INSIGHTSONINDIA

DAILY QUIZ

MAY

2016
1. The first state in the country set to become Open Defecation free in urban areas is
   (a) Kerala
   (b) Sikkim
   (c) Andhra Pradesh
   (d) Goa

   Solution: c.

   “Andhra Pradesh is set to become the first State in the country to make all of its urban areas ‘Open Defecation Free’ by October 2nd this year, marking the two years of the launch of Swachh Bharat Mission by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.”

   http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=142599

2. Consider the following statements:
   1. Seeking votes of overseas electors by going abroad by the candidates or their agents or party leaders is prohibited under the law
   2. Any inducement to overseas electors by offering to bear the travel expenses to come to India for the purpose of voting, would amount to the electoral offence of ‘bribery’

   Which of the statements above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 Only
   (b) 2 Only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

   Solution: b.

   “It is likely that as part of election campaign party leaders and candidates may travel to overseas countries for the purposes of canvassing in their favour to seek votes of the overseas electors residing in those countries. In this context, the Commission clarifies that though seeking votes of overseas electors by going abroad by the candidates or their agents or party leaders is not prohibited under the law, all expenditure incurred by those candidates, their agents or party leaders on their travel, boarding, lodging, etc., in those countries would be deemed to be the expenditure incurred or authorized by the candidates concerned in connection with their election.”

   http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=142602

3. Consider the following statements:
   1. With respect to indirect taxation, the poor often are implicitly subjected to a higher individual tax rate than people considerably wealthier
   2. Controlling only for the level of economic development, India does not under-tax its citizens

   Which of the statements above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 Only
   (b) 2 Only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

   Solution: c.

   “In 2015-16, direct taxes contributed only 51 per cent of the tax revenue, lower than in
recent years (and even the government’s expectations) and the lowest since 2007-08. An increasing share of indirect taxes in total revenue collection is cause for alarm because indirect taxes affect all Indians alike, rich and poor. Indeed, given that the poor generally spend a greater fraction of their income on essentials than the rich do, with wider indirect taxation, they end up paying a higher individual tax rate than people considerably wealthier.”

Chapter 7, Economic Survey 2015-16, Volume 1

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/where-are-indias-taxpayers/article8544335.ece

4. With reference to certain provisions of the Indian Constitution, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. Protection under Article 30 is confined only to minorities – religious or linguistic – and not to any other section of citizens

2. Protection under Article 29 is not necessarily restricted to minorities – any section of citizens can avail protection under it

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 Only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: d.

Article 29 – Protection of Interests of Minorities

Article 30 – Rights of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions

Page 7.16, Indian Polity 4th Edition by M Laxmikanth

http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/aligarh-muslim-university-amu-minority-institution-2779703/

5. Consider the following list:

1. GPS

2. GLONASS

3. BeiDou

4. NAVIC

5. Galileo

Which of the above operational Navigation Satellite Systems offer global coverage services as opposed to regional?

(a) 1 and 2 Only

(b) 2 and 3 Only

(c) 3 and 4 only

(d) 1, 2 and 5 Only

Solution: a.

The question mentions, “Which of the above operational Navigation Satellite Systems...”, hence option 5 gets eliminated.

“The U.S.’s GPS navigation system, which became operational in 1993, offers good coverage and service globally; other countries and regions already have or are building their own systems. Russia’s Global Navigation Satellite System too is global in coverage. In 2012, China got its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System operational, but unlike the GPS and Russia’s GLONASS, it is currently more regional in coverage; it intends to expand the system for global coverage by 2020. The European Satellite Navigation System, Galileo,
with global coverage, will be operational only by 2019-2020. Japan too is establishing its own global system.”

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/selfreliance-is-the-key/article8544336.ece

6. Consider the following pairs:

**Wildlife Sanctuary/Lake – State**

1. Sepahijala Wildlife Sanctuary – Assam
2. Bhimtal Lake – Himachal Pradesh
3. Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary – Kerala

Which of the pairs above is/are NOT correctly matched?

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

Solution: a.

“Researchers recently spotted 101 species of spiders belonging to 65 genera from Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary in Idukki, Kerala, when documenting spider diversity in the Sanctuary.”

“Mi-17 chopper of the IAF has been stationed near Bhimtal and it will spray water from the Bhimtal lake”

‘Nation’ Page: “An elephant is watched by a keeper as it bathes at Sepahijala wildlife sanctuary, on the outskirts of Agartala”
1. The Justice Doabia Committee in 2012 was set up to
   (a) study the activities that are required for optimal development of a river basin
   (b) provide views on issues related to taxation of e-commerce and recent international developments in this area
   (c) simplify the Income Tax Act, 1961
   (d) revisit civil services examination pattern

   Solution: a.


2. In the context of the recent Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh forest fires, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

   1. These were mostly ground fires
   2. Ground fires spread with a flaming front and burn leaf litter, fallen branches and other fuels located at ground level
   3. About half of India’s forests are prone to fires, most of which are man-made

   Select the correct answer using the code given below:
   (a) 2 and 3 Only
   (b) 1 and 2 Only
   (c) 2 Only
   (d) 1 Only

   Solution: c.

   Types of Fire Spread:

   **Ground fires**—which burn organic matter in the soil beneath surface litter and are sustained by glowing combustion.

   **Surface fires**—which spread with a flaming front and burn leaf litter, fallen branches and other fuels located at ground level.

   Crown fires—which burn through the top layer of foliage on a tree, known as the canopy or crown fires. Crown fires, the most intense type of fire and often the most difficult to contain, need strong winds, steep slopes and a heavy fuel load to continue burning.

   “A report titled Forest Fire Disaster Management, prepared by the National Institute of Disaster Management, a body under the Ministry of Home Affairs, in 2012, said about half of India’s forests were prone to fires. The Forest Survey of India’s State Forest Report, 1995 – a compilation of 25 years of observations and analyses – revealed that more than 95% of wildfires in India were man-made.”

   [Link to the article](http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/uttarakhand-fire-himachal-fire-india-forests-fire-2781274/)

3. Consider the following statements:

   **Assertion (A):** Crown fires are ecologically more damaging than ground fires

   **Reason (R):** The influence of wind is greater in the tree canopy than on the ground

   Select the correct answer using the code given below:
   (a) A and R both are true, and R is the correct explanation for A
   (b) A and R both are true, and R is the NOT the correct explanation for A
   (c) A is correct, R is incorrect
   (d) A and R both are incorrect

   Ans: a.
“Apart from the threat to life, forest fires are ecologically damaging depending on whether they are ground fires or crown fires. When fires spread at the level of treetops — the crown — they irreversibly damage trees. The fires in Uttarakhand this year, according to Mr. Kumar are largely ground fires.”


4. In the Index of Eight Core Industries, which one of the following is given the least weight?

(a) Coal Production
(b) Electricity generation
(c) Fertilizer Production
(d) Cement Production

Solution: c.

Electricity: 10.32%
Cement: 2.41%
Coal: 4.38%
Fertilizers: 1.25%

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=144646

5. Which of the following are not some of the challenges faced by India on the World Trade Organisation platform?

1. Lack of a sufficient pool of trade law experts to represent India at the WTO’s Dispute Settlement Body
2. Efforts by some countries to bring within the WTO’s ambit non-trade issues such as labour and environment

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

Question 1: Past news reports state that “Sikkim is the first state in India to achieve 100 percent sanitation coverage”.

According to this PIB release, “Andhra Pradesh is the first state in the country to become Open Defecation Free in urban areas. During the review, it emerged that Andhra Pradesh which has been in the forefront of construction of toilets in urban areas can make all 100 municipalities Open Defecation Free by October 2 this year as per the action plans in progress. As against the Mission target of construction of 1,94,336 individual household toilets in urban areas of Andhra Pradesh, work has started in respect of 1,53,779 and construction of 1,04,732 toilets has already been completed.”

So it appears that the number of toilets (or sanitation coverage) is the basis on which Andhra Pradesh has been declared the first state in the country set to become Open Defecation Free in urban areas.

Sanitation coverage can be 100% but Open Defecation may persist to a large extent. So, with respect to sanitation coverage, Sikkim turns out to be the actual “winner”. But according to PIB, Andhra Pradesh is the first state in the country to become Open Defecation Free in urban areas (although this remains, as per the above explanation, open to question).

And to understand Statement 2 of Question 3, please read the Economic Survey!
1. Consider the following rivers:
   1. Kameng
   2. Subansiri
   3. Dibang
   4. Barak

Which of the above are tributaries of Brahmaputra?
   (a) 1, 2 and 3
   (b) 2, 3 and 4
   (c) 1, 2 and 4
   (d) 2 and 3 only

Solution: a.

“The Brahmaputra receives numerous tributaries in its 750 km long journey through the Assam valley. Its major left bank tributaries are the Burhi Dihing and Dhansari (South) whereas the important right bank tributaries are the Subansiri, Kameng, Manas and Sankosh. The Subansiri which has its origin in Tibet, is an antecedent river. The Brahmaputra enters into Bangladesh near Dhubri and flows southward. In Bangladesh, the Tista joins it on its right bank from where the river is known as the Yamuna. It finally merges with the river Padma, which falls in the Bay of Bengal.”

India Physical Environment Class XI NCERT

2. ‘Ghar Sodhon’, associated with the Ministry of Textiles, is
   (a) A non-corrosive room disinfectant
   (b) A Technology Incubator to be set up in each and every Tier-I city
   (c) A web-based Information Portal for all textile manufacturers
   (d) None of the above

Solution: a.

“The National Research Development Corporation (NRDC), under the Ministry of Science & Technology, entered into Licence Agreements with ….. for the commercialization of ‘Ghar Sodhon’ – a room disinfectant for silkworm rearing houses and appliances. It has been developed at the Central Silk Research & Training Institute, a constituent Research Institute under Central Silk Board, under the Ministry of Textiles. Ghar Sodhon is a user friendly and non-corrosive room disinfectant, devoid of the requirement of labour, water, electricity and spraying machines. It is gaining popularity among the silk farmers of the States of West Bengal, Odisha and Jharkhand. The initiative of NRDC aids the “Make in India” and “Start-up India” Missions of the Government of India.”

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=144755

3. Consider the following statements:

1. The objective of the National Food Security Mission is to increase production of rice, wheat and pulses only
2. Production of horticulture crops have outpaced the production of food-grains consistently since 2012-13
Which of the statements above is/are correct?
(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: c.

“Despite the deficit monsoon, unseasonal rains and hailstorm in the major part of the country, the production of horticulture crops have outpaced the production of foodgrains since 2012-13...”

NFSM includes coarse cereals as well as commercial crops.

PIB Releases, Ministry of Agriculture, 3rd May

4. Consider the following statements:

1. India’s tax-to-GDP ratio has remained stagnant at close to 10 per cent during the last few years.”

“The Labour Bureau has compiled statistics for job creation in labour-intensive sectors in the country each quarter since the 2008 global financial crisis. The latest figures show that 1.35 lakh jobs were created in 2015, the lowest figure by far of any year since then — lower than the 4.9 lakh new jobs in 2014 and 12.5 lakh in 2009. In fact, the last quarter of 2015 recorded job losses.”

http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/editorials/a-taxing-agenda-income-tax-department-tax-returns-tax-payers-2783067/

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/a-job-for-every-indian/article8552392.ece

**Clarifications: Quiz 104, May 3, 2016

Question 3: “Wind and temperature are the predominant drivers of fire behaviour. Hot temperatures will speed up the process of preheating and heat transfer and allow a fire to spread more quickly. Wind speeds the process of heat transfer by pushing flames and heat sideways to preheat unburnt areas. Higher winds also mean more oxygen and more intense flames.”

Also, “The influence of wind is greater in the tree canopy and where this canopy is interconnected or continuous, fires can spread incredibly quickly”

Greater the fire spread, greater the ecological damage. Hence, Option ‘a’ is correct.

1. ‘Progeria’ is a rare disease which

(a) Is marked by stunted growth – that may not become obvious until the child is about three years of age – and broad facial abnormalities

(b) Is a progressive neurological disorder causing patients to experience progressive loss of memory and intellectual abilities

(c) Causes accelerated aging in children, leading to premature death mostly due to heart attacks

(d) Causes malformations affecting the finger and toenails and abnormalities affecting the lungs and the airways

Solution: c.


2. With reference to a chemical known as ‘Alloxan’, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. It was first discovered by the Indian Council of Medical Research of possessing strong antibacterial properties

2. Its use as a food additive has been banned by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 Only

(b) 2 Only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: a.


3. Consider the following statements in the context of the NOTA option on Electronic Voting Machines:

1. The NOTA symbol is an outline of a gender-neutral figure with a black cross across it

2. Prior to its introduction, a negative vote could be cast by filling a form under Rule 49-O of the Conduct of Election Rules

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

(a) 1 Only

(b) 2 Only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: b.

NOTA Symbol:

“The voter essentially got a method to register discontent, a protest that became unavailable to her with the shift to EVMs. Earlier, voters could deface the ballot paper or leave it
unmarked to cast an invalid vote. With EVMs, a vote is deemed to have been taken place only when a button is pressed. Voters can still fill a form under Rule 49-O of the Conduct of Election Rules to invalidate votes, but the process is not anonymous.”

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/nota-on-my-ballot/article8557160.ece

4. Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, which of the following are not among the thirteen thematic circuits identified for development?

1. North-East India Circuit
2. Spiritual Circuit
3. Coastal Circuit
4. Tribal Circuit
5. Rural Circuit
6. Ramayana Circuit

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 and 4 only
(b) 2 and 6 only
(c) 3, 4 and 5
(d) All are identified thematic circuits

Solution: d.

“For development of tourism infrastructure in the country, the Ministry of Tourism has launched the Swadesh Darshan scheme – Integrated Development of Theme-Based Tourist Circuits, in 2014-15. Under the scheme, thirteen thematic circuits have been identified for development, namely North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual

PIB Releases, 5th May

1. In the context of political parties’ poll time promises made in their election manifestos, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. Wherever freebies are offered, parties must broadly state how they plan to gather the funds and finance to fulfil such promises

2. Supreme Court has ruled that promises made in an election manifesto cannot be construed as a ‘corrupt practice’ under the Representation of the People Act, 1951

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.

The Election Commission in Chapter VIII of its Model Code of Conduct titled ‘Guidelines on Election Manifestos’, has enumerated the rules that political parties must follow while making poll-time promises in their election manifestos.

http://www.gktoday.in/blog/freebies-in-election-manifestoes/

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/in-a-freebie-state/article8566482.ece

2. The provision of free legal aid in the Indian Constitution is made in

(a) Article 20
(b) Article 21
(c) Article 39A
(d) Article 36

Solution: c.

Article 39A. Equal justice and free legal aid.— The State shall secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice, on a basis of equal opportunity, and shall, in particular, provide free legal aid, by suitable legislation or schemes or in any other way, to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities.

‘Most death row convicts first time offenders’, 7th May, The Hindu

3. Consider the following statements about the ‘Swiss challenge method’:

1. The Supreme Court of India has approved it as a way of awarding contracts
2. This method can be applied also for sectors that are not covered under the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) framework
3. The original proposer has the right of first refusal

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

(a) 2 Only
(b) 2 and 3 Only
(c) 1 and 2 Only
(d) None

Ans: d.

Under the Swiss challenge model, any bidder can offer to improve upon a project proposal submitted by another player. However, the project developer, who had originally submitted the plan, is given an opportunity to match the bid amount.

What is the Swiss Challenge method?

http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/carriers-can-choose-regional-route/article8566503.ece

4. Which of the following statements with reference to the Budget’s Income Declaration Scheme is/are incorrect?

1. People with undisclosed income can now declare it by paying a penal tax rate of 45 per cent on such income
2. Details disclosed under the scheme are confidential under all circumstances

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: b.

“Bringing in Section 138 of the Income Tax Act to the Scheme brings in objectivity on confidentiality of income tax information and the limitations thereof,” Rahul Garg, leader of the direct tax practice at PwC India told The Hindu. “This is appropriate to ensure that people don’t misunderstand the confidentiality aspect.” In other words, the aim behind bringing in this section is to dispel the perception that the details disclosed under the scheme are confidential under any circumstances — they can be disclosed if it is deemed to be in public interest.

http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/income-tax-dept-can-reveal-taxpayers-details/article8566506.ece
1. The terms ‘bawari’, ‘jhalara’, ‘nadi’, and ‘khadin’ refer to
   (a) Traditional systems of water harvesting
   (b) Different attires of artists in Mughal courts
   (c) Forest tribes recently accorded the ‘Scheduled Tribe’ status
   (d) Ancient Persian terms for the four cardinal directions

   Solution: a.

   “As the report below explains, ecologically safe engineering marvels of water conservation have existed in India for nearly 1,500 years, including traditional systems of water harvesting, such as the bawari, jhalara, nadi, tanka, and khadin. Even today these systems remain viable and cost-effective alternatives to rejuvenate depleted groundwater aquifers, according to experts.”

   [Link to the article](http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/lessons-from-ancient-india/article8570408.ece)

2. Which of the following statements with reference to e-cigarettes is/are incorrect?

   1. There are no laws regulating them in India as of now
   2. Unlike conventional cigarettes, all e-cigarettes are known to have very low toxic emissions
   3. The World Health Organisation recently endorsed the claim that these assist smokers to quit smoking

   Solution: b.

   There are no laws regulating e-cigarettes in India as of now. Countries like ours — which is a signatory to WHO’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), a global treaty for tobacco control — have, however, been cautious by making it amply clear that e-cigarettes are not a “healthier” option and there is no evidence to say that it helps people who want to quit smoking. The WHO has, for long, maintained that the claim is not based on evidence. There are about 500 e-cigarette brands, and only a few have been analysed. “Some of the analysed brands are known to have very low toxic emissions compared with conventional cigarettes. Some e-cigarettes have few and low levels of toxicants, but some contain levels of cancer-causing agents, such as formaldehyde, that are as high as those in some conventional cigarettes.”

   [Link to the article](http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/clampdown-on-the-cancer-estick/article8570409.ece)

3. With reference to a drug known as ‘Ephedrine’, which of the following statements is/are correct?

   1. It is useful for treatment of asthma and cough
   2. It is manufactured in India for the sole purpose of export
3. It can be synthesised to produce the narcotic ‘Methamphetamine’

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

Ephedrine, the sale of which is banned in India, is popularly used overseas to treat asthma and bronchitis. While controlled dosage eases breathing, its abuse, popularly in the powder form, is known to cause euphoria, hallucinations, delusions, hypertension and nausea. It is synthesised to produce the popular narcotic Methamphetamine. While its controlled manufacturing as a bulk drug for pharmaceutical use is legal in India, its retail sale as an OTC drug is, however, illegal. There are strict rules regulating the production and transportation of ephedrine — a company producing ephedrine needs permission from the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

4. Which of the following are not components of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)?

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1, 2 and 4 Only
(b) 2, 3 and 4 Only
(c) 2 and 4 only
(d) All are components of PMKSY

Solution: d.

5. Consider the following pairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missile</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barak 8</td>
<td>Long Range Surface to Air missile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astra</td>
<td>Medium Range Surface to Air missile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akash</td>
<td>Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air missile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BrahMos</td>
<td>Supersonic Cruise Missile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the pairs above is/are correctly matched?

(a) 1 and 4 only
(b) 2 and 4 Only
(c) 1,2 and 4 Only
(d) 4 Only
Solution: a.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has recently test fired the following indigenously developed missiles.

- Long Range Surface to Air Missile (LRSAM) with range of 70 km.
- Beyond Visual Range (BVR) Air-to-Air Missile, Astra with a range of 75 km.
- Medium Range Surface to Air Missile, Akash with a range of 25 km and Multi target handling capability.
- Supersonic Cruise Missile, BrahMos with a range of 290 km.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=144965

6. A sister city relationship has been established between Dunhuang in China and which city of India?

(a) Mathura
(b) Bodh Gaya
(c) Aurangabad
(d) Sarnath

Solution: c.

“Deputy-Mayor of Dunhuang, Wu Guang Lin, points to an agreement between India and China, following Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to China, to establish a sister city relationship between Dunhuang and Aurangabad. He says the arrangement is a statement of intent by the two countries to leverage culture as a major strand for building India-China ties.”

2015: “Four agreements were signed on sister-state and sister-city relations between Karnataka and Sichuan province; Chennai and Chongqing; Hyderabad and Qingdao; and Aurangabad and Dunhuang.”

http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-international/mogao-caves-reveal-pivotal-indiachina-buddhist-link/article8562736.ece

7. The ADIP scheme, Swavlamban Health Insurance Scheme and Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan are associated with which of the following ministries?

(a) Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
(b) Ministry of Law & Justice
(c) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
(d) Ministry of Agriculture

Solution: a.

ADIP Scheme stands for Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase / Fitting of Aids and Appliances. Sugamya means accessible.

“The Department’s Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan is also making inroads into making the dream of ‘Universal Accessibility’ turn into reality. He also added that the Government recently notified the guidelines for certifying Autism for the first time ever. Shri Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Joint Secretary DEPwD, in his address informed that all the equipment distributed in the ADIP Camp were high-end technical devices which have been manufactured by ALIMCO in collaboration with German pioneers Ottobock. He also informed the audience about the Department’s latest scheme “Swavlamban Health Insurance Scheme” which provides life insurance to PwDs at a nominal annual premium.”

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145064
1. Majority of death-row convicts in our country
   1. Are first-time offenders
   2. Belong to economically vulnerable sections
   3. Belong to backward classes and religious minorities
   Select the correct answer using the code given below:
   (a) 1 and 2 Only
   (b) 2 and 3 Only
   (c) 1 and 3 Only
   (d) 1, 2 and 3

   Solution: d.

   “A total of 241 persons out of the 385 death row inmates in India are first time offenders, new findings contained in the “Death Penalty India Report” released on Friday said. The study found that around 60 per cent of the prisoners did not complete secondary education and nearly 75 per cent belong to economically vulnerable sections. Further, three fourth of the prisoners sentenced to death belong to backward classes and religious minorities. While this finding does not imply direct discrimination, it reflects structural concerns which disempowers the marginalised.”

2. Following statements compare the Australian and Indian system of governments:
   1. The Governor-General of Australia is akin to the President of India
   2. Unlike in India, Australia’s House of Representatives as well as the Senate – both houses of the Parliament – can be dissolved

   Which of the statements above is/are correct?
   (a) 1 only
   (b) 2 only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

   Solution: c.

   “Australian Prime Minister Malcom Turnbull on Sunday announced fresh elections on July 2, a date that is several months ahead of schedule. Turnbull met with the Governor-General (akin to the President in the Indian system), Peter Cosgrove, and proposed a “double dissolution” of Parliament. Once the proposal is accepted, both Houses of Parliament would stand dissolved on Monday morning.”

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/poverty-and-the-death-row/article8573130.ece

3. Which of the following statements with reference to T3R or ‘Tooth-to-Tail Ratio’ in the context of military personnel is/are correct?
   1. It refers to the amount of military and support personnel it takes to supply and support each combat soldier
   2. Defence Public Sector Undertakings are a component of the ‘tail’

   Select the correct answer using the code given below:
   (a) 1 Only
   (b) 2 Only
   (c) Both 1 and 2
   (d) Neither 1 nor 2

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/poverty-and-the-death-row/article8573130.ece
Solution: c.

The tooth-to-tail ratio, referred to as T3R in the Army, is the ratio of fighting arms, which wage the actual battle such as infantry and armoured wings, to support services, such as logistics, signals and ordnance.

An army’s tooth-to-tail ratio is often inversely related to its technological capabilities and subsequently its overall power. While an army with a high tooth-to-tail ratio will have more personnel devoted to combat, these soldiers will lack the support provided by the tail. Such support includes the supply and communication infrastructure on which modern armies depend. An army with a higher tooth-to-tail ratio may have more combat troops, but each will be less effective.

The introduction of computer technology has made automation of the tail a possibility. With automation, increasing the tooth-to-tail ratio (reducing the amount of logistics and support personnel necessary in proportion to combat personnel without reducing combat effectiveness) would be the objective.

According to the data presented in Parliament, Rs.61,824.32 crore was transferred to 30.8 crore beneficiaries in 59 schemes. Out of this, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) payments made up Rs.25,800 crore, or 42 per cent of total DBT schemes.

This also means that 85 per cent of the MGNREGA payments made in 2015-16 were done directly into the beneficiary’s bank accounts.

The second largest head under which DBT transfers were made was the PAHAL scheme for the electronic transfer of LPG subsidies. The government transferred Rs.21,400 crore under the PAHAL scheme in 2015-16, which is 35 per cent of the total amount transferred through DBT.


5. The closest spiral galaxy to the Milky Way is

(a) Andromeda Galaxy
(b) Canis Major Dwarf Galaxy
(c) Large Magellanic Cloud
(d) Sagittarius Dwarf Galaxy

Solution: a.

“Studying a nearby star has given scientists a fascinating insight into how the Sun may have behaved billions of years ago. Found in the northern constellation of Andromeda, the star showed signs of “starspots” the equivalent of sunspots found within our own solar system. The pattern of these spots differs significantly from those found on the Sun.”
6. With reference to the ‘Hydrophobic Silica Aero Gel’ recently developed by researchers of ISRO, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. Air fills up to 95 per cent of its size
2. Its heat conductivity is very low – close to zero
3. The aero gel can be made in granular, bead, powder, tape or sheet form

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) 3 Only
(d) None

Solution: d.

Trapped air is a good heat insulator. So if statement 1 is true, statement 2 is true. If statement 1 is false, so will statement 2. You are left with options a and d.

The yet to be christened product, the hydrophobic silica aero gel as it is known now, is supposed to have low thermal conductivity and density and high specific surface area and can be applied on any surface.

With its “exotic properties,” silica aero gels are attractive candidates for many unique thermal, optical, acoustic, catalytic and chemical applications and are best known for their “super-insulating property.” Silica aero gels can be made in chunks (granular), beads, powder and tape or sheet form, and may be used as the application demands, according to VSSC.

As air fills the gel up to 95 per cent of its size, it comes as super lightweight material. The air molecules trapped inside the gel would act as insulators, and its heat conductivity is close to zero. They could be used for coating the windows of houses and vehicles as they would let in 95 per cent of the light that falls on the surface and fully deflect the heat.
1. In order to understand and respond effectively to new challenges in the world of work, the ‘Future of Work Initiative’ has been launched by

(a) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
(b) The World Bank
(c) Group of 20
(d) The International Labour Organisation

Solution: d.

The world of work is undergoing a major process of change. There are several forces transforming it, from the onward march of technology and the impact of climate change to the changing character of production and employment, and demographics to name a few. It is necessary to understand and to respond effectively to new challenges in the world of work in order to be able to advance social justice. For this reason, the International Labour Organization’s Director-General Guy Ryder has launched the “Future of Work initiative”. The initiative seeks to involve ILO’s member-states fully and universally, but also to reach beyond them to all relevant and interested stakeholders, including youth.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment, V.V. Giri National Labour Institute and International Labour Organization are organizing an event on “The Future of Work in India and Young People’s Aspiration”. This event will focus on India’s youth and their aspirations in the world of work. It will seek to highlight both challenges in the labour market and how youth can be an agent of change themselves to address them.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145112

2. ‘CHILDLINE’ is India’s first 24-hour, free, emergency phone service for children in need of aid and assistance. To access this service, one must dial

(a) 1023
(b) 1012
(c) 1098
(d) 1090

Solution: c.

The three-day Technical Meeting & 4th Ministerial Meeting of South Asian Initiative to end Violence against Children (SAIEVAC) began in New Delhi today. Delegates have assembled to assess progress and developments of the past decade of regional effort, set strategies, agree on commitments and identify priorities for SAIEVAC for the next five years.

The technical sessions began with an overview of SAIEVAC’s progress in the last decade. This was followed by several technical input sessions based on Governing Board recommendations, on Child Sexual Abuse, travelling sex offenders, regional project on cross border trafficking/MCA, TrackChild, the online system of tracking missing children in India and Khoya Paaya, a citizen portal for reporting missing and found children. Presentations were also made on India’s safety net for Children, CHILDLINE 1098 and the legislation covering Child Sexual Abuse in India i.e. POCSO.

CHILDLINE is a platform bringing together the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India, Department of Telecommunications, street and community youth, non-profit organisations, academic institutions, the corporate sector and concerned individuals.
3. The Central Ground Water Authority was constituted under the

(a) The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
(b) Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
(c) Central Pollution Control Board Act, 2012
(d) Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers’ Rights Act, 2001

Solution: b.

“Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under ‘The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986’ for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water development and management has issued advisory to States/ Union Territories and Ministry of Urban Development to take necessary measures for adopting rain water harvesting/ artificial recharge in all the Government buildings.”

PIB Release

5. Climate change is said to be changing the way the Earth wobbles around its polar axis. In this context, consider the following statements:

Assertion (A): Despite the lost water mass – due to depletion of aquifers and drought – in Eurasia being lesser than lost ice mass of Greenland, the former is predominantly responsible for the changing/wobbling of Earth’s spin axis

Reason (R): Spin Axis of rotating objects is very sensitive to changes occurring around 45 degrees latitude

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) A and R both are true, and R is the correct explanation for A
(b) A and R both are true, and R is the NOT the correct explanation for A
(c) A is correct, R is incorrect
(d) A and R both are incorrect

Ans: a.

Page 13, ‘Explained’, Indian Express

Question 1, Quiz 107, May 7: Typo; Answer must be option ‘d’, not ‘c’.

Question 4, Quiz 107, May 7: Answer must be option ‘c’. Both statements are incorrect. Explanation: PIB release (click to open source): “Shri Jaitley proposed a limited period Compliance window for domestic taxpayers to declare undisclosed...
income or income represented in the form of any asset and clear up their past tax transgressions. This will include paying tax at 30% and surcharge at 7.5% and penalty at 7.5% (and not 45%), which is a total of 45% of the undisclosed income. Regarding income declared in these declarations, there will be no scrutiny or enquiry under the Income Tax Act or the Wealth Tax Act and the declarants will have immunity from prosecution. Immunity from Benami Transaction (Prohibition) Act, 1988 is also proposed subject to certain conditions. The surcharge levied at 7.5% of undisclosed income will be called ‘Krishi Kalyan surcharge’ which will be used for agriculture and rural economy. Government of India plan to open the window under this Income Disclosure Scheme from 1st June to 30th September, 2016 with an option to pay amount due within two months of declaration.”

Question 3, Quiz 106, May 5th: NOTA Symbol: (click to view image) The specific symbol for NOTA is a ballot paper (and not a gender neutral figure) with a black cross across it.

Question 3, Quiz 105, May 4th: According to the given explanation, answer must be option ‘b’ and not ‘c’.

Question 4, Quiz 105, May 4th: The question should have specifically mentioned, ‘central government’ and not simply ‘India’s tax-to-GDP ratio’. Hence statement 1 provides insufficient information. According to the economic survey 2015-16, India’s tax-to-GDP ratio is 16.6% (this is the overall tax-to-GDP ratio, not just the centre’s).

Note: Thanks to all Insightians for pointing out errors!
1. Consider the following statements:

1. Extradition is an executive action and consequently is a quick process relative to deportation

2. Deportation requires investigating agencies to establish prima facie culpability of the accused who has recourse to several defences under deportation treaties

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: d.


2. In the context of the recently signed India-Mauritius protocol at Port Louis, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. Nearly a third of India’s total foreign direct investment inflows since 2000 have come from Mauritius

2. The Double Taxation Avoidance treaty between India and Mauritius is what made the latter attractive for foreign investors to route investments into India

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: a.

“Railways market share in freight has eroded over the years. The share of railways in the total transportation of freight traffic has declined from 89 per cent in 1950-51 to 36 per cent in 2007-08. In his second Budget this year, Mr. Prabhu announced increasing investments by 21 per cent to Rs 1.21 lakh crore in 2016-17. The Railways intends to spend Rs 8.5 lakh crore over the next four years.”

“McKinsey’s Building India: Transforming the Nations’ Logistic Infrastructure (2010) study has estimated that the modal share in freight traffic stands at 36 per cent for the railways vis-a-vis 57 per cent for roads. According to the Report of the National Transport Development Policy Committee (NTDPC, 2014) this share is estimated to decline further to 33 per cent in 2011-12.”

Chapter 6 Volume 1 Economic Survey 2014-15


4. The ‘World Development Report on Digital Dividends’ was recently brought out by

(a) The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

(b) The World Bank

(c) World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers

(d) Cellular Operators’ Association of India

Solution: b.

The ‘World Development Report’ Series is released by the World Bank. The 2015 WDR was on ‘Mind, Society and Behaviour’.


5. In the context of the proposed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. Altogether, it will have seven members

2. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor will not vote in the first instance, viz. he possesses the deciding vote in case of a tie

3. The three central government nominees of the MPC will hold office for a period of four years and will not be eligible for re-appointment

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 Only

(b) 1 and 2 Only

(c) 1 and 3 Only

(d) 2 Only

Solution: b.

MPC: The Central Government constitutes the MPC through a notification in the Official Gazette. Altogether, the MPC will have six members, – the RBI Governor (Chairperson), the RBI Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy, one official nominated by the RBI Board and the remaining three members would represent the Government of India.

These Government of India nominees are appointed by the Central Government based on the recommendations of a search cum selection committee consisting of the cabinet secretary (Chairperson), the RBI Governor, the secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, and three experts in the field of economics or banking as nominated by the central government.

The three central government nominees of the MPC appointed by the search cum selection committee will hold office for a period of four years and will not be eligible for re-appointment.

Clarifications:

Question 3, Quiz 109, May 10:

“But are the logistic support elements of the Armed Forces the only component of the tail? A look at the larger national environment gives a different picture and suggests an alternative and more efficient method of reducing expenditure that could generate more funds for the modernisation process. Outside the ambit of the armed forces, a significant portion of the tail is found in India’s eight Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) and 39 Defence Ordnance Factories (OFs), all of which come under the Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence.”

1. Primacy of the floor test in determining a government’s majority was a principle laid down in which of the following cases?

(a) Harish Rawat vs Union of India
(b) S. R. Bommai vs Union of India
(c) Janata Party vs Governor of Karnataka
(d) None of the above

Solution: b.

The 1994 judgement made some very serious and clear observations against the use of ‘private opinion’ and any sort of subjective analysis, of anyone, in deciding the fate of the government. The judgement held, “The assessment of the strength of the Ministry is not a matter of private opinion of any individual be he the governor or the President. It is capable of being demonstrated and ascertained publicly in the House. Hence when such a demonstration is possible, it is not open to bypass it and instead depend upon the subjective satisfaction of the Governor or the President. Such private assessment is an anathema to the democratic principle, apart from being open to serious objections of personal mala fides”.

In the Bommai judgement the apex court also made it clear the circumstances under which the decision to impose President’s Rule can be made without going for a floor test. The court held, “The sole exception to this will be a situation of all-pervasive violence where the governor comes to the conclusion — and records the same in his report — that for the reasons mentioned by him, a free vote is not possible.”

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/lessons-from-uttarakhand/article8586365.ece

2. With reference to the amended Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) between India and Mauritius, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. A firm based in Mauritius, if its total operational expenses in that country is less than Rs.27 lakh, will not be eligible for the 50 per cent reduction in tax rate on capital gains during the transitional two-year period
2. Investments made until 31st March 2017 by Mauritius tax residents will be exempt from any capital gains tax

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.


3. Consider the following statements:

1. Capital gains exemption under the India-Singapore DTAA will remain exempt only till the time the India-Mauritius DTAA provides for capital gains exemption
2. The amended India-Mauritius DTAA imposes curbs on P-notes issued by Foreign Portfolio Investors of Mauritius

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
Solution: a.

“Article 6 of the protocol dated July 18, 2005 to the Singapore Tax Treaty says that the capital gains exemption under the Singapore Tax Treaty would remain in force only till the time Mauritius Tax Treaty provides for capital gains exemption on alienation of shares. Therefore, the benefits accorded under the Singapore Tax Treaty would fall away, unless amended.”

“While there have been concerns in the market that imposition of capital gains tax will deter investments through Participatory Notes or P-notes, Adhia on Wednesday said that there would be no change for P-notes as of now. “P-notes is a separate decision, it is not linked to the treaty. There is no change in decision with regard to taxation of P-notes because of signing of the Mauritius treaty,” he said....”


Solution: d.

Sir B.N. Rau was not a member of the Constituent Assembly.

The American expression ‘due process of law’ was first introduced by the Supreme Court of India as inherent in Article 21 in the Menaka Gandhi vs Union of India case (1978).

Page 107, India After Gandhi by R. Guha

Page 7.11, Indian Polity 4th Edition by M Laxmikanth

Improvisation: http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/a-tale-of-two-judgments/article8586369.ece

5. Which of the following steps cannot be effective in addressing the problem of exit in the Indian Economy?

1. Avoiding exit through liberal entry
2. Direct policy actions
3. Widening the deployment of the JAM solution

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 and 3 Only
(b) 2 and 3 Only
(c) 1 and 2 Only
(d) All can be effective in addressing the problem of exit

Solution: d.

4. Consider the following statements:

1. Sir B.N. Rau was a member of and Constitutional adviser to the Constituent Assembly
2. The American expression ‘due process of law’ was first introduced by the Supreme Court of India as inherent in Article 21 in the AK Gopalan vs Union of India case

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: d.

Sir B.N. Rau was not a member of the Constituent Assembly.

The American expression ‘due process of law’ was first introduced by the Supreme Court of India as inherent in Article 21 in the AK Gopalan vs Union of India case (1978).

Page 107, India After Gandhi by R. Guha

Page 7.11, Indian Polity 4th Edition by M Laxmikanth

Improvisation: http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/a-tale-of-two-judgments/article8586369.ece
2.42 **Avoid exit through liberal entry**: Since 1991, an overarching principle for eliminating inefficiency and/or addressing the exit problem in vast parts of the economy has been this: to promote competition via private sector entry rather than change ownership through privatisation. This approach had some intrinsic merit – after all, Russia suffered from trying to privatize assets which ended up in the hands of a few so-called “oligarchs.”

2.44 And the strategy broadly worked. The Indian aviation and telecommunication sectors of today are unrecognisably different from what they were 20 years ago, with enormous benefits for the citizens. Public sector companies now account for a small share of the overall size of these sectors. In some ways, the exit problem has been skirted if not avoided.

Page 46-48, Volume 1, Economic Survey 2015-16

**Improvisation:**
http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/columns/it-is-disinvestment-not-privatisation/article8586358.ece

6. **The nodal agency for INTERPOL in India is**

(a) National Investigation Agency
(b) Central Bureau of Investigation
(c) Indian Central Police Service
(d) National Central Bureau for INTERPOL in India

Ans: b.

Question being repeated.

“...Stating that the Mumbai Police were prepared for all eventualities,” Mr. Javed said:

“...The CBI is the nodal agency for Interpol in India, and could hold him back for interrogation in New Delhi for as long as they like. That is the protocol. We cannot speculate how long the CBI may want him in the capital.”...”

“Even as the Enforcement Directorate initiated proceedings for the extradition of businessman Vijay Mallya, the Central Bureau of Investigation on Thursday forwarded to the Interpol its request for issuance of a Red Notice against him to facilitate this.”


7. In the context of elections, the term ‘gerrymandering’ refers to

(a) A practice intended to establish a political advantage for a particularly party or group by manipulating the boundaries of constituencies
(b) The practice of fighting elections not on the basis of policy but on the basis of competitive populism
(c) The illegal practice of selection of candidates of reserved constituencies by the members of the same constituency but who cannot avail reservations, viz. selecting proxies
(d) A strategy to influence the outcome of an election via paid news

Solution: a.

**What is Gerrymandering?**
8. In context of the election machinery in India, ‘VVPAT’ is the acronym for

(a) Voter Verified Paper ballot Trail
(b) Voter Verification PATrols
(c) Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail
(d) Verification of Voter Identity by PET Authorisation

Solution: c.

“As many as 1,062 polling booths in 12 Assembly constituencies in Kerala will have electronic voting machines equipped with voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT) units to provide feedback to the voter on the ballot and ensure the transparency of the electoral process. An official press note issued here said the VVPAT unit attached to the machine would display the candidate’s name, serial number and symbol on a slip as soon as the vote is cast. After seven seconds, the slip would detach itself and fall into the VVPAT unit. The slip cannot be accessed by the voter.”


9. Which of the following statements about the organising principle of ‘Subsidiarity’ is not correct?

(a) Nothing should be done by a larger and more complex organisation which can be done as well by a smaller and simpler organisation
(b) ‘Maximum Governance, Minimum Government’ is an idea that can be furthered by adoption of this principle
(c) The Central Government establishing subsidiary bodies to implement its directives and decisions is an instance of ‘subsidiarity’ in practice
(d) It increases the opportunities for citizens to take interest in public affairs

Solution: c.

Of the above statements, statement ‘c’ is incorrect. Because, ‘Subsidiarity’ is “The principle that decisions should always be taken at the lowest possible level or closest to where they will have their effect, for example in a local area rather than for a whole country.”

“Mr. Elango goes on to stress the organising principle of “subsidiarity”, a tenet that “holds that nothing should be done by a larger and more complex organisation which can be done as well by a smaller and simpler organisation”. This principle is a bulwark of limited government and personal freedom. Unless local-level leaders are involved, he says, it will be impossible to have a true idea of what people want…”

http://www.thehindu.com/elections/tamilnadu2016/should-leaders-play-santa-during-polls/article8591578.ece
**Clarification:**

Earlier Clarification for Question 1, Quiz 107, May 7: (Click here for Quiz 107) : “Typo; Answer must be option ‘d’, not ‘c’. This was wrong. Sorry! The link provided provided in the solution (click here) mentions, “There must be transparency w.r.t to the promises and how the parties aim to implement their promises. The promises must also be credible. Wherever freebies are offered, parties must broadly state how they plan to gather the funds and finances to fulfil such promises.” However, as one Insightian informed us, the actual ECI guideline (click here) does not use the word “must”. The guidelines state, “In the interest of transparency, level playing field and credibility of promises, it is expected that manifestos also reflect the rationale for the promises and broadly indicate the way and means to meet the financial requirements for it.”

Thus, Statement 1 as seen in the question is incorrect and statement 2 is correct. Solution will now be Option ‘a’, that is, only statement 1 is incorrect.

Altogether, the MPC will have six members, – the RBI Governor (Chairperson), the RBI Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy, one official nominated by the RBI Board and the remaining three members would represent the Government of India. The proceedings of MPC are confidential and the quorum for a meeting shall be four Members, at least one of whom shall be the Governor and in his absence, the Deputy Governor who is the Member of the MPC. The MPC takes decisions based on majority vote (by those who are present and voting). In case of a tie, the RBI governor will have the second or casting vote. The decision of the Committee would be binding on the RBI.”

The only way a tie can happen is if there are an even number of people. Which means, the RBI governor votes in the first instance because he is one among the six (or four, if two are absent) of the MPC.

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**Question 5 Statement 2, Quiz 111, May 12**: (Click here): “The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor will not vote in the first instance, viz. he possesses the deciding vote in case of a tie”. This statement as a whole is incorrect. The solution does not change.

“The Central Government constitutes the MPC through a notification in the Official Gazette.
1. What is unique about the rice variety ‘CR Paddy 310’ developed by the National Rice Research Institute, Cuttack?

(a) It has been derived from the first recorded species of rice in India, which possesses superior nutrition in contrast to other species of rice

(b) This species of rice requires the least amount of water but yields 1.5 times the national rice yield average

(c) There is minimal and in some cases no requirement of addition of fertilisers for its full potential growth

(d) It contains a relatively higher percentage of protein than other species of rice

Solution: d.

“The Minister further said that the scientists of NRRI, Cuttack have developed CR Paddy 310 for the first time in the world which contains 11% protein while other species of rice generally contain protein only 6-7%.”

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145074

2. Which of the following countries are members of the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) programme?

1. India
2. Pakistan
3. Nepal
4. Bhutan
5. Bangladesh
6. Myanmar

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Only

(b) 2, 3, 4 and 5 Only

(c) All

(d) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only

Solution: d.

“The South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Program, set up in 2001, brings together Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka in a project-based partnership to promote regional prosperity by improving cross-border connectivity, boosting trade among member countries, and strengthening regional economic cooperation. Since 2001, SASEC countries have implemented 37 regional projects worth more than $6.75 billion in the energy, transport, trade facilitation, and information and communications technology (ICT) sectors. The Manila, Philippines-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) serves as the Secretariat for the SASEC member countries.”

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145143

3. The committee under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Ayyappan has been constituted in order to

(a) Look into various aspects pertaining to setting up of Departments of Yogic Art and Science in Universities, viz. Yoga education in universities

(b) Address complaints from the general public of violation on the implementation of the guidelines on Government advertisements set out by the Supreme Court

(c) Ascertain the present status of exploitation of marine fishery resources by various
sectors and to consult all stakeholders for preparing a draft National Policy on Marine Fisheries

(d) Suggest ways to strengthen security along Indo-Pak border

Solution: c.

Deep-sea fishing vessels (DSFVs) in the Exclusive Economic Zone are only allowed to carry out resource-specific fishing beyond 12 nautical miles from the territorial limits.

A committee has been constituted on 28th July, 2015 under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Ayyappan, former Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) with terms of reference to inter alia ascertain the present status of exploitation of marine fishery resources by various sectors, namely, traditional sector, mechanized boats sector and deep-sea fishing vessels; and to consult all stakeholders for preparing a draft National Policy on Marine Fisheries for overall development of marine fisheries in India.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145194

4. ‘Mission Raftaar’ is

(a) The Indian Railways’ Mission Mode activity to increase speeds of freight train and super-fast mail/express trains

(b) A component of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways’ ‘Avataran’ or seven mission mode activities, under which all national highways will be made pothole-free by 2019

(c) A complementary programme to the Sagarmala initiative in order to provide efficient road and rail connectivity from ports to the hinterland

(d) A blueprint for making optimum use of the massive renewable energy generation capacity that will be created by 2022

Solution: a.

Mission Raftaar: It targets doubling of average speeds of freight trains and increasing the average speed of superfast mail/express trains by 25 kmph in the next 5 years.

Improvisation:
http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145291

5. With reference to the ‘Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016’ bill which was recently passed by the Parliament, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. This code does not apply to individuals
2. Insolvency resolution process for companies will have to be completed within 180 days, a limit which may be extended to 270 days in certain circumstances
3. The code provides a ‘Fresh Start Process’ for companies under which they will be eligible for a debt waiver of up to Rs 1,00,000/-

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.

Bill Summary:

Insolvency Resolution Process: The Code specifies similar insolvency resolution processes for companies and individuals, which will have to be completed within 180 days. This limit may be extended to 270 days in certain circumstances. The resolution process will involve negotiations between the
debtor and creditors to draft a resolution plan.”

**Fresh Start Process:** The Code provides a Fresh Start Process for individuals under which they will be eligible for a debt waiver of up to Rs 35,000. The individual will be eligible for the waiver subject to certain limits prescribed under the Code.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145309

6. Consider the following statements:

1. The Central Government may enter into agreements with other countries to enforce provisions of the code
2. The code creates an Insolvency and Bankruptcy Fund to which any person can make voluntary contributions
3. An Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India will be established which will include representatives from the Central Government as well as the Reserve Bank of India

Which of the statements above, in the context of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, is/are correct?

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

Solution: d.

**Bill Summary:**

**Insolvency regulator:** The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India will be established as a regulator to oversee functioning of Insolvency professionals, insolvency professional agencies and information utilities. The Board will have 10 members, including representatives from the central government and the Reserve Bank of India.

**Insolvency and Bankruptcy Fund:** The Code creates an Insolvency and Bankruptcy Fund. The Fund will receive voluntary contributions from any person. In case of insolvency proceedings being initiated against the contributor, he will be allowed to withdraw his contribution for making payments to workmen, protecting his assets, etc.

**Cross-border insolvency:** Cross-border insolvency relates to an insolvent debtor who has assets abroad. The central government may enter into agreements with other countries to enforce provisions of the Code.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145309
1. With reference to the amended Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) between India and Mauritius, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. A firm based in Mauritius, if its total operational expenses in that country is less than Rs.27 lakh, will not be eligible for the grandfathering provision

2. Investments made until 31st March 2017 by Mauritius tax residents will be exempt from any capital gains tax

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: a.

Slightly modified question (from what was posted a few days ago).

Statement 2 defines the ‘grandfathering’ provision of the amended DTAA. The firms as mentioned in Statement 1 cannot avail the concessional rates of taxation for the two-year transition period beginning April 2017.


2. In the context of missile defence battle space boundaries, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. ‘Endo-atmosphere’ refers to the Troposphere and the Stratosphere as one atmospheric block

2. ‘Exo-atmosphere’ refers to the space beyond Stratosphere as one atmospheric block

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Solution: c.

Question being repeated.

“The missile defense battle space is divided between intercepts – in the atmosphere, what is called endo-atmospheric, and out of the atmosphere, what is called exo-atmospheric. An endoatmospheric missile is one that remains within the earth’s atmosphere, i.e., at an altitude below 100 kilometers.”

“The target missile was launched at about 11.15 hours and the interceptor, Advanced Air Defence (AAD) missile positioned at Abdul Kalam island (Wheeler Island) getting signals from tracking radars, roared through its trajectory to destroy the incoming hostile missile in mid-air, in an endo-atmospheric altitude, the sources said.”

Improvisation:

3. Which of the following statements with reference to Article 122 of our Constitution is **incorrect**?

(a) It prohibits courts from inquiring into proceedings of Parliament and examining their validity

(b) The judiciary has set limits to the privilege of the legislature under this article

(c) Article 222 is analogous to Article 122 and it applies to State legislatures

(d) Both b and c

Solution: c.

Article **212** applies to state legislatures and is analogous to Article 122.

There are several prior cases in which the Supreme Court has examined the decision of the Speaker or the legislature. The Supreme Court has examined its powers of review under Articles 122 and 212 in the Raja Ram Pal case in 2007. This case pertained to the expulsion of some members of Parliament after they were found to have taken cash to ask questions in Parliament. The Court said: “The proceedings which may be tainted on account of substantive illegality or unconstitutionality, as opposed to those suffering from mere irregularity thus cannot be held protected from judicial scrutiny by Article 122 (1)”.

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/aadhar-bill-the-power-to-certify/article8604009.ece

4. In which of the following matters are the powers and status of the Rajya Sabha unequal to that of the Lok Sabha?

1. Initiation of removal of the Vice President

2. Approval of ordinances issued by the President

3. Introduction and passage of financial bills involving expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 Only

(b) 1 and 2 Only

(c) 1 and 3 Only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Solution: a.

Both, the Lok Sabha as well as the Rajya Sabha are involved in the process of election and removal of the Vice President. But the RS alone can initiate the removal of the VP. Statements 2 and 3 are applicable to both RS and LS.

Page 22.20, 22.28 and 22.29; Indian Polity 4th Edition by M Laxmikanth

Improvisation: http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/aadhar-bill-the-power-to-certify/article8604009.ece

5. The Animal Welfare Board of India is a statutory advisory body on animal welfare laws and promotes animal welfare in the country. It has been established under the

(a) Wildlife Protection Act, 1972

(b) Indian Forest Act, 1927

(c) Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

(d) It is a not-for-profit and non-statutory body established as an independent entity by civil society

Solution: c.
The Supreme Court has asked the Centre to respond on a plea seeking guidelines for punishment for animal abuse and exploitation in pet shop industry. A Bench of Justices Dipak Misra and S.K. Singh recently issued notice to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change on a petition by NGO, Angel Trust, which contended that the Law Commission of India has given a detailed report regarding animals being treated with cruelty by pet shop owners and said the government should notify the rules prepared by the Animal Welfare Board of India.”


6. Consider the following statements:

1. The amended Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010 will ensure that donations made by foreign-origin companies to political parties will not attract its provisions

2. The Representation of the People Act bars political parties from receiving foreign funds

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: c.

The government has admitted that the Finance Bill route, will not only help foreign-origin companies to fund NGOs here but has also cleared the way for them to give “donations to political parties.” Minister of State (Home) Kiren Rijiju told The Hindu that the amendment, which was cleared by the Lok Sabha in the recently concluded Budget session, will ensure that “donations made by such [foreign shareholding] companies to entities including political parties will not attract provisions of the FCRA, 2010.”

The statement assumes significance as such funding from foreign donors will bypass government scrutiny. The Representation of the People Act bars political parties from receiving foreign funds.

http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/foreign-firms-can-now-fund-party/article8604763.ece
1. The following Ramsar Sites – Sasthamkotta Lake, Kole Wetlands and Ashtamudi Lake – can be found in which Indian State?

(a) Andhra Pradesh
(b) Karnataka
(c) Kerala
(d) Tamil Nadu

Solution: c.


2. Consider the following statements:

1. India can make an extradition request only to countries with which it has signed an extradition treaty
2. India has an extradition treaty/arrangement with the United Kingdom

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: b.

“India can make an extradition request to any country. While India’s treaty partners have treaty obligations to consider India’s requests, in the absence of a treaty, it is a matter for the foreign country to consider, in accordance with its domestic laws and procedures, whether the country can agree to India’s extradition request on the basis of an assurance of reciprocity, the Ministry of External Affairs says on its web site. Just as India can request any country for an extradition, any country can make a similar extradition request to India. The legal basis for extradition with states with whom India does not have an extradition treaty – described as “non-Treaty States” – is provided by Section 3(4) of the Indian Extradition Act, 1962.”

http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/vijay-mallya-deport-britain-india-request-extradition-2802406/

3. NASA’s ‘Kepler Mission’, sometimes seen in the news, serves what purpose?

(a) This mission has been designed to discover terrestrial planets in our region of the Milky Way Galaxy
(b) This mission has been designed to discover terrestrial planets outside of our Galaxy, viz. in galaxies other than the Milky Way
(c) It continuously measures and transmits atmospheric data of the inner planets of our solar system
(d) It is a mission to help discover galaxies that have the same characteristics as that of the Milky Way

Solution: a.

“The Kepler Mission, NASA Discovery mission #10, is specifically designed to survey our region of the Milky Way galaxy to discover hundreds of Earth-size and smaller planets in or near the habitable zone and determine the fraction of the hundreds of billions of stars in our galaxy that might have such planets.”

Page 11, May 16th, Indian Express
4. In the context of India’s bid to become a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. The NSG is a body that was set up specifically in response to India’s Pokhran-II test
2. India is neither a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
3. The New Agenda Coalition, of which India is not a member, seeks to relax the preconditions for admission into the NSG

Select the correct answer using the code given below:
(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 3 Only
(c) 1 and 2 Only
(d) 2 and 3 Only

Solution: b.

The NSG was set up in response to India’s Pokhran-I test.

Today, the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) is a ministerial-level group of states within the framework of the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) focused on building international consensus to make progress on nuclear disarmament, as legally called for in the Nonproliferation Treaty.

http://thediplomat.com/2015/02/india-and-the-nuclear-suppliers-group/

Improvisation:
http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/nsgs-annual-plenary-session-fee-india-needs-to-pay-for-nsgs-membership/article8607952.ece

5. Which of the following nations have never signed the NPT?

1. India
2. Israel
3. Pakistan
4. North Korea

Select the correct answer using the code given below:
(a) 1, 2 and 3
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Solution: a.

North Korea was a party to the treaty but withdrew later. In addition to India, Israel and Pakistan, South Sudan too has not yet signed it.

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_parties_to_the_Treaty_on_the_Non-Proliferation_of_Nuclear_Weapons#

Improvisation:
http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/nsgs-annual-plenary-session-fee-india-needs-to-pay-for-nsgs-membership/article8607952.ece

**Clarifications:**

Question 2, Quiz 114, 16th May (Click Here): The directive is, “Which of the above statements are correct?” It instead should have been, “Select the correct answer using the code given below”. 
1. Consider the following statements:

1. The right to reputation is a constituent of Article 21 of the Constitution
2. Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code prescribes the punishment for a person and his family found guilty of demanding dowry

Which of the statements above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: a.

The court held that criminalisation of defamation to protect individual dignity of life and reputation is a “reasonable restriction” on the fundamental right of free speech and expression. “The right to reputation is a constituent of Article 21 of the Constitution. It is an individual’s fundamental right,” Justice Misra observed.

Section 498A of the IPC is the anti-dowry harassment law.

http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/sc-upholds-law-on-criminal-defamation/article8597865.ece

2. The 1980s and 2000s witnessed a pick-up in growth of the Indian Economy. With respect to economic parameters, what was the difference between these two phases of growth?

(a) While the 1980s saw a deterioration in twin deficit, growth in 2000s was accompanied by deteriorating domestic savings rate
(b) While the 1980s witnessed falling capital investment growth rates, the 2000s saw deterioration in domestic savings rate
(c) The 1980s growth was accompanied by deterioration in fiscal deficit only, whereas all stability parameters were at desired levels in 2000s
(d) Growth in the 1980s was accompanied by deterioration in twin deficit, while in the 2000s, all stability parameters were at desired levels

Solution: d.

“The domestic savings rate during this period(2005-2008) averaged 34.9 per cent of GDP. Similarly, the gross capital formation rate averaged 36.2 per cent. The current account deficit (CAD) remained low with an average of 1.2 per cent of GDP. Agricultural growth during this period averaged 5 per cent, and the annual manufacturing growth rate was 11 per cent. The capital flows were large but as the CAD remained low, the accretion to reserves amounted to $144 billion. Inflation during the period averaged 5.2 per cent. The combined fiscal deficit of the Centre and States was 5.2 per cent of GDP, well below the stipulated 6 per cent. Thus on many dimensions the growth rate was robust. Unlike in the 1980s when the pick-up in growth was accompanied by deterioration in fiscal deficit and current account, the sharp increase in growth between 2005-06 and 2007-08 happened with the stability parameters at desired levels. Also, a booming external environment provided good support.”

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/can-india-grow-at-8-to-9-per-cent/article8596824.ece
3. Which of the following statements with reference to “Incremental Capital Output Ratio” (ICOR) is correct?

(a) An ICOR of value greater than one indicates that for every rupee worth of capital investment, the entity generates more than one rupee worth of output

(b) A decline in investment rate, if accompanied by a greater decline in growth rate, indicates a rising ICOR

(c) Improvements on account of Research and Development can help enhance production efficiency and consequently increase ICOR

(d) None of the above

Solution: b.

The incremental capital output ratio (ICOR) is a metric that assesses the marginal amount of investment capital necessary for an entity to generate the next unit of production. Overall, a higher ICOR value is not preferred because it indicates that the entity’s production is inefficient. The measure is used predominantly in determining a country’s level of production efficiency. ICOR is calculated as Annual Investment by Annual Increase in GDP.

For example, suppose that Country X has an ICOR of 10. This implies that $10 worth of capital investment is necessary to generate $1 of extra production. Furthermore, if Country X’s ICOR was 12 last year, this implies that Country X has become more efficient in its use of capital.

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/can-india-grow-at-8-to-9-per-cent/article8596824.ece

4. Consider the following statements:

1. It was a secret convention made during World War I
2. It was signed between the governments of Great Britain and France
3. It dismembered the Ottoman Empire

Which agreement do the above statements refer to?

(a) The Treaty of Versailles
(b) The Treaty of West Asia
(c) Asia Minor Agreement
(d) None of the above

Ans: c.

Question being repeated.

Sykes-Picot Agreement, also called Asia Minor Agreement (May 9, 1916): A secret convention made during World War I between Great Britain and France, with the assent of imperial Russia, for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. The agreement led to the division of Turkish-held Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine into various French- and British-administered areas. Negotiations were begun in November 1915, and the final agreement took its name from its negotiators, Sir Mark Sykes of Britain and François Georges-Picot of France.

Improvisation:
http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/the-ghosts-of-sykespicot/article8612191.ece
5. Consider the following rivers:

1. Sengar
2. Ken
3. Betwa
4. Tila

Which of the above are tributaries of Yamuna?
(a) 1, 2 and 3
(b) 1, 3 and 4
(c) 1, 2 and 4
(d) All

Solution: a.

Chapter 3, India Physical Geography NCERT Class XI

Improvisation:
http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/kenbetwa-link-will-benefit-tigers/article8612673.ece

6. Consider the following statements with reference to the Ken-Betwa link project:

1. It envisages diversion of surplus waters of Ken basin to Betwa basin
2. It will help irrigate land and provide drinking water to people in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh

Which of the statements above is/are correct?
(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: a.

The project involves building the 288-metre Daudhan dam, and transfer of surplus water from the Ken river basin to the Betwa basin. This will submerge nearly 4,141 hectares of the Panna tiger reserve — held as model of tiger conservation after its numbers fell from 35 in 2006 to zero in 2009, and rose again to at least 18 after seven years of conservation — and could also mean that one tigress and her cub and some of the vultures resident in the area may have to adjust to new surroundings.

Executive Summary of the Ken-Betwa Link Project

http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/kenbetwa-link-will-benefit-tigers/article8612673.ece
1. Consider the following statements:

1. The date for a normal monsoon onset over Kerala is 1st of June
2. The date of monsoon advance over the Andaman Sea has no association either with the date of monsoon onset over Kerala or with the seasonal monsoon over the country

Which of the statements above is/are correct?
(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: c.

The onset of southwest monsoon over Kerala signals the arrival of monsoon over the Indian subcontinent and represents beginning of rainy season over the region. The normal monsoon onset over Kerala is 01 June. Since 2005, India Meteorological Department (IMD) has been issuing operational forecasts for the date of monsoon onset over Kerala using an indigenously developed statistical model with a model error of ± 4 days.

Past data suggest that there is no association of the date of monsoon advance over the Andaman Sea either with the date of monsoon onset over Kerala or with the seasonal monsoon rainfall over the country.

2. UDAAN Project, launched by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development, seeks to address the

(a) Lower enrolment ratio of girl students in science and engineering colleges
(b) Employability of girl students from science and engineering colleges
(c) Problem of low literacy among adult women in the informal sector of our economy
(d) Problem of low literacy among adults – both men and women – in the informal sector of our economy

Solution: a.

Ministry of Human Resource Development also launched UDAAN project to address the lower enrolment ratio of girl students in science and engineering colleges. The aim of UDAAN is to enrich and enhance teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics at Senior Secondary level by providing free and online resources to every girl, with a focus on special incentives and support to 1000 selected disadvantaged girls per year.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145371

3. Which of the following statements with reference to the dairy sector in India is/are incorrect?

1. Majority of the households dependent upon this sector for their livelihood belong to the small, marginal and landless labourers category
2. Majority of those engaged in this sector are women

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145364
Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

“Shri Radha Mohan Singh mentioned that livelihood of 60 million rural households depend upon dairy sector. Out of this, two third are small, marginal and landless labourers. Shri Singh informed that as many as 75 million women are engaged in the sector as against 15 million men. There is an increasing trend towards participation of women in livestock development activities. This has led to empowerment of women-headed households in the rural communities.”

4. The Government recently constituted a five Member Committee to comprehensively review and give recommendations on the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management roadmap for the future. Its chairman is,

(a) Dr. Arvind Subramanian 
(b) Shri N.K. Singh 
(c) Shri Urjit Patel 
(d) Shri Sumit Bose 

Solution: b.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Committee are as under:

- To review the working of the FRBM Act over last 12 years and to suggest the way forward, keeping in view the broad objective of fiscal consolidation and prudence and the changes required in the context of the uncertainty and volatility in the global economy;
- To look into various aspects, factors, considerations going into determining the FRBM targets
- To examine the need and feasibility of having a ‘fiscal deficit range’ as the target in place of the existing fixed numbers(percentage of GDP) as fiscal deficit target; if so, the specific recommendations of the Committee thereon; and
- To examine the need and feasibility of aligning the fiscal expansion or contraction with credit contraction or expansion respectively in the economy.

5. Consider the following statements for the period 2005-2012:

1. Poverty reduction in the developing world was well above the pace for India
2. On the measure of ‘shared prosperity’ – or equitable improvement among all people – India lags behind countries at a similar stage of development

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: b.
Since 2005, poverty reduction in India has exceeded the pace for the developing world. However, poverty reduction did not benefit all segments of the population equally. The fall in poverty levels could have been much higher if growth had been more inclusive. Notably, while consumption levels have increased rapidly in recent years, the poorest 40 per cent of households have seen their incomes grow at a slower pace than the population as a whole. On this measure of ‘shared prosperity’ — or equitable improvement among all people — India lags behind countries at a similar stage of development.

http://inde\n\n incremental capital output ratio (ICOR) is a metric that assesses the marginal amount of investment capital necessary for an entity to generate the next unit of production. Overall, a higher ICOR value is not preferred because it indicates that the entity’s production is inefficient. The measure is used predominantly in determining a country’s level of production efficiency. ICOR is calculated as Annual Investment by Annual Increase in GDP.

For example, suppose that Country X has an ICOR of 10. This implies that $10 worth of capital investment is necessary to generate $1 of extra production. Furthermore, if country X’s ICOR was 12 last year, this implies that Country X has become more efficient in its use of capital.

“An analysis of the data of the period since 2012-13 reveals two trends. First, there has been a decline in investment rate. Second, the decline in growth rate is greater than the decline in investment rate indicating a rise in the incremental capital-output ratio (ICOR).”
1. Article 37 of the Indian Constitution states that

1. Provisions contained in Part IV shall not be enforceable by any court
2. It shall be the duty of the State to apply the principles enshrined in Part IV in making laws

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.

Article 37 in The Constitution Of India 1949:
Application of the principles contained in this Part: The provisions contained in this Part shall not be enforceable by any court, but the principles therein laid down are nevertheless fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws.

Constitutionalists apply the metaphor to courts who are forbidden by Article 37 of the Constitution to enforce by writs or orders the catena of Directive Principles of State Policy set forth in Part IV of the Constitution. But ever since 1986 (the Indian Express Building case), judges have frequently crossed the lakshmana rekha of Article 37 — simply because “the State” (the legislatures and/ or the executive) have failed to implement the Directive Principles of State Policy.

http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/surely-mr-jaitley-2807699/

2. ‘BNVSAP’ stands for

(a) Bureau of Vehicle Standards and Safety Parameters
(b) Bharat New Vehicle Safety Assessment Programme
(c) Bharat New Vision Students’ Aid Program
(d) Bureau of New Vehicles’ Security Assessment Programme

Solution: b.

“New Indian regulations — Bharat New Vehicle Safety Assessment Programme, or BNVSAP — that will kick in from October 2017 require that crash tests are done at 56 km/h, the same standard as in Europe and US.”

SIAM Presentation


3. The Ashgabat Agreement, which the Union Cabinet recently gave its approval for India to accede to, is

(a) An agreement which makes Turkmenistan India’s partner in development of the Iranian Chabahar Port
(b) An international transport and transit corridor facilitating transportation of goods between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf
(c) An Intergovernmental Snow Leopard and High-Mountain Ecosystems Conservation Programme
(d) A civil nuclear pact with Turkmenistan

Solution: b.
Question being repeated.

“The Ashgabat Agreement, an international transport and transit corridor facilitating transportation of goods between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. Accession to the Agreement would enable India to utilise this existing transport and transit corridor to facilitate trade and commercial interaction with the Eurasian region. Further, this would synchronise with our efforts to implement the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) for enhanced connectivity.”

http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/modi-iran-visit-narendra-modi-iran-india-ties-2807776/

4. Which of the following are NOT some of the terms of reference of the Committee set up to comprehensively review and give recommendations on the Fiscal Responsibility Budget Management roadmap for the future?

1. To examine the need and feasibility of having a ‘fiscal deficit range’ as the target in place of the existing fixed numbers
2. To examine the need and feasibility of aligning the fiscal expansion or contraction with credit contraction or expansion respectively in the economy
3. To review the working of the FRBM Act over last 12 years

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 and 3 Only
(c) 1 and 2 Only
(d) None of the above

Solution: d.
1. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recently passed an order which led to the social networking giant ‘Facebook’ to withdraw from India its ‘Free Basics’ initiative. Which of the following matches the TRAI order?

(a) It directly banned Free Basics and Airtel Zero
(b) It prohibited running business models which provide free data or suitable reimbursement to users
(c) It permitted running business models which provide free data or suitable reimbursement to users but which do not violate differential pricing norms set by TRAI
(d) It only banned the practice of differential pricing of data by telecom service providers

Solution: d.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India issued a consultation paper on free data seeking comments from stakeholders whether business models which provide free data or suitable reimbursement to users could be allowed without violating the differential pricing norms set by the regulator.

Earlier this year, TRAI had banned the practice of differential pricing of data or allowing telecom service providers to offer differential pricing for access to specific applications or websites. The move put the end to Facebook’s Free Basics. Now, the regulator is looking at different models which can work within its regulatory framework.

http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/trai-seeks-comments-on-free-data/article8621787.ece

2. Consider the following statements with reference to the updated base year and weights for the various goods and services in the Consumer Price Index (CPI):

1. The base year is 2012
2. Weights for food and fuel items add up to about 60%

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: a.

According to Volume 2 of the Economic Survey 2014-15, food and fuel add up to 59.2% (49.7+9.5) of total weight. The new CPI accords fuel and food a combined weight of 65.6%.


3. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. Losses incurred by farmers at any stage of farming activity – from sowing to post-harvest season – is covered
2. Farmers who haven’t taken bank loans are eligible for insurance cover
3. Sharecroppers are not eligible for insurance cover under this scheme

http://www.InsightsIAS.com
Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.

19th May, PIB Features

The Operational Guidelines (source being provided but need not be read) of the Ministry of Agriculture states, “All farmers including sharecroppers and tenant farmers growing the notified crops in the notified areas are eligible for coverage.”

4. Consider the following statements:

1. The Child Sex Ratio in the latest census figures (2011) is the lowest ever since Independence

2. Under the ‘Sukanya Samriddhi Account’ programme (SSA), the government will open an account for every girl child up to the age of ten years

3. SSA will be valid only till the girl child attains the age of 21 years, after which the matured amount if not withdrawn will earn no interest

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 and 3 Only
(c) 1 and 2 Only
(d) None of the above

Solution: a.

- Under the scheme, a parent or legal guardian can open an account in the name of the girl child until she attains the age of ten years. As per the government notification on the Scheme, the account can be opened in any post office branch and designated public sector banks.

- The rate of interest for the scheme will be revised every year by the government and will be announced at the time of the Union Budget. The minimum deposit that needs to be made every year is Rs 1,000, and the maximum amount that can be deposited in a year is Rs 1,50,000. There is no limit on the number of deposits either in a month or in a financial year.

- The account will be valid for 21 years from the date of opening, after which it will mature and the money will be paid to the girl child in whose name the account had been opened.

1. Consider the following statements:

1. A third of the global burden of disease for mental, neurological and substance use disorders occurs in India.
2. Among males, cancer of the lung and among women, breast cancer are the leading sites of cancer in India.

Which of the statements above is/are correct?
(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: b.

“A third of the global burden of disease for mental, neurological and substance use disorders occurs in India and China, more than in all high-income countries combined.”

Page ‘Weekend Being’, May 22nd, The Hindu


2. Consider the following statements:

1. Type 1 diabetes affects children and young people unlike Type 2 which is a late onset disease
2. Type 2 diabetes is thought to be caused by improper nutrition and other lifestyle factors
3. India has more number of Type 1 diabetes afflicted individuals than Type 2

Which among the following nations are among the Indian Information Technology companies’ top five markets?

1. Germany
2. United Kingdom
3. Switzerland
4. Canada

3. Which among the following nations are among the Indian Information Technology companies’ top five markets?

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

Solution: b.

“Type 1 diabetes is believed to be congenital and affects children and young people unlike Type 2, a late onset disease that afflicts 90 per cent of diabetics and is thought to be caused by improper nutrition and other lifestyle factors. “Finding the cellular mechanisms behind the development of autoimmune diseases, such as Type 1 diabetes, could lead to treatments that help us lead longer, healthier lives,” Mr. Cole added. Around the world, 21 million people have Type 1 diabetes and constitute between 5-10 per cent of global cases of diabetes. While figures suggest that India is in the grip of a Type 2 diabetes epidemic, with more rural than urban populations diagnosed with the condition, there is also a marked rise in Type 1 afflictions.”

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/bugs-may-be-to-blame-for-type-1-diabetes-says-research/article8630541.ece
Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

India will raise its concerns over Canada’s restrictions on temporary work visas for skilled professionals, as these curbs put in place two years ago have been hurting the domestic Information Technology (IT) sector.

As per Nasscom estimates, Canada is among the top five markets for Indian IT companies, the others being the U.S., the U.K., Germany and Switzerland. Annual revenue of Indian IT firms from the Canadian market is around $2-3 billion. India has already taken up with the U.S. and U.K. the issue of curbs imposed by them on temporary work visas for skilled professionals. India has even dragged the US to the World Trade Organisation on the issue.


4. After 17 straight months of fall of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), it rose recently in April. What was the primary reason for this latest inflationary push?

(a) Higher food prices
(b) Increase in demand for industrial goods
(c) Rise in the demand for steel products
(d) International shortage of cotton yarn

Solution: a.

The government is considering banning futures trading in chana dal (brown chickpeas) and reducing import duty on sugar as part of its efforts to rein in inflation, according to a top official. Higher food prices, led by pulses and sugar, pushed wholesale price inflation into positive territory in April after 17 months of decline while consumer price inflation crossed 5 per cent in the same month. The ban in futures trading in chana dal would be discussed at a committee of secretaries’ meeting on Monday but a final call would be taken by the finance ministry, the food ministry official said.

http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/chickpeas-futures-trading-may-face-ban/article8630548.ece

5. With reference to the ‘None Of The Above’ option – exercised by votes to express their disenchantment with candidates in the poll fray – which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. No constituency – either at assembly or central level elections – has seen the number of NOTA votes exceed the margin of defeat of second-placed candidates
2. The NOTA symbol is an outline of a gender-neutral figure with a black cross across it

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.

Statement 2 has been copy-pasted from a question posted here a few days ago. Nota Symbol:
Many constituencies have seen the number of NOTA votes exceed the margin of defeat of second-placed candidates.

‘The NOTA Effect’

6. ‘Buddha Purnima’ or ‘Vesak’ is regarded as the thrice-sacred day that celebrates which three momentous events in the life of Gautama Buddha?

1. Buddha’s birth
2. Sambodhiprapti
3. Dhammacakkappavattana
4. Mahaparinibbana

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

“Addressing on the occasion, Shri Rajnath Singh said that pious Vaisakhi Poornima is described as Buddha Poornima because Bhagwan Buddha’s Birth, attainment of Sambodhiprapti and Mahaparinirvana all fell on this day of Vaisakhi Poornima.”

“Buddha Purnima or Vesak is regarded as the thrice-sacred day that celebrates three momentous events in the history of human kind, regardless of the country or Buddhist tradition to which we belong, namely Buddha’s birth, sambodhiprapti and mahaparinirvana. India is the land of the origin of Buddha dharma, and home to three of the four holiest Buddhist sites, namely Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar, and numerous others connected with Buddha’s life and thereafter. Buddha was born as Prince Siddhartha in Lumbini in present day Nepal. He attained sambodhiprapti in Bodhgaya in Bihar, and mahaparinirvana in Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh.”

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145519

7. ‘DEEP’ e-bidding portal, sometimes seen in the news, is

(a) A portal for procurement of short term power by distribution companies
(b) A licensing portal under the new Hydrocarbon Exploration and licensing Policy
(c) A portal for procurement by Oil Marketing Companies of oil extracted from deep sea exploration activities
(d) A component of the domestic efficient electricity programme under which the supplier of LED bulbs for the UJALA programme is selected

Solution: a.

First e-Bidding process through recently launched DEEP (Discovery of Efficient Electricity Price) e-Bidding Portal for Short term power procurement has been concluded for the State of Uttarakhand and Kerala.

Secretary (Power) Shri P K Pujari, while congratulating States of Uttarakhand, Kerala Bihar and Torrent Power for early adoption of the e-bidding portal, stated that the process has resulted in substantial savings as the prices discovered through e-bidding are significantly lower than the prices at which power was procured during the similar period in the last year.

http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145526
Clarifications:

Question 2, Quiz 119, 21st May

(Click HERE): CPI, unless otherwise specified, should be considered to be combined CPI. According to Arthapedia (Click HERE), “The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has started using CPI-combined as the sole inflation measure for the purpose of monetary policy. As per the agreement on Monetary Policy Framework between the Government and the RBI dated February 20, 2015 the sole of objective of RBI is price stability and a target is set for inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index-Combined.” So when we usually say that the RBI uses CPI for measuring inflation, it means CPI-combined.

As was pointed out by a couple of Insightians, Statement 1 (“The base year is 2012”) is not a new development. Additionally, statement 2 (“Weights for food and fuel items add up to about 60%”) has been wrongly worded. It should have instead been, “Weights for food and fuel items, including pan, tobacco and intoxicants add up to about 60%”.

This question was framed on the basis of two sources – the ET article (dated 20th May), and the Economic Survey 2014-15 Volume 2, table 5.2, page 70. We should have double-checked the information provided in the article. Based on the latest Press Release by MoSPI on CPI dated 12th May (Click HERE), CPI-combined weight for food, beverages, pan, tobacco and intoxicants adds up to 55.08% and not 65.6% as has been highlighted in the article.

It could also be that the CPI composition was updated between the 12th and 20th May. We could not find any PIB release or news articles associated with any such development. If you did (or do), please share it in the comments section below.

Until further notice, consider this particular question to be invalid.
1. Consider the following statements:

**Assertion (A):** The farmers of the Bundelkhand region have largely depended on just the rabi season; the area of crops sown during kharif is much smaller

**Reason (R):** The region suffers due to ‘Anna Pratha’

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

(a) A and R both are true, and R is the correct explanation for A
(b) A and R both are true, and R is the NOT the correct explanation for A
(c) A is correct, R is incorrect
(d) A and R both are incorrect

Ans: a.

Question being repeated.

“The rabi crop is good here and high value crops like gram, lentil, pea etc are grown in the area in large quantities. However, the farmers of the region have largely depended on just one crop; the area sown during kharif is much smaller. The primary reason given is that the region suffers due to Anna Pratha. This is a traditional system under which people leave their milch cattle unfettered to graze in the fields. These cattle eat up the crops and therefore the farmers are not inclined to sow their lands during the season of Kharif. This does not happen during the rabi season as he farmers keep their cattle at home.”

PIB Features – 8th October 2015, “Open Sesame!” by Amit Mohan Prasad

2. Consider the following statements:

1. Cattle do not eat this crop
2. It is a crop meant for the rain fed areas
3. Very few countries cultivate it

Which of the above statements about the ‘Sesame’ or ‘Til’ crop is/are true?

(a) 1 and 3 Only
(b) 1 and 2 Only
(c) 1, 2 and 3 only
(d) None of the above

Ans: c.

Question being repeated.

“The economics of sesame cultivation is revealing. It is a crop meant for the rain fed areas. There is no dearth of market for the produce as there are very few countries cultivating sesame whereas almost every country consumes it in some form or the other. Sesame oil is used for cooking, making sweets, massage, medicinal and cosmetic purposes and many other uses. Sesame seeds are used for preparing sweets like gajak, rewar, laddoos and tilkut in India, tahini sauce in Middle East and on top of buns and burgers in the west. It is also used for different rituals on religious occasions. Sesame gets a better price for the farmers than the other oilseeds in the market.”

PIB Features – 8th October, “Open Sesame!” by Amit Mohan Prasad


3. With reference to India’s culture and tradition, what is ‘Kalaripayattu’?

(a) It is an ancient Bhakti cult of Shaivism still prevalent in some parts of South India

(b) It is an ancient style bronze and brasswork still found in southern part of Coromandel area

(c) It is an ancient form of dance-drama and a living tradition in the northern part of Malabar

(d) It is an ancient martial art and a living tradition in some parts of South India

Solution: d.

CS(P) 2014


4. The Indian Space Research Organization recently successfully conducted the maiden test flight of a Reusable Launch Vehicle Technology Demonstrator. Which ‘technology demonstration exercise’ was tested in this test flight?

(a) Hypersonic Flight Experiment (HEX)

(b) Landing Experiment (LEX)

(c) Return Flight Experiment (REX)

(d) Scramjet Propulsion Experiment (SPEX)

Solution: a.

Reusable Launch Vehicle -Technology Demonstration Program or RLV-TD is a series of technology demonstration missions that have been considered as a first step towards realizing a Two Stage To Orbit (TSTO) fully reusable vehicle. A Winged Reusable Launch Vehicle technology Demonstrator (RLV-TD) has been configured to act as a flying test bed to evaluate various technologies, namely, hypersonic flight, autonomous landing, powered cruise flight and hypersonic flight using air-breathing propulsion.

These technologies will be developed in phases through a series of experimental flights. The first in the series of experimental flights is the hypersonic flight experiment (HEX) followed by the landing experiment (LEX), return flight experiment (REX) and scramjet propulsion experiment (SPEX).


5. Which of the following statements, in the context of fishermen from India and Pakistan being arrested by Pakistan and India respectively, is/are incorrect?

1. According to the ‘Agreement on Consular Access (2008)’, consular access must be provided within 180 days of arrest of either country’s prisoners

2. A Joint Judicial Committee on Prisoners was set up in 2008 whose mandate is only to ensure that such prisoners are treated humanely

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 Only

(b) 2 Only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: c.
India and Pakistan had signed the Agreement on Consular Access in 2008, according to which consular access must be provided within 90 days of arrest of either country’s prisoners. This period is given to help verify the person’s nationality and enable necessary steps to repatriate the person to his or her country of origin. There have been instances where prisoners could not be released and repatriated because their nationalities were not verified on time.

In January 2008, India and Pakistan set up the India-Pakistan Joint Judicial Committee on Prisoners, which consisted of retired judges from both countries. The committee worked hard to seek early repatriation of prisoners who have completed their sentences in the other country’s jail and also ensure that they are treated humanely. It met every six months and visited prisoners in both countries. It discussed issues such as health and food of the prisoners and the need to evolve a mechanism for humanitarian treatment of women, the mentally challenged, juvenile prisoners, and so on.

http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/fishermen-in-troubled-waters/article8634150.ece

6. Consider the following statements:

**Assertion (A):** There are more Indian fishermen in Pakistan’s jails than the other way round

**Reason (R):** Indian population is far greater than Pakistan’s

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) A and R both are true, and R is the correct explanation for A

(b) A and R both are true, and R is the NOT the correct explanation for A

(c) A is incorrect, R is correct

(d) A and R both are incorrect

Ans: b.

“These prisoners (both Indian as well as Pakistani) have nothing to do with the policies of their respective governments, but they bear the consequences of these policies or are often held up as “prizes” in a tense geo-political conflict. In Gujarat, where there is pollution near the shores and an overabundance of trawlers, fishermen have no other option but to go farther into the sea to catch fish. This explains why there are more Indian fishermen in Pakistan’s jails than the other way round. Also, while most Indians in Pakistan’s prisons are fishermen, the opposite is not true.”

http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/fishermen-in-troubled-waters/article8634150.ece

7. Keeping all other factors a constant, an increase in the international price of crude oil would definitely result in which of the following?

1. Reduced revenues for the Centre

2. Rise in price of food articles

3. Increased income from petroleum product exports

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 Only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1,2 and 3

Solution: b.
Revenues will reduce only if the Centre reduces the excise duty on Petroleum products. Consequently, if the centre does not alter excise duty, an increase in crude oil price will increase the cost of transportation of food articles. Also, there would be an increase in revenues from exports for the oil marketing companies.

http://www.livemint.com/Politics/n7aaS98NsJ8sopqBIXWN/NDA-in-the-right-direction-but-still-a-long-way-to-go.html
1. With reference to the ‘International Dunhuang Project’, which of the following statements is/are **incorrect**?

1. It is an international collaboration to make information and images of all manuscripts, paintings, textiles and artefacts from not just Dunhuang, but also archaeological sites of the Eastern Silk Road, available on the Internet

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

IDP: The International Dunhuang Project


2. The National Museum of India in New Delhi is a founding member

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.

The first agreement, a bilateral, signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s May 22-23 visit, will provide India the right to develop and operate two terminals and five berths with multipurpose cargo handling capacities in the port of Chahbahar for 10 years. After the bilateral, Prime Minister Modi and Iranian President Dr. Hassan Rouhani were joined by Dr. Ashraf Ghani, President of Afghanistan, who sealed the agreement for Trilateral Transport and Transit Corridor connecting Chahbahar with Afghan road and rail network. The two countries also sealed 11 other agreements, covering culture, finance and conservation, during Mr. Modi’s official meetings with the Iranian President.


3. Consider the following statements:

1. Potassium Bromate has been classified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) as ‘possibly carcinogenic to humans’

2. IARC is not a part of the World Health Organisation

3. Quercetin – a natural ingredient that possesses anti-cancerous and anti-inflammatory properties – is found in turmeric
Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: c.

Quercetin, known to cause anti-cancer and anti-inflammatory activity, reportedly induces ‘apoptosis,’ a process by which cells commit suicide in a controlled manner. The compound is also said to prevent multiplication of cancerous cells by blocking the process of cell division. It can even kill the highly aggressive leukaemia cell line K562, which is resistant to most anti-cancerous drugs. Quercetin is abundantly found in commonly available food items such as tomatoes, broccoli, raw asparagus, raw red onion, red and black grapes, apple, apricot, cherry and coriander.

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Agency_for_Research_on_Cancer


4. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee is constituted under the

(a) Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006
(b) Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999
(c) Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
(d) Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
Note: Question 2 (from today’s quiz) gives you a clue to understand statement 3 of Question 7, 23-May, Quiz 121 (Click Here). And please read the question carefully. Attempt it once again. We will provide clarification in the next quiz.

1. With reference to the recent successful launch of the first technology demonstrator of the indigenously made Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV), which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

   **Assertion (A):** ISRO will not use the same RLV to launch satellites as well as carry astronauts

   **Reason (R):** An RLV that can launch satellites as well as carry astronauts costs more per kg of payload as compared to one that launches only satellites

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) A and R both are true, and R is the correct explanation for A
(b) A and R both are true, and R is the NOT the correct explanation for A
(c) A is correct, R is incorrect
(d) A and R both are incorrect

Ans: a.

“Learning from the mistakes of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in its space shuttle programme, ISRO will not use the same reusable vehicle to launch satellites and carry astronauts as it drastically reduces the payload capacity and thereby increases the cost per kg.”

2. Which of the following statements is correct with regard to ‘Operating Margin’?

   (a) It is a measure of a company’s operating efficiency
   (b) A ratio which compares operating expense to net sales
   (c) Smaller its value, greater is the company’s earning per unit currency of sales
   (d) All of the above

Solution: a.

“Operating margin is a measurement of what proportion of a company’s revenue is left over after paying for variable costs of production such as wages, raw materials, etc. Generally speaking, the higher a company’s operating margin is, the better off the company is. If a company’s margin is increasing, it is earning more per dollar of sales.”

“As per the targets, the operating margin for the major ports is set to increase to 44 per cent, compared to 39 per cent during 2015-16. The operating margins in 2014-15 stood at 35 per cent. The Minister has also directed officials to ensure that that overall operating margins increase by five percentage points compared to the previous fiscal, with the condition that no major port reports an improvement of less than one percentage one, according to a ministry note reviewed by The Hindu.”


3. Consider the following statements with reference to Payment Banks (PB):

1. They are not allowed to offer loans
2. They cannot issue debit and ATM cards
3. They are an authorised form of a Ponzi Scheme
Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: a.

A Ponzi Scheme is a form of fraud in which belief in the success of a non-existent enterprise is fostered by the payment of quick returns to the first investors from money invested by later investors. PBs certainly are not an ‘authorised form of a Ponzi scheme’.

They can issue debit and ATM cards.

"...Long gestation period is also one reason that prompted Tech Mahindra to withdraw. “It has a very long gestation period, ideally between 4 to 5 years,” he said. In addition, the revenue stream for a payments bank is limited. RBI has not allowed payments banks to offer loans. Their main objective is to provide remittance services. “The revenue stream for us is limited, we are not allowed to lend, which is obviously going to be a challenge. We knew about it though. But having that in the condition would have helped,” Mr. Mitra added...”

What are Payment Banks?


4. With reference to the Banks Board Bureau, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. It is a part of the government's Indradhanush programme to revamp the functioning of state-run banks
2. It will eventually transform into a Bad Bank to relieve lenders of stressed and non-performing assets

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: b.

Statement 2 is incorrect. No such announcement has ever been made. Refer this article to know what some of the BBB's functions include.

http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/it-is-time-for-mergers-banks-boards-rai/article8641652.ece
1. With reference to the recently promulgated NEET Ordinance and specifically with respect to this academic year, which of the following statements is/are incorrect?

1. All PG (Post Graduate) admissions will be done through NEET
2. State Government seats – in both government and private medical colleges – will be exempt from the purview of NEET regulations if the State Government so opts
3. All private medical colleges holding UG (Under Graduate) medical exams will fall under NEET’s ambit

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 Only
(b) 1 and 2 Only
(c) 2 Only
(d) None

Solution: d.

All statements are correct.


2. Iran is said to have a unique geopolitical location and has historically been an important arena of great power jostling for influence. Which of the following countries border Iran?

1. Tajikistan
2. Turkey
3. Azerbajian
4. Pakistan

“...Iran has always potentially been the most important power in the region. It has a unique geopolitical location owing to its reach in Central Asia and Caucasus as well as in West Asia and the Persian Gulf. Because of its geography, Iran was historically an important arena of great power jostling for influence. From the last decades of the 19th century to the mid-20th century, the British and Russian empires vied for influence in Iran and eventually settled for a condominium.”

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/modis-visit-to-iran-the-takeaway-from-tehran/article8646427.ece

3. The Union Cabinet recently approved India’s first-ever policy for the capital goods sector.
Which of the following statements with reference to it is/are correct?

1. It aims to double the value of production of capital goods by 2025
2. The objectives of the policy will be met by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

- This is first ever policy for Capital Goods sector with a clear objective of increasing production of capital goods from Rs.2,30,000 crore in 2014-15 to Rs.7,50,000 crore in 2025 and raising direct and indirect employment from the current 8.4 million to 30 million.

- The policy envisages increasing exports from the current 27 percent to 40 percent of production.

- It will increase the share of domestic production in India’s demand from 60 percent to 80 percent thus making India a net exporter of capital goods.

- The idea of a ‘National Capital Goods Policy’ was first presented by the Deptt. of Heavy Industry to the Prime Minister in the ‘Make in India’ workshop held in December, 2014.

- The objectives of the policy will be met by the Department of Heavy Industries

http://pib.nic.in/newssite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145622

4. Consider the following statements:

1. Zardozi – also played in Iran – is a folk musical instrument of Uttar Pradesh
2. The manuscript ‘Kalileh-wa-Dimneh’ is a Persian rendering of Jatakas and Panchatantra

Which of the statements above is/are correct?

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

Solution: b.

A question on Zardozi was earlier posted here, based on the republic day Tableaux (PIB Release).

“The rare Persian manuscript Kalileh-wa-Dimneh, released just now, captures the close historical links between India and Iran. It is remarkable how the simple stories of the Indian classics of Jataka and Panchatantra became the Persian Kalileh-wa-Dimneh. It is a classic example of exchange and travel of cultural ideas between two societies….. Crafts like Zardozi, Guldozi and Chanderi may be a part of the Iranian society. They are equally common in India too.”

http://pib.nic.in/newssite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=145578
1. In the context of international affairs, the ‘Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action’ – often seen in the news – refers to

(a) A Memorandum of Understanding between SAARC and the European Union on a proposed Free Trade Agreement
(b) The Iranian Nuclear Deal reached between Iran, the P5+1 nations and the European Union
(c) The outcome document of the 2016 round of ‘Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process’
(d) The outcome document of India’s flagship conference of geopolitics and geo-economics – the Raisina Dialogue

Solution: b.

The agreement (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA) between Iran and P5+1 on Iran’s nuclear programme and the corresponding easing of sanctions, concluded last July, has provided the long-awaited opening.

http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/indias-deal-with-iran-watch-the-follow-through/article8651063.ece

2. With respect to India’s foreign relations, ‘Agenda for Action – 2020’, recently seen in the news is

(a) An agreement between NASA and ISRO to cooperate and collaborate on Reusable Launch Vehicle Technology development
(b) A joint statement issued by India and China to promote peace, prosperity, stability and security in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region
(c) A common roadmap to jointly guide and strengthen the India-EU Strategic Partnership
(d) The outcome document of India’s flagship conference of geopolitics and geo-economics – the Raisina Dialogue

Solution: c.

“The Agenda for Action-2020, which emerged from the March 30 talks in Brussels and sets the strategic agenda between India and EU for the next five years, emphasises sub-national and business-to-business linkages.”


3. Section 357A of the Code of Criminal Procedure mandates that

(a) Every State Government shall on its own prepare a scheme for providing funds for the purpose of compensation to the victim
(b) Every State Government in co-ordination with the Central Government shall prepare a scheme for providing funds for the purpose of compensation to the victim
(c) The party which loses in the court shall pay the other party's legal fees
(d) If the party which filed the complaint loses in the court, it shall pay not only the other party’s legal fees, but also expenses incurred by the court

Solution: b.

Options c and d mention punishments and not any code of procedure unlike in option a and b.

Section 357A of CrPC – Victim compensation scheme: Every State Government in co-ordination with the Central Government shall prepare a scheme for providing funds for the
purpose of compensation to the victim or his dependents who have suffered loss or injury as a result of the crime and who require rehabilitation.”

“The Bench issued notice to the Centre, States and UTs on the question of effective implementation of Section 357 A of the Cr.PC. This provision mandates States to co-ordinate with the Centre to prepare a scheme for providing funds to compensate and rehabilitate victims or dependents. “Setting up of Nirbhaya Fund is not enough... The Union of India must ensure that adequate relief is being provided to the victims of sexual offences,” the Bench observed orally.”


5. Which of the following statements with reference to the Rajya Sabha is/are incorrect?

1. The Third Schedule to the Constitution provides for allocation of seats to States and Union Territories
2. The requirement that a candidate contesting an election to the Rajya Sabha from a particular state should be an elector in that particular state has dispensed with

Select the correct answer using the code given below:
(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: a.

The Fourth Schedule to the Constitution provides for allocation of seats to the States and Union Territories.


6. Which of the following statements with reference to the traditional Gond Art is/are correct?

1. Many art works have respectful representation of snakes
2. Of late, villagers in Maoist areas are documenting their stories on memorial plaques in this art form

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: c.

Traditional paintings, particularly in Gondi and Mithila art have many artistic and respectful representations of snakes.

Chapter 9, Living Craft Traditions of India, NCERT

Improvisation:

7. Consider the following statements with reference to the North Eastern Council (NEC):

1. It is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region
2. The North Eastern Region as defined by the NEC consists of the seven sister states and Sikkim
3. It is a statutory body

Which of the statements above is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: d.

About NEC: The North Eastern Council is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region which consists of the eight States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. The North Eastern Council was constituted in 1971 by an Act of Parliament. The constitution of the Council has marked the beginning of a new chapter of concerted and planned endeavour for the rapid development of the Region.

http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/northeast-may-get-resource-centre/article8657481.ece

8. Consider the following statements:

1. The RBI Act has been amended by the Parliament to make Consumer Price Inflation the inflation target for purposes of Monetary Policy
2. The Urjit Patel Committee report on Monetary Policy Reform had recommended a ‘glide path’ to inflation targeting

Which of the statements above is/are incorrect?

(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
Solution: d.

“The government has the responsibility of notifying the inflation rate that it wishes to achieve. This rate is to be set every five years. The inflation target in the MPFA chosen by government and the RBI was 6 per cent by January 2016 and then 4 per cent for 2016-17 and thereafter (with a band of 2 per cent). This sudden jump down in the inflation rate appears at odds with the stated intent outlined in the Urjit Patel Committee report of setting a glide path to inflation. A glide path in the case of other countries such as Chile and the Czech Republic, cited in the report, was slower and smoother and a lowering of the target was done when the existing target was achieved and stabilised.”


**Clarifications:**

Question 1, Quiz 124, 26 May (Click Here): Given the fact that in statements 2 and 3 we specifically mention, ‘medical colleges’, statement 1 too should have included the same. That is, the statement should have been, “All medical (and dental) postgraduate (PG) admissions will be done through NEET this year.”

9. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee is constituted under the

(a) Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006
(b) Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999
(c) Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
(d) Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

Solution: c.

CS(P), 2015

http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/gm-seeds-key-to-food-security-javadekar/article8638547.ece
1. Consider the following statements with regard to e-waste Management Rules, 2016:

1. Producers are exclusively responsible for collection of electronic waste
2. Separate authorisation for setting up of collection centres will be required from State Pollution Control Boards

Which of the statements above is/are correct?
(a) 1 Only
(b) 2 Only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: a.

“Collection is now exclusively Producer’s responsibility, which can set up collection centre or point or even can arrange buy back mechanism for such collection. No separate authorization for such collection will be required, which will be indicated in the EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) Plan of Producers. Single EPR Authorization for Producers is now being made CPCB’s responsibility to ensure pan India implementation. Need for separate EPR authorization from each state lead to significant delays and thus failure in implementation of EPR”

See Graphic, Page 13, The Hindu, May 31st

2. ‘Artemisinin’, recently seen in the news, is

(a) The prime constituent of the chemical weapon used against rebels in Syria
(b) An antibiotic discovered to be the next line of resistance, after colistin
(c) An anti-malarial drug whose discoverer was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine
(d) A virus found in ground water near steel industries which causes deadly gum infections when consumed

Solution: c.

“Just as rice, wheat and cotton are among the 25 crops that qualify for a government-mandated minimum support price, the CSIR is framing a proposal to push for mentha (the plant that gives menthol), lavender, lemongrass, artemisia annua (the source of the antimalarial compound artemisinin), geranium, lavender and rose oil to be included in such a category.”


3. Arrange the following places in their order of occurrence from West to East:

1. Gulf of Sirte
2. Lesbos
3. Fallujah
4. Chahbahar

Select the correct answer using the code given below:
(a) 1-2-3-4
(b) 1-2-4-3
(c) 2-1-3-4
(d) 2-1-4-3

Solution: a.
Based on locations that were in the news recently (actually, are often in the news).


4. ‘Gatiman Express’, recently seen in the news, is/are

(a) The first bullet train being built with cooperation from Japan

(b) India’s fastest train so far

(c) Trains which will serve sea ports-to-hinterland connectivity

(d) The first train in the northeast to put Meghalaya on the railway map of India

Solution: b.

Government Advertisement, Page 20, The Hindu, May 31st