calcutta.

His followers were known as the Derozians and their movement the Young Bengal Movement.

They attacked old traditions and decadent customs. They also advocated women's rights and their education.

They founded associations and organized debates against idol worship, casteism and superstitions.

20) The main objective of the Prarthana Samaj was to

- a) Spiritually purify the Hindu community from western pollution
- b) Securing social justice for the oppressed
- c) Revive the Gurukul education system in India
- d) Establish a swatantra (free) India

Solution: b)

Prarthana Samaj was founded by Aatma Ram Pandurang in 1867 with an aim to make people believe in one God and worship only one God. The main reformers were the intellectuals who advocate reforms of the social system of the Hindus.

It sought to remove caste restrictions, abolish child marriage, encourage the education of women, and end the ban on widow remarriage.

The religious meetings of the Samaj drew upon Hindu, Buddhist and Christian texts.

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6. Environment

- 1) Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in
- Andhra Pradesh
 - Maharashtra
 - Madhya Pradesh
 - Tamil Nadu

Solution: b)

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra. It is Maharashtra's oldest and largest national park.

- 2) Which of the following can lead to reduction of soil organic carbon?
- Volcanoes
 - Frequent cropping
 - Earthquakes
 - Excessive tillage
 - Urban expansion

Select the correct answer code:

- 1, 2, 3, 4
- 1, 2, 4
- 1, 3, 4, 5
- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Solution: d)

Reasons for the reduction of soil organic carbon:

There may be **natural factors** such as floods, earthquakes and volcanoes.

The **human induced factors** are:

- Urban expansion
- Over grazing
- Excessive tillage
- Land degradation due to inappropriate agriculture practices
- Frequent cropping
- Unscientific crop rotation
- Improper agriculture practices
- Poor irrigation and water management

- 3) With reference to ecological succession, the term Seral stage refers to
- Intermediate stage in an ecological succession.
 - Final stage in the ecological succession that is in near equilibrium with the environment.
 - First stage of primary succession in an area.
 - First stage of secondary succession in areas where natural biotic communities have been destroyed.

Solution: a)

A **seral stage** is an intermediate stage found in ecological succession in an ecosystem advancing towards its climax community. In many cases more than one seral stage evolves until climax conditions are attained.

- 4) Consider the following statements regarding *Eutrophication*.

- Eutrophication* is when a body of water becomes overly enriched with minerals and nutrients which induce excessive growth of algae and in turn, increases water quality.
- Increase of phytoplankton in a water body is the response to increased levels of nutrients.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

Eutrophication is when a body of water becomes overly enriched with minerals and nutrients which induce excessive growth of algae. This process may result in oxygen depletion of the water body. One example is an "algal bloom" or great increase of phytoplankton in a water body as a response to increased levels of nutrients. Eutrophication is often induced by the discharge of nitrate or phosphate-containing detergents, fertilizers, or sewage into an aquatic system.

5) Consider the following statements.

- 1. An ecological niche is the unique functional role or place of a species in an ecosystem.
- 2. No two species have exact identical niches.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

A niche is the unique functional role or place of a species in an ecosystem. It is a description of all the biological, physical and chemical factors that a species needs to survive, stay healthy and reproduce.

A niche is unique for a species, which means no two species have exact identical niches. Niche plays an important role in conservation of organisms.

If we have to conserve species in its native habitat we should have knowledge about the niche requirements of the species and should ensure that all requirements of its niche are fulfilled.

6) Consider the following statements regarding snowflake coral

- 1. It is a keystone species of marine ecosystem.
- 2. It is found only in Gulf of Kutch.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

- Colonies of snowflake coral (*Carijoa riisei*), an invasive species was documented off the coast of Thiruvananthapuram and Kanyakumari. It could pose a serious threat to the marine ecology of the region.
- The snowflake coral is known to inhabit reefs and underwater structures such as shipwrecks and piers, attaching itself to metal, concrete and even plastic. It is considered an invasive species because of its capacity to dominate space and crowd out other marine organisms.



7) Due to some reasons, if there is a huge fall in the population of species of butterflies, what could be its likely consequence/consequences?

1. Pollination of some plants could be adversely affected.
2. There could be a drastic increase in the fungal infections of some cultivated plants.
3. It could lead to a fall in the population of some species of wasps, spiders and birds.

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: c)

Bees and butterflies play a vital role in the pollination of plants and the production of crops by transporting pollen grains from one place to another.

Statement 2 is an absurd statement.

These are some of the common predators of butterflies: wasps, ants, parasitic flies, birds, snakes, toads, rats etc. The decline in butterfly population would therefore adversely affect the food chain.

8) What do you understand by an indicator species?

- a) Its status provides information on the overall health of the ecosystem.
- b) It is a representative species of all species that are threatened or endangered in the ecosystem
- c) It is an endemic species that is at the lowest level of the food chain.
- d) It is a keystone species of an ecosystem without which the local food chain may collapse.

Solution: a)

It provides information on the overall condition of the ecosystem and of other species in that ecosystem. It reflects the quality and changes in environmental conditions as well as aspects of community composition. River otters (*Lontra canadensis*) can be an indicator species of clean rivers. Or presence of too much algae can be the indication of toxicity in a marine ecosystem.

9) What is a "Biotope"?

- a) It is an ecosystem that supports the genetic mutation of a contiguous ecosystem.
- b) It is a well-defined geographical area, characterised by specific ecological conditions.
- c) It is a biome that harbours all species of same phenotype.
- d) It is a community of species that reproduces entirely by asexual reproduction.

Solution: b)

Biotope is an area that is uniform in environmental conditions and in its distribution of animal and plant life. It is often used interchangeably with the word habitat.

A biotope is generally not considered to be a large-scale phenomenon. For example, a biotope might be a neighbouring park, a back garden, even potted plants or a fish tank on a porch.

In other words, the biotope is not a macroscopic but a microscopic approach to preserving the ecosystem and biological diversity.

Phenotype is the set of observable characteristics of an individual resulting from the interaction of its genotype with the environment.

10) What do you understand by Ecological footprint?

- a) The way in which ecological agents reveal their preferences through ecological activity
- b) A degree of impairment to an ecosystem, which when surpassed is too severe to allow recovery of that ecosystem
- c) An index of the area of a productive ecosystem required to produce the resources used and to assimilate the wastes produced by a defined population
- d) Non-monetary assessment of ecosystem integrity, health or resilience

Solution: c)

As per the Millennium Eco Assessment it is an index of the area of productive land and aquatic ecosystems required to produce the resources used and to assimilate the wastes produced by a defined population at a specified material standard of living, wherever on Earth that land may be located.

Ecological footprint analysis is widely used around the Earth in support of sustainability assessments.

It can be used to measure and manage the use of resources throughout the economy and explore the sustainability of individual lifestyles, goods and services, organizations, industry sectors, neighborhoods, cities, regions and nations.

11) Humus is the dark organic matter that forms in the soil when plant and animal matter decays.

Consider the following statements in this context.

- 1. Humus contains nitrogen that is essential for plant growth and helps in nutrient retention.
- 2. Humus contributes to moisture retention in the soil by increasing micro-porosity.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Humus should be differentiated from decomposing organic matter. The latter is rough- looking material and remains of the original plant are still visible. Fully humified organic matter, on the other hand, has a uniform dark, spongy, jelly-like appearance, and is amorphous. It may remain like this for millennia or more.

The process of humification can occur naturally in soil, or in the production of compost.

Humus has a characteristic black or dark brown color and is organic due to an accumulation of organic carbon.

The rate at which raw organic matter is converted into humus promotes (when fast) or limits (when slow) the coexistence of plants, animals, and microbes in soil.

Effective humus and stable humus are further sources of nutrients to microbes, the former provides a readily available supply, and the latter acts as a longer-term storage reservoir.

12) Consider the following statements regarding dissolved oxygen in an aquatic ecosystem

- 1. It increases with increase in temperature of a water-body.
- 2. Its concentration in fresh water is usually more than the concentration of oxygen in air.
- 3. Snow cover of ice on water reduces dissolved oxygen concentration.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1, 2
- b) 3 only

- c) 1, 3
- d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: b)

Dissolved oxygen (DO) is a measure of how much oxygen is dissolved in the water - the amount of oxygen available to living aquatic organisms. The amount of dissolved oxygen in a stream or lake can tell us a lot about its water quality.

Oxygen concentrations are much higher in air, which is about 21% oxygen, than in water, which is a tiny fraction of 1 percent oxygen.

Dissolved oxygen levels decrease with increasing temperature and atmospheric oxygen content is far higher than dissolved oxygen levels.

Ice and snow reduce the amount of sunlight reaching aquatic plants, thereby reducing photosynthesis and oxygen production.

13) Consider the following statements about Pulicat Lake

1. Pulicat Lagoon is the largest brackish water lagoon in India.
2. The annual Flamingo Festival is held at Pulicat lake.
3. The lake encompasses Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Pulicat Lagoon is the second largest brackish water lagoon in India, after Chilika Lake. The lake encompasses the Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary.

Flamingo festival is an annual festival held in the Pulicat Lake.

14) Which of the following national and international events monitors Ozone pollution?

1. Gothenburg Protocol
2. *Bonn Convention*
3. National Air Quality index
4. System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2, 3
- b) 1, 3, 4
- c) 3, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: b)

The **1999 Gothenburg Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone** is a multi-pollutant protocol designed to reduce acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone. The Protocol is part of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

The *Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)*, also known as the *Bonn Convention*, aims to conserve terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species throughout their range.

Ozone has been classified and monitored as one of the eight pollutants under National Air Quality index.

Ozone is monitored as one of the Pollutants under SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting).

- 15) Basel Ban Amendment is related to
- Import of Hazardous chemicals
 - Flue-gas desulfurization
 - Global waste dumping prohibition
 - Long range transboundary air pollution

Solution: c)

The **1995 Basel Ban Amendment, a global waste dumping prohibition**, has become an international law after Croatia ratified it on September 6, 2019.

Croatia became the 97th country to ratify the ban, which was adopted by the parties to the Basel Convention in 1995, to **protect human health and the environment against the adverse effects of hazardous wastes**, according to Basel Action Network (BAN).

BAN is a United States-based charity organisation and is one among the organisations and countries, which created the Basel Ban Amendment — hailed as a landmark agreement for global environmental justice. The **Ban Amendment prohibits all export of hazardous wastes, including electronic wastes and obsolete ships** from 29 wealthiest countries of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to non-OECD countries.

- 16) As Earth's climate warms, the permafrost is thawing. Thawing permafrost can have impact on our planet like
- Thawing permafrost can destroy houses, roads and other infrastructure built on permafrost.
 - Microbes begin decomposing the plant material in the soil called organic carbon.
 - It could make humans and animals very sick.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- 1, 2
- 1, 3
- 2, 3
- 1, 2, 3

Solution: d)

As Earth's climate warms, the permafrost is thawing. That means the ice inside the permafrost melts, leaving behind water and soil.

Thawing permafrost can have dramatic impacts on our planet and the things living on it. For example: Many northern villages are built on permafrost. When permafrost is frozen, it's harder than concrete. However, thawing permafrost can destroy houses, roads and other infrastructure.

When permafrost is frozen, plant material in the soil—called organic carbon—can't decompose, or rot away. As permafrost thaws, microbes begin decomposing this material. This process releases greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane to the atmosphere.

When permafrost thaws, so do ancient bacteria and viruses in the ice and soil. These newly-unfrozen microbes could make humans and animals very sick. Scientists have discovered microbes more than 400,000 years old in thawed permafrost.

[Source](#)

- 17) Which of the following adaptations help mangrove plants to cope with their dynamic and harsh ecosystem?
- Vivipary
 - Stilt roots

3. Pneumatophores

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: d)

Mangrove environment is highly dynamic and harsh and mangrove species are variously adapted to cope with these environmental conditions.

Breathing roots: Underground tissue of any plant requires oxygen for respiration and in mangrove environment, oxygen in soil is very limited or nil. This necessitates mangrove root system to take up oxygen from the atmosphere. For this purpose, **mangrove species have specialized above ground roots called breathing roots or pneumatophores.** These roots have numerous pores through which oxygen enters into the underground tissues. In some plants buttress roots function as breathing roots and also provide mechanical support to the tree.

Silt roots: In some mangrove species, roots diverge from stems and branches and penetrate the soil some distance away from the main stem as in the case of banyan trees. Because of their appearance and because they provide the main physical support to these they are called as stilt roots. These roots also have many pores through which atmospheric oxygen enters into the roots.

Vivipary: Saline water, unconsolidated saline soil with little or no oxygen is not a conducive environment for seeds to germinate and establish. To overcome this, mangrove species have unique way of reproduction, which is generally known as vivipary. **In this method of reproduction, seeds germinate and develop into seedlings while the seeds are still attached to the parent tree.** These seedlings are normally called as propagules and they photosynthesize while still attached to the mother tree. The parent tree supplies water and necessary nutrients. They are buoyant and float in the water for some time before rooting themselves on suitable soil.

18) In what ways do naturally-occurring wildfires play an integral role in nature?

- 1. They help return nutrients to the soil
- 2. They act as a disinfectant
- 3. They allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, enabling a new generation of seedlings to grow

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: c)

“Although often harmful and destructive to humans, **naturally occurring wildfires play an integral role in nature.** They return nutrients to the soil by burning dead or decaying matter. They also act as a disinfectant, removing disease-ridden plants and harmful insects from a forest ecosystem. And by burning through thick canopies and brushy undergrowth, wildfires allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, enabling a new generation of seedlings to grow.”

19) Mediterranean trees adapt themselves to dry summers with the help of their thick barks and wax coated leaves. These help them to

- a) Reduce transpiration
- b) Increase rate of water flow from roots to shoots
- c) Cut down the need for photosynthesis
- d) Increase the area of the leaves to step up glucose intake

Solution: a)

Transpiration is the loss of water from the leaves through stomata.

This creates a suction pull in plants that creates demand for more water from the roots.

If transpiration is high due to large area of large pores of the leaves, water demand for the plant is likely to be high, which would not work for a climate like Mediterranean. So, waxy leaves and thick barks reduce transpiration and thus water need.

20) Which of the following are the sources of arsenic contamination.

1. Weathering of rocks and minerals followed by leaching and runoff.
2. Intense exploitation of groundwater
3. Iron coprecipitation
4. Burning of coal

Select the correct answer code:

- a) 1, 2, 3
- b) 1, 2, 4
- c) 2, 3, 4
- d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: b)

The sources of arsenic are natural or may partly stem from anthropogenic activities like intense exploitation of groundwater, application of fertilizers, burning of coal and leaching of metals from coal-ash tailings.

Arsenic is introduced into soil and groundwater during weathering of rocks and minerals followed by subsequent leaching and runoff.

Among the various arsenic removal technologies, lime softening and iron coprecipitation have been reported to be the most effective.

[Source](#)


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EBS Approach – Essential, Breakthrough & Simulation.



ESSENTIAL APPROACH

Emphasizes on building the basics.

- Prelims GS - 17 Tests
- MAINS GS - 20 Tests
- Essay - 4 Tests



BREAKTHROUGH APPROACH

Tests the ability to link facts and concepts with Current Affairs.

- Prelims GS - 13 Tests
- MAINS GS - 14 Tests
- Essay - 4 Tests



SIMULATION APPROACH

Provides for a real-exam like feeling to help aspirants consolidate and finally put their preparation to test.

- Prelims GS - 8 Tests
- MAINS GS - 8 Tests
- Essay - 2 Tests



Perfectly planned single timetable: Inculcates discipline, focus, consistency and ensures holistic preparation for both Prelims and MAINS.



Mentorship: 2 Sessions for every test via Telephonic conversation for online students or in-person for Offline students.



Accessibility: Choose either Online or Offline as your mode for every test on the go from our All New INSTA COURSES Test Portal.



Rapid Discussion: Road-map w.r.t to syllabus, sources, time-management for effective and efficient preparation for the upcoming test.

Fee:

34,000/-

Early Bird Offer:

10% discount

for registering before 30th June 2020

Old Subscriber Offer:

20% discount

Free MAINS Test series:

(Post-Prelims 2021)

Upon completion of all the MAINS Tests with minimum 10% marks