Insights QUIZ

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I. ECONOMY

(Q) Consider the following statements about ‘Sustainable Blue Economy Conference’.

1. The first Sustainable Blue Economy Conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya.
2. The conference was held on momentum of UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. India did not participate in the Conference.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

- The first Sustainable Blue Economy Conference was held in Nairobi, capital of Kenya. It was organized by Kenya and co-hosted by Japan and Canada.
- It builds on the momentum of the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 2015 Climate Change Conference in Paris and the UN Ocean Conference 2017 “Call to Action”.
- “India endorses the growth of the Blue Economy in a sustainable, inclusive and people centered manner through the framework of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)”.

Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=185994

(Q) Consider the following statements about Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC).

1. The Chairman of the FSDC is the Finance Secretary.
2. The members include the heads of the financial sector regulatory authorities (i.e, SEBI, IRDA, RBI, PFRDA and FMC).
3. Council would monitor macro prudential supervision of the economy.
4. It will also focus on financial literacy and financial inclusion.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

- The Chairman of the FSDC is the Finance Minister of India and its members include the heads of the financial sector regulatory authorities (i.e, SEBI, IRDA, RBI, PFRDA and FMC) , Finance Secretary and/or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (Ministry of Finance), Secretary, (Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance) and the Chief Economic Adviser.
- A sub-committee of FSDC has also been set up under the chairmanship of Governor RBI. The Sub-Committee discusses and decides on a range of issues relating to financial sector development and stability including substantive issues relating to inter-regulatory coordination.
- Council would monitor macro prudential supervision of the economy, including the functioning of large financial conglomerates. It will address inter-regulatory coordination issues and thus spur
It will also focus on financial literacy and financial inclusion. What distinguishes FSDC from other such similarly situated organizations across the globe is the additional mandate given for development of financial sector.

(Q) Consider the following statements about **Operation Greens**

1. It seeks to promote Farmer Producers Organizations and agri-logistics.
2. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare has launched the scheme.
3. It seeks to ensure availability of Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) crops throughout the country round the year without price volatility.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only  

b) 1, 3  

c) 2, 3  

d) 1, 2, 3

**Solution: b)**

- In the budget speech of 2018-19, a new Scheme “**Operation Greens**” was announced on the line of "Operation Flood", with an outlay of Rs.500 crore to promote Farmer Producers Organizations, agri-logistics, processing facilities and professional management.
- Operation Greens seeks to stabilize the supply of **Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) crops** and to ensure availability of TOP crops throughout the country round the year without price volatility.
- The **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** has launched the scheme. **NAFED** will be the Nodal Agency to implement price stabilisation measures.

Source: [http://vikaspedia.in/agriculture/market-information/operation-greens](http://vikaspedia.in/agriculture/market-information/operation-greens)

(Q) Consider the following statements about **Small Grants Programme (SGP)** related to environmental funding

1. Established in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, the Small Grants Programme embodies the essence of sustainable development.
2. It is implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership.
3. SGP grants are made directly to the state governments for environment and development concerns.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 3  

b) 2, 3  

c) 1, 2  

d) 1, 2, 3

**Solution: c)**

- The **GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP)** provides financial and technical support to communities and Civil Society Organizations to meet the overall objective of global environmental benefits secured through community-based initiatives and actions.
- Established in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, the GEF Small Grants Programme embodies the very essence of sustainable development by “thinking globally acting locally”. The Small Grants Programme has expanded to provide assistance to 125 countries currently. The SGP believes that
community-driven and civil society-led initiatives can generate environmental benefits, while supporting sustainable livelihoods, gender equality and civil society empowerment. These are actions needed at the local and regional level to address global environmental challenges and complement other areas where the GEF works.

- It is currently implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership. The Program is specifically designed to mobilize bottom-up actions by empowering local civil society organizations, and poor and vulnerable communities, including women and Indigenous Peoples.

Source: https://www.thegef.org/topics/gefsgp

(Q) Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Scheme aims to facilitate technology up-gradation for

1. Micro Enterprises
2. Small Enterprises
3. Medium Enterprises

Select the correct code:

a) 1 only
b) 1 and 2
c) 1, 2, 3
d) None

Solution: b) The objective of the Scheme is to facilitate technology up-gradation in MSEs by providing an upfront capital subsidy of 15 per cent (on institutional finance of upto Rs 1 crore availed by them) for induction of well-established and improved technology in the specified 51 sub-sectors/products approved. In other words the major objective is to upgrade their plant & machinery with state-of-the-art technology, with or without expansion and also for new MSEs which have set up their facilities with appropriate eligible and proven technology duly approved under scheme guidelines.

The Scheme is a demand driven one without any upper limit on overall annual spending on the subsidy disbursal.

- The revised scheme aims at facilitating technology up-gradation by providing 15% up front capital subsidy to MSEs, including tiny, khadi, village and coir industrial units, on institutional finance availed by them for induction of well-established and improved technologies in specified sub-sectors/products approved under the scheme.

(Q) Consider the following statements about India’s solar market.

1. India emerged as the Second largest solar market in the world in 2017.
2. World’s largest solar park named ‘Shakti Sthala’ was launched in Karnataka.

Select the correct code:

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: b) India emerged as the third largest solar market in the world in 2017 behind China and the US.
World’s largest solar park named ‘Shakti Sthala’ was launched in Karnataka in March 2018 with an investment of Rs 16,500 crore.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM)
1. It is a new form of BOT Annuity model.
2. The government will contribute 60% of the project cost in the first five years through annual payments.
3. There is no toll right for the developer.
Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?
   a) 1, 2
   b) 2, 3
   c) 1, 3
   d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: a)

In India, the new HAM is a mix of BOT Annuity and EPC models. As per the design, the government will contribute 40% of the project cost in the first five years through annual payments (annuity). The remaining payment will be made on the basis of the assets created and the performance of the developer.

- Here, hybrid annuity means the first 40% payment is made as fixed amount in five equal instalments whereas the remaining 60% is paid as variable annuity amount after the completion of the project depending upon the value of assets created.
- As the government pays only 40%, during the construction stage, the developer should find money for the remaining amount.
- Here, he has to raise the remaining 60% in the form of equity or loans.
- There is no toll right for the developer. Under HAM, Revenue collection would be the responsibility of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

Source: [http://arthapedia.in/index.php?title=Hybrid_Annuity_in_Infrastructure_Sector](http://arthapedia.in/index.php?title=Hybrid_Annuity_in_Infrastructure_Sector)

(Q) Consider the following statements.
1. The share of manufacturing sector in the GDP has been nearly stagnant for the last two decades in India.
2. Among all the South Asian economies, India has the largest size of manufacturing sector.
Which of the above is/are correct?
   a) 1 only
   b) 2 only
   c) Both 1 and 2
   d) None

Solution: c)

The share has been around 15 per cent for the last two decades with a slight decline recently. The share of industry (which includes manufacturing sector also) has increased slightly and then taken a dip recently. The graphs show the story till 2013-14, but the broad trends will remain the same.
Consider the following statements about E-commerce sector in India

1. Marketplace model is where goods sold on the portal is owned or controlled by the e-commerce company.
2. inventory-based model is where the e-commerce firm simply acts as a platform that connects buyers and sellers.
3. FDI is allowed in e-commerce companies in marketplace model.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

E-commerce companies can operate under two different models in India.

- The first is the **marketplace model** where the e-commerce firm simply acts as a platform that connects buyers and sellers. FDI is allowed in e-commerce companies in this model.
- The second model is **inventory-based** where the inventory of goods sold on the portal is owned or controlled by the e-commerce company. FDI is not allowed under this model.

(Q) Consider the following about ‘Priority Sector Lending Certificates’ (PSLC) scheme of the Reserve Bank of India.

1. Any registered lender who has made loans to eligible categories would get ‘Priority Sector Lending Certificates’ (PSLC) for the amount of these loans.
2. No loss would be borne by the certificate “buyer” in case the loan turns into a bad asset.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both 1 and 2
d) None
Correct Answer: c)

- The Committee proposed the PSLC scheme to allow a more efficient implementation of the priority sector lending mandate (with similar schemes extending to possible financial service mandates also).

**Statement 1:** Any registered lender (including microfinance institutions, cooperative banks, banking correspondents, etc.) who has made loans to eligible categories would get ‘Priority Sector Lending

- Certificates’ (PSLC) for the amount of these loans. A market would then be opened up for these certificates, where deficient banks can buy certificates to compensate for their shortfall in lending.
- Importantly, the loans would still be on the books of the original lender, and the deficient bank would only be buying a right to undershoot its priority sector-lending requirement by the amount of the certificate.

**Statement 2:** If the loans default, for example, no loss would be borne by the certificate buyer. The merit of this scheme is that it would allow the most efficient lender to provide access to the poor, while finding a way for banks to fulfill their norms at lower cost.

- Essentially the PSLC will be a market-driven interest subsidy to those who make priority sector loans. It is an innovative instrument designed in a market friendly way for achieving a socialistic / welfare goal.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission (FSLRC).

1. Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission (FSLRC) is a statutory body setup by the parliament.
2. The Commission is chaired by Justice B. N. Srikrishna.
3. The Commission would streamline regulatory architecture of financial markets.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution:** c)

The Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission (FSLRC) is a body set up by the Government of India, Ministry of Finance, on 24 March 2011, to review and rewrite the legal-institutional architecture of the Indian financial sector. This Commission is chaired by a former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, Justice B. N. Srikrishna and has an eclectic mix of expert members drawn from the fields of finance, economics, public administration, law etc.

The Commission would examine financial sector legislations, including subordinate legislations. The Commission would also examine the case for greater convergence of regulations and streamline regulatory architecture of financial markets.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework.

1. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issues a Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework to maintain sound financial health of banks.
2. It is intended to encourage banks to eschew certain riskier activities and focus on conserving capital.
3. The framework is intended to constrain the performance of normal operations of the banks for the general public.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework to maintain sound financial health of banks. It facilitates banks in breach of risk thresholds for identified areas of monitoring, viz., capital, asset quality (which is tracked in terms of the net Non-Performing Assets ratio) and profitability, to take corrective measures in a timely manner, in order to restore their financial health. Thus, it is intended to encourage banks to eschew certain riskier activities, improve operational efficiency and focus on conserving capital to strengthen them. The framework is not intended to constrain the performance of normal operations of the banks for the general public.

II. GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

(Q) Consider the following statements about Ramsar Convention.

1. It is the United Nations Convention that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands.
2. Almost 90% of UN member states, have acceded to become “Contracting Parties”.
3. It does not consider underground aquifers and human-made sites as wetlands.
4. Montreux Record is maintained as part of the Ramsar List.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: a)

• The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

• The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975. Since then, almost 90% of UN member states, from all the world’s geographic regions, have acceded to become “Contracting Parties”.

• The Convention uses a broad definition of wetlands. It includes all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, oases, estuaries, deltas and tidal flats, mangroves and other coastal areas, coral reefs, and all human-made sites such as fish ponds, rice paddies, reservoirs and salt pans.

• Montreux Record under the Convention is a register of wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference.

• It is maintained as part of the Ramsar List.

Source: https://www.ramsar.org/about-the-ramsar-convention

(Q) The stratospheric aerosol injection (SAI) sometimes seen in news is associated with

a) Increasing Global Warming
b) Mitigating Global Warming
c) Cloud Seeding
d) Pollutant from Nuclear Power Plant

Solution: b)

• Scientists have found that spraying sun-dimming chemicals high above the earth to slow global warming could be remarkably inexpensive costing about $2.25 billion a year over a 15-year period.

• This geo-engineering technique known as stratospheric aerosol injection (SAI) could limit rising temperatures that are causing climate change.

• Under SAI delivery of precursor sulfide gases such as sulfuric acid, hydrogen sulfide (H2S) or sulfur dioxide (SO2) are sprayed by artillery, aircraft and balloons.
(Q) A new species of ‘crying’ snake has been discovered in
a) Assam
b) Kerala
c) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
d) Arunachal Pradesh

Solution: d)

- A new species of ‘crying’ snake has been discovered in Lepa-Rada district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The discovery of the non-venomous crying keelback, whose zoological name is Hebius lacrima, has been published in Zootaxa, the New Zealand-based scientific mega-journal for animal taxonomy.


(Q) Consider the following statements about National Policy on Biofuels – 2018
1. The Policy expands the scope of raw material for ethanol production.
2. The Policy allows use of surplus food grains for production of ethanol with the approval of Gram Sabha.
3. The Policy encourages setting up of supply chain mechanisms for biodiesel production.
4. The policy encourages import of third Generation (3G) biofuels.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

- The Policy categorises biofuels as “Basic Biofuels” viz. First Generation (1G) bioethanol & biodiesel and "Advanced Biofuels" – Second Generation (2G) ethanol, Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) to drop-in fuels, Third Generation (3G) biofuels, bio-CNG etc. to enable extension of appropriate financial and fiscal incentives under each category.
- The Policy expands the scope of raw material for ethanol production by allowing use of Sugarcane Juice, Sugar containing materials like Sugar Beet, Sweet Sorghum, Starch containing materials like Corn, Cassava, Damaged food grains like wheat, broken rice, Rotten Potatoes, unfit for human consumption for ethanol production.
- Farmers are at a risk of not getting appropriate price for their produce during the surplus production phase. Taking this into account, the Policy allows use of surplus food grains for production of ethanol for blending with petrol with the approval of National Biofuel Coordination Committee.
- The Policy encourages setting up of supply chain mechanisms for biodiesel production from non-edible oilseeds, Used Cooking Oil, short gestation crops.

Expected Benefits:

- **Reduce Import Dependency**: One crore lit of E10 saves Rs.28 crore of forex at current rates. The ethanol supply year 2017-18 is likely to see a supply of around 150 crore litres of ethanol which will result in savings of over Rs.4000 crore of forex.

Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=179313
(Q) Consider the following statements about National Board for Wildlife

1. It is a “Statutory Organization” constituted under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
2. No alteration of boundaries in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries can be done without approval of the NBWL.
3. Its recommendations are binding on the Central Government while framing policies and measures for conservation of wildlife in the country.
4. The NBWL is chaired by the Environment Minister.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: c)

National Board for Wildlife:

• It is a “Statutory Organization” constituted under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
• Its role is “advisory” in nature and advises the Central Government on framing policies and measures for conservation of wildlife in the country.
• Primary function of the Board is to promote the conservation and development of wildlife and forests.
• It has power to review all wildlife-related matters and approve projects in and around national parks and sanctuaries.
• No alteration of boundaries in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries can be done without approval of the NBWL.
• The NBWL is chaired by the Prime Minister.

(Q) Consider the following statements

1. Kerala has the highest number of elephants followed by Karnataka and Assam.
2. Elephant is a National Heritage Animal and categorized as least concern under IUCN List.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

• Karnataka has the highest number of elephants followed by Assam and Kerala. Elephant is listed as endangered species under IUCN List.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/india-has-27312-elephants-census-shows/article19504528.ece
(Q) Consider the following statements about Green Climate Fund (GCF)

1. It is established within the framework of the Kyoto Protocol.
2. It assists developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change.
3. The GCF is based in Incheon, South Korea.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is a fund established within the framework of the UNFCCC as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism to assist developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change. The GCF is based in Incheon, South Korea. It is governed by a Board of 24 members and supported by a Secretariat.

Source: https://www.greenclimate.fund/who-we-are/about-the-fund
III. GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AND INSTITUTIONS

(Q) Consider the following statements about Zero Defect and Zero Effect (ZED) scheme.

1. Zero Defect and Zero Effect (ZED) scheme is for manufacturing amongst micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) only.
2. Quality Council of India (QCI) is the National Monitoring & Implementing Unit (NMIU) for implementation of ZED.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: c)

- The Government has launched “Financial Support to MSMEs in ZED Certification Scheme”.
- The objective of the scheme for promotion of Zero Defect and Zero Effect (ZED) manufacturing amongst micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and ZED Assessment for their certification.
- Quality Council of India (QCI) is the National Monitoring & Implementing Unit (NMIU) for implementation of ZED.

Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=169325

(Q) Consider the following statements about Rashtriya Gokul Mission

1. Undertake breed improvement programme for indigenous cattle breeds
2. Distribute disease free high genetic merit bulls of indigenous breeds for natural service.
3. It is one of the component of National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development (NPBBDD).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development (NPBBDD) has the following three components.

1. National Programme for Bovine Breeding (NPBB)
2. National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD) and
Rashtriya Gokul Mission

- To undertake breed improvement programme for indigenous cattle breeds so as to improve the genetic makeup and increase the stock.
- To enhance milk production and productivity of indigenous bovines.
- To upgrade nondescript cattle using elite indigenous breeds like Gir, Sahiwal, Rathi, Deoni, Tharparkar, Red Sindhi.
- To distribute disease free high genetic merit bulls of indigenous breeds for natural service.

Source: [http://vikaspedia.in/agriculture/policies-and-schemes/livestock-poultry-related/national-project-for-cattle-buffalo-breeding](http://vikaspedia.in/agriculture/policies-and-schemes/livestock-poultry-related/national-project-for-cattle-buffalo-breeding)

(Q) Consider the following statements about National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP).

1. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) launched NAHEP to attract talent and strengthen higher agricultural education in the country.
2. The project will be funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Indian Government on a 50:50 basis.
3. A four year degree in Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries and Forestry has been declared a professional degree.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

ICAR has recently launched Rs 1100 crore ambitious National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) to attract talent and strengthen higher agricultural education in the country.

This project will be funded by the World Bank and the Indian Government on a 50:50 basis.

In addition, a four year degree in Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries and Forestry has been declared a professional degree.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP).

1. It is for capacity augmentation of navigation on Sadiya-Dhubri stretch of Brahmaputra River.
2. It is implemented with the technical assistance and investment support of the World Bank.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: b)
• The Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) on NW-1 (Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system) is being implemented by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) with the financial and technical support of the World Bank.

• The Project entails development of fairway with 3 meters depth between Varanasi and Haldia (Phase-I) covering a distance of 1380 km. The NW-1 passes through West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and serves major cities and their industrial hinterlands.

Source: http://jmvp.nic.in/about-us

(Q) Consider the following statements about Power Grid Corporation of India Limited.

1. It is the ‘Central Transmission Utility (CTU)’ of the country under Ministry of Power.
2. POWERGRID has completed the NKN (National Knowledge Network) project of Government of India.
3. It is one of the implementing agencies for BharatNet project.
4. It has an active role in formation of SAARC grid.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

• Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID, the ‘Central Transmission Utility (CTU)’ of the country and a ‘Navratna’ Company operating under Ministry of Power, is engaged in power transmission business with the responsibility for planning, implementation, operation and maintenance of Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS).

Source: https://powermin.nic.in/en/content/power-grid

(Q) Consider the following statements about Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana

1. It is for providing free medical check-up for the persons aged 60 and above.
2. The expenditure for implementation of the scheme will be met from the “Senior Citizens’ Welfare Fund”.
3. As far as possible, 30% of the beneficiaries in each district shall be women.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

• Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana is scheme for providing Physical Aids and Assisted-living Devices for Senior citizens belonging to BPL category. This is a Central Sector Scheme, fully funded by the Central Government. The expenditure for implementation of the scheme will be met from the “Senior Citizens’ Welfare Fund”. The Scheme will be implemented through the sole implementing agency – Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation (ALIMCO), a PSU under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
The Scheme duration is for period of the 3 years i.e. upto 2019-20.

**Senior Citizens, belonging to BPL category** and suffering from any of the *age related disability/infirmity* viz. Low vision, Hearing impairment, Loss of teeth and Locomotor disability will be provided with such assisted-living devices which can restore near normalcy in their bodily functions, overcoming the disability/infirmity manifested.

As far as possible, 30% of the beneficiaries in each district shall be women.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Kisan Credit Card Scheme

1. The scheme was prepared by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
2. It is implemented by the all Co-operative banks, Regional Rural Banks and Public Sector Banks throughout the country.
3. It covers risk of KCC holders against death or permanent disability resulting from accidents.
4. Crop loans disbursed under KCC Scheme for notified crops are covered under Crop Insurance Scheme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

- The **Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme** was announced in the Budget speech of 1998-99 to fulfil the financial requirements of the farmers at various stages of farming through institutional credit.
- The model scheme was prepared by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on the recommendation of **V Gupta committee**.
- The KCC scheme is being implemented by the all Co-operative banks, Regional Rural Banks and Public Sector Banks throughout the country.
- Scheme covers risk of KCC holders against death or permanent disability resulting from accidents.
- **Crop loans** disbursed under KCC Scheme for notified crops are **covered under Crop Insurance Scheme**, to protect the interest of the farmer against loss of crop yield caused by natural calamities, pest attacks etc.

Source: [http://vikaspedia.in/agriculture/agri-credit/kisan-credit-card-scheme](http://vikaspedia.in/agriculture/agri-credit/kisan-credit-card-scheme)

(Q) Consider the following statements about FAME-India Scheme

1. Department of Heavy Industry is implementing FAME-India Scheme.
2. It was launched under National Electric Mobility Mission (NEMM).
3. Commercial vehicles and buses are not covered under the scheme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2
b) 1, 3
c) 2, 3
d) 1, 2, 3
Solution: a)

- In order to promote manufacturing of electric and hybrid vehicle technology and to ensure sustainable growth of the same, Department of Heavy Industry is implementing FAME-India Scheme- Phase-I [Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles in India] from 1st April 2015 under National Electric Mobility Mission (NEMM).
- The scheme is being administered by the **Heavy Industries Ministry**.
- It provides fiscal and monetary incentives for adoption and market creation of both hybrid and electric technologies vehicles in the country. It is aimed at incentivising all vehicle segments, including two-wheelers, three wheeler auto, passenger four-wheeler vehicle, light commercial vehicles and buses.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Agri-Market infrastructure fund

1. AMIF will be created with Ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare.
2. AMIF will provide the State/UT Governments subsidized loan for developing marketing infrastructure in Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs) and Grameen Agricultural Markets (GrAMs).
3. In these GrAMs, physical and basic infrastructure will be strengthened using MGNREGA and other Government Schemes.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The **Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs** gave its approval for the creation of a corpus of Rs. 2000 crore for **Agri-Market Infrastructure Fund (AMIF)** to be created with NABARD for development and up-gradation of agricultural marketing infrastructure in Gramin Agricultural Markets and Regulated Wholesale Markets.

- AMIF will provide the State/UT Governments subsidized loan for their proposal for developing marketing infrastructure in 585 Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs) and 10,000 Grameen Agricultural Markets (GrAMs). States may also access AMIF for innovative integrated market infrastructure projects including Hub and Spoke mode and in Public Private Partnership mode. In these GrAMs, physical and basic infrastructure will be strengthened using MGNREGA and other Government Schemes.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC).

1. It is a statutory market committee constituted by a State Government in respect of trade in certain notified agricultural products.
2. Agricultural marketing is in Concurrent list.
3. Inter-state trading comes under the jurisdiction of state governments.

Which of the above statements is/are **incorrect**?

a) 1, 2
b) 2, 3
c) 2 only
d) 1, 2, 3
Solution: b)

- Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) is a statutory market committee constituted by a State Government in respect of trade in certain notified agricultural or horticultural or livestock products, under the Agricultural Produce Market Committee Act issued by that state government.

- Under Constitution of India, agricultural marketing is a state (provincial) subject. While intra-state trades fall under the jurisdiction of state governments, inter-state trading comes under Central or Federal Government (including intra-state trading in a few commodities like raw jute, cotton, etc.). Thus, agricultural markets are established and regulated mostly under the various State APMC Acts.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Government e-Marketplace

1. It facilitates online procurement of goods and services by various Government Departments.
2. Central and State Public Sector Units and local bodies can also make procurement through GeM portal.
3. SEBI empaneled credit rating agencies are being used for conducting third-party assessment of suppliers.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  

b) 2, 3  

c) 1, 3  

d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: d)

- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is a one stop portal to facilitate online procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Government Departments / Organizations / PSUs. GeM aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement.

- All Central government and State Government Ministries/Departments including its attached/subordinate offices, Central and State autonomous bodies, Central and State Public Sector Units and local bodies etc. are authorized to make procurement through GeM portal.

- GeM is a completely secure platform and all the documents on GeM are e-Signed at various stages by the buyers and sellers. The antecedents of the suppliers are verified online and automatically through MCA21, Aadhar and PAN databases. In addition, SEBI empaneled credit rating agencies are also being used for conducting third-party assessment of suppliers.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Scheme of Mega Food Park

1. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing Mega Food Park Scheme in the country.
2. More than half of the states have got Mega Food Parks.
3. India’s first mega food park ‘Srini Mega Food Park’, was opened in Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh in 2012.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  

b) 3 only  

c) 2, 3  

d) 1, 3
Solution: b)

- To give a major boost to the food processing sector by adding value and reducing food wastage at each stage of the supply chain with particular focus on perishables, the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** is implementing **Mega Food Park Scheme** in the country. So far there are Twelve Mega Food Parks.

- India’s first mega food park ‘Srini Mega Food Park’, sprawling 147-acre space, was opened in Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh in 2012.

Source: [http://mofpi.nic.in/Schemes/mega-food-parks](http://mofpi.nic.in/Schemes/mega-food-parks)

(Q) Consider the following statements about Nirbhaya fund

1. It can be utilised for the projects for women safety and security.
2. The Fund is administered by Ministry of Women and Child Development.
3. Ministry of Women and Child Development is also the nodal authority for recommending the proposals to be funded under Nirbhaya fund.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

- **Ministry of Women and Child Development** apart from several other concerned ministries were authorised to work out details of structure, scope and application of this fund.

- The Fund is administered by Department of Economic Affairs of the finance ministry.

Source: [http://www.wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/nirbhayatoupload_0.pdf](http://www.wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/nirbhayatoupload_0.pdf)

(Q) Consider the following statements about Central Ground Water Authority.

1. It was constituted under Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act.
2. It regulates withdrawal of ground water by industries/ projects in Over-exploited units.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: b)

- **Central Ground Water Authority** has been constituted under Section 3 (3) of the **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** to regulate and control development and management of ground water resources in the country.

- The Central Ground Water Authority is regulating withdrawal of ground water by industries/ projects in 802 Over-exploited and 169 Critical Assessment Units.

Source: [http://cgwb.gov.in/aboutcgwa.html](http://cgwb.gov.in/aboutcgwa.html)
(Q) Consider the following statements about Atomic Energy Regulatory Board.

1. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board was constituted by the Parliament.
2. The regulatory authority of AERB is derived from the rules promulgated under the Atomic Energy Act and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
3. It ensures that the use of nuclear energy in India does not cause undue risk to health and environment.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

- The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board was constituted on November 15, 1983, by the President of India by exercising the powers conferred by the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 to carry out certain regulatory and safety functions under the Act. The regulatory authority of AERB is derived from the rules and notifications promulgated under the Atomic Energy Act and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- The Mission of the AERB is to ensure the use of ionizing radiation and nuclear energy in India does not cause undue risk to the health of people and the environment.

Source: [https://aerb.gov.in/english/about-us](https://aerb.gov.in/english/about-us)

(Q) Consider the following statements about Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan scheme.

1. The Ministry of Power has formulated a Scheme ‘Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (KUSUM)’.
2. It includes installation of grid-connected solar power plants each of Capacity up to 2 MW in the rural areas.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: b)

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has formulated a Scheme ‘Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (KUSUM)’. The Scheme is currently under the process of seeking approval.

The proposal on KUSUM Scheme provides for :-

(i) installation of grid-connected solar power plants each of Capacity up to 2 MW in the rural areas;
(ii) installation of standalone off-grid solar water pumps to fulfil irrigation needs of farmers not connected to grid; and
(iii) solarisation of existing grid-connected agriculture pumps to make farmers independent of grid supply and also enable them to sell surplus solar power generated to DISCOM and get extra income.

(Q) Which of the following statements is correct regarding Swachh Shakti Programme.

a) Provide separate toilets for girls in all government schools
b) Awarding NGOs which are promoting clean sanitation practices in rural areas
c) Providing monetary assistance to women households for constructing toilets
d) Bring to focus the leadership role played by rural women in Swachh Bharat Mission

Solution: d)

Swachh Shakti Programme:

- The Swachh Shakti Programme is a national event which aims to bring in to focus the leadership role played by rural women in Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Launched in 2017, the Programme is a part of ongoing activities under the aegis of the Swachh Bharat Mission.

(Q) Recently Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan was launched to fix the gaps in the panchayat system of India. Which of the following schemes are part of Gram Swaraj Abhiyan ?

1. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
2. Ujala scheme
3. Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana

Select the correct code:

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

Solution: d)

Gram Swaraj Abhiyan is a campaign that was organised on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti during the period 14th April to 05th May, 2018.

The identified schemes are as follows.

- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
- Saubhagya
- Ujala scheme
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana
- Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and
- Mission Indradhanush.

(Q) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban seeks to address the housing requirement of urban poor through which of the following programme verticals?

1. Slum rehabilitation with participation of private developers.
2. Promotion of Affordable Housing for weaker section through grants.
3. Subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction/enhancement.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) Programme launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA), in Mission mode envisions provision of Housing for All by 2022, when the Nation completes 75 years of its Independence.

The Mission seeks to address the housing requirement of urban poor including slum dwellers through following programme verticals:

- Slum rehabilitation of Slum Dwellers with participation of private developers using land as a resource.
- Promotion of Affordable Housing for weaker section through credit linked subsidy.
- Affordable Housing in Partnership with Public & Private sectors.
- Subsidy for beneficiary-led individual house construction/enhancement.


(Q) Consider the following functions of Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC).

1. Promotion of development of small agribusiness through Venture Capital Assistance (VCA) scheme.
2. Helping formation of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The Government established Small Farmers’ Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) as a Society in 1994 to facilitate agri-business ventures by catalyzing private investment through Venture Capital Assistance (VCA) Scheme in close association with financial institutions. The setting up of State level SFAC as counterpart agency of Central SFAC for agribusiness projects was part of the Scheme.

The main functions of SFAC are:

(i) Promotion of development of small agribusiness through VCA scheme;

(ii) Helping formation and growth of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) / Farmer Producer Companies (FPCs);
(iii) Improving availability of working capital and development of business activities of FPOs/FPCs through Equity Grant and Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme;


(Q) Blue-flame revolution sometimes seen in news is related to

a) Deep sea fishing
b) India's ambitions for Blue-Water Economy
c) Providing clean cooking fuel
d) Developing Tidal Energy Plants

Solution: c)

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi hails Ujjwala scheme saying that a 'Blue Flame Revolution' is underway.


(Q) Consider the following statements about PETROTECH conference

1. PETROTECH conference is a biennial International Oil & Gas Conference.
2. The PETROTECH 2019 conference was held in Saudi Arabia.
3. The event aims to explore areas of growth in petroleum technology, exploration, legal and human resource development.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 13th International Oil and Gas Conference – PETROTECH-2019 in Greater Noida.

The PETROTECH series of International Oil & Gas Conference is a biennial platform for national and international experts in the oil & gas industry to exchange views and share knowledge, expertise, and experiences. The event aims to explore areas of growth in petroleum technology, exploration, drilling, production and processing, refining, pipeline transportation, petrochemicals, natural gas, LNG, petroleum trade, economics, legal and human resource development, marketing.

Source: https://www.petrotech.in/conference/

(Q) Consider the following statements about National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK).

1. NCSK was constituted as a non-statutory body.
2. It takes suo-motu notice of matters relating to non-implementation of programmes or schemes in respect of Safai Karamcharis.
3. It monitors the implementation of The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

• The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) was constituted on 12th August, 1994 as a statutory body by an Act of Parliament viz. ‘National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993’, for a period of three years i.e. up to 31st March, 1997. As per sub-section (4) of Section 1 of the Act, it was to cease to exist after 31.3.1997. However, validity of the Act was extended up to March, 2002, and then up to February, 2004 vide Amendment Acts passed in 1997 and 2001 respectively.

• With the lapsing of the “The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993” w.e.f. 29.2.2004, the Commission is acting as a Non-Statutory body of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment whose tenure is extended from time to time through Government Resolutions.

Functions:

• Recommend to the Central Government specific programmes of action towards elimination of inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities for Safai Karamcharis.

• Study and evaluate the implementation of the programmes and schemes relating to the social and economic rehabilitation of Safai Karamcharis; and scavengers, in particular.

• Investigate specific grievances and take suo-motu notice of matters relating to non-implementation of:
  – programmes or schemes in respect of any group of Safai Karamcharis
  – decisions, guidelines or instructions, aimed at mitigating the hardships of Safai Karamcharis
  – measures for the social and economic upliftment of Safai Karamcharis
  – the provisions of any law in its application to Safai Karamcharis; and take up such matters with the concerned authorities or with the Central or State Governments

• To study and monitor the working conditions, including those relating to health, safety and wages of Safai Karamcharis working under various kinds of employers including Government, Municipalities and Panchayats, and to make recommendations in this regard.

• Make reports to the Central or State Governments on any matter concerning Safai Karamcharis, taking into account any difficulties or disabilities being encountered by Safai Karamcharis

• Any other matter which may be referred to it by the Central Government.

However, with the enactment of “The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013”, the mandate and scope of the Commission has also been enlarged. The Commission shall perform the following functions, namely:-

1. To monitor the implementation of the Act.
2. To enquire into complaints regarding contravention of the provisions of the Act, and to convey its findings to the concerned authorities with recommendations requiring further action.
3. To advise the Central and the State Governments for effective implementation of the provisions of the Act.
4. To take suo motu notice of matter relating to non-implementation of the Act.

Source: http://ncsk.nic.in/about-us/about-ncsk
(Q) e-AUSHADHI portal recently seen in news is related to
a) Monitoring of fixed dose drug combinations (FDCs)
b) Online sale of Generic Drugs by the Jan Aushadhi Kendras
c) Portal on educating citizens on ill effects of Antibiotics
d) Online Licensing System of AYUSH Medicine

Solution: d)
e-AUSHADHI portal for Online Licensing System of AYUSH Medicine: Ministry of State (IC) for AYUSH launched the e-AUSHADHI portal, for online licensing of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homoeopathy drugs and related matters. Portal is intended for increased transparency, improved information management facility, improved data usability and increased accountability.
Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188553

(Q) Consider the following statements about Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme.
1. Earlier it was known as ‘Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities’.
2. It provides financial assistance to voluntary organizations.
3. It emphasises on education and training programmes.
4. It supports legal literacy, including legal counselling and legal aid.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)
The umbrella Central Sector Scheme of this Ministry called the “Scheme to Promote Voluntary Action for Persons with Disabilities” was revised w.e.f. 01.04.2003 and was renamed as the “Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)”. The objectives of the scheme are:
• To create an enabling environment to ensure equal opportunities, equity, social justice and empowerment of persons with disabilities.
• To encourage voluntary action for ensuring effective implementation of the People with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities and Protection of Rights) Act of 1995.

The approach of this Scheme is to provide financial assistance to voluntary organizations to make available the whole range of services necessary for rehabilitation of persons with disabilities
Source: http://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/differently-abled-welfare/schemes-programmes/ddrs-scheme-revised

(Q) Which of the following statements is correct about SWAYAM PRABHA?

a) A tool for comprehensive self-review and analysis for CBSE affiliated schools.
b) Provide interactive digital boards to nearly 15 lakh classrooms across the country.
c) Utilization of satellite communication technologies for transmission of educational e-contents.
d) Imparting ICT Skills in all the Kendriya Vidyalayas to the students of classes III to XII.
Solution: c)
- **SWAYAM Prabha** - a project for operationalising 32 Direct to Home (DTH) Television Channels for providing high quality educational content to all teachers, students and citizens across the country interested in lifelong learning.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP)

1. The programme would provide senior faculty the required leadership and managerial skills.
2. The implementation of LEAP Programme will be through 15 NIRF top ranked Indian Institutions.
3. It is the initiative of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)
**Ministry of Human Resource Development** launched **Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP)**.

Leadership for Academicians Programme (LEAP) is a three weeks Flagship leadership development training programme (2 weeks domestic and one week foreign training) for second level academic functionaries in public funded higher education institutions. The main objective is to prepare second tier academic heads who are potentially likely to assume leadership roles in the future. The programme would provide senior faculty, with high academic credentials, the required leadership and managerial skills including skills of problem-solving, handling stress, team building work, conflict management, developing communication skills, understanding and coping with the complexity and challenges of governance in HEIs, financial & general administration.

- The implementation of LEAP Programme will be through 15 NIRF top ranked Indian Institutions.


(Q) Which of the following comes under the Champion Services Sectors as identified by the Government

1. Information Technology & Information Technology enabled Services (IT& ITeS)
2. Transport and Logistics Services
3. Audio Visual Services
4. Environmental Services
5. Entertainment and media services
6. Legal Services

Select the correct code:

a) All except 3
b) All except 3 and 5
c) All except 5
d) All of the above
Solution: c)

Champion Services Sectors refers to the 12 identified sectors where the Government wants to give focused attention for promoting their development, and realizing their potential. These include:

1. Information Technology & Information Technology enabled Services (IT& ITeS),
2. Tourism and Hospitality Services,
3. Medical Value Travel,
4. Transport and Logistics Services,
5. Accounting and Finance Services,
6. Audio Visual Services,
7. Legal Services,
8. Communication Services,
9. Construction and Related Engineering Services,
10. Environmental Services,
11. Financial Services and
12. Education Services.


(Q) The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the

a) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
b) Ministry of Rural Development
c) Ministry of Urban Affairs and Poverty Alleviation
d) Ministry of Minority Affairs

Solution: b)

The NSAP is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Rural Development. It came into effect from 15th August, 1995.

- It aims to provide financial assistance to the elderly, widows and persons with disabilities in the form of social pensions.

Presently NSAP comprises of five schemes, namely:

1. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS).
2. Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS).
3. Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS).
5. Annapurna

(Q) Consider the following statements about Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs)

1. It is a joint initiative with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs and Union Ministry of Women & Child Development.
2. Kerala is the first state to adopt the initiative.
3. One Mahila Police Volunteer (MPV) is envisaged per Gram Panchayat across the country.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c

Originally conceived by the Union Ministry of Women & Child Development, Mahila Police Volunteer is a joint initiative with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

• The Mahila Police Volunteers scheme envisions creation of a link between the police authorities and the local communities in villages through police volunteers who will be women specially trained for this purpose.
• Their primary job will be to keep an eye on situations where women in the village are harassed or their rights and entitlements are denied or their development is prevented.
• In order to provide a link between police and community and facilitate women in distress, one Mahila Police Volunteer (MPV) is envisaged per Gram Panchayat across the country.
• Haryana is the first state to adopt the initiative at Karnal and Mahindergarh District on a pilot basis under Nirbhaya Fund during the financial year 2016-2017.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Operation Digital Board (ODB)

1. Union Human Resource Development Ministry has launched Operation Digital Board.
2. It aims to provide e-resources at any time and at any place to students.
3. The digital board will be introduced in the Aspirational Districts.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

• Operation Digital Board (ODB) aims at converting a class room into a digital class room and provide e-resources at any time and at any place to students.
• The digital board will be introduced all over the country in government and government aided schools from class 9th onwards as well as in higher education institutions.
• The Operation Digital Board (ODB) will be implemented in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188812

(Q) Which of the following are the components of Safe City project intended to make cities safer for women.

1. Implementing Safety measures in buses.
2. Setting up Pink Toilets.
3. Automated number plate reading machines to be deployed in extremely sensitive areas.
Select the correct code:

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

Solution: d)

Some of the key features of the safe city project include:

- Identification of sensitive hot spots in each city,
- Installation of CCTV surveillance covering the entire hot spot.
- Automated number plate reading machines to be deployed in extremely sensitive areas.
- Intensive patrolling in vulnerable areas beyond the identified hot spots.
- Improving street lighting and public toilet facilities for women.
- Others like setting up women help desks in police stations, augmentation of women support centres etc.


(Q) Consider the following statements about POSHAN Abhiyaan:

1. POSHAN Abhiyaan is a multi-ministerial convergence mission with the vision to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by 2022.
2. It aims to improve nutritional outcomes for children and pregnant women only.
3. Incentivizes Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) for using IT based tools.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

POSHAN Abhiyaan is a multi-ministerial convergence mission with the vision to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by 2022. The objective of POSHAN Abhiyaan to reduce stunting in identified Districts of India with the highest malnutrition burden by improving utilization of key Anganwadi Services and improving the quality of Anganwadi Services delivery.

The Mission is aimed at improving the nutritional status of Children from 0-6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner during the next three years.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Khelo India programme:

1. It is an initiative of Ministry of Sports and Youth affairs.
2. Traditional games like Kabaddi and Kho-Kho are part of the programme.
3. One of the component is the promotion of sports amongst people with disabilities.
4. Talented players identified in priority sports disciplines at various levels will be provided annual financial assistance of INR 5 lakh per annum for 5 years.
Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Talented players identified in priority sports disciplines at various levels by the High-Powered Committee will be provided annual financial assistance of INR 5 lakh per annum for 8 years.

(Q) FSSAI has been mandated by the FSS Act, 2006 for performing which of the following functions?

1. To provide scientific advice to both Central and State Governments in the matters of framing the policy and rules in areas which have a direct bearing of food safety and nutrition.
2. Provide training programmes for persons who are involved in food businesses.
3. Contribute to the development of international technical standards for food, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been established under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 which consolidates various acts & orders that have hitherto handled food related issues in various Ministries and Departments. FSSAI has been created for laying down science based standards for articles of food and to regulate their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import to ensure availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption.

FSSAI has been mandated by the FSS Act, 2006 for performing the following functions:

- Framing of Regulations to lay down the Standards and guidelines in relation to articles of food and specifying appropriate system of enforcing various standards thus notified.
- Laying down mechanisms and guidelines for accreditation of certification bodies engaged in certification of food safety management system for food businesses.
- Laying down procedure and guidelines for accreditation of laboratories and notification of the accredited laboratories.
- To provide scientific advice and technical support to Central Government and State Governments in the matters of framing the policy and rules in areas which have a direct or indirect bearing of food safety and nutrition.
- Collect and collate data regarding food consumption, incidence and prevalence of biological risk, contaminants in food, residues of various, contaminants in foods products, identification of emerging risks and introduction of rapid alert system.
- Creating an information network across the country so that the public, consumers, Panchayats etc receive rapid, reliable and objective information about food safety and issues of concern.
- Provide training programmes for persons who are involved or intend to get involved in food businesses.
• Contribute to the development of international technical standards for food, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards.
• Promote general awareness about food safety and food standards.

Source: https://foodlicensing.fssai.gov.in/about_fssai.aspx

(Q) Consider the following statements about Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF)

1. Work related to the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) is under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
2. Central Road Fund Act, 2000 was amended to use proceeds of the road cess under CRIF to finance infrastructure projects such as waterways, some portion of the railway infrastructure and even social infrastructure.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: b)

Budget 2018 amended the Central Road Fund Act, 2000, and renamed the Central Road Fund the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund.

• Work related to the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) has been taken away from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and brought under the domain of the Finance Ministry.
• It will now be under the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Finance Ministry.
• Budget 2018 amended the Central Road Fund Act, 2000, and renamed the Central Road Fund the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund.
• The objective of the amendment was to use proceeds of the road cess under CRIF to finance other infrastructure projects such as waterways, some portion of the railway infrastructure and even social infrastructure, including education institutions and medical colleges.

IV. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(Q) Hayabusa-2 is an asteroid sample-return mission operated by
a) China National Space Administration (CNSA)
b) Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI)
c) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)
d) Australian Space Agency

Solution: c)
• Hayabusa2 is an asteroid sample-return mission operated by the Japanese space agency, JAXA.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).
1. PCT gives patent protection for an invention simultaneously in large number of countries.
2. The application for patent protection by a country must be filed by the department responsible for intellectual property rights relating to patents.
3. PCT is administered by World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: d)
The Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) makes it possible to seek patent protection for an invention simultaneously in each of a large number of countries by filing an “international” patent application. Such an application may be filed by anyone who is a national or resident of a PCT Contracting State. It may generally be filed with the national patent office of the Contracting State of which the applicant is a national or resident or, at the applicant's option, with the International Bureau of WIPO in Geneva.
• PCT is administered by WIPO.
Source: https://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/registration/pct/

(Q) Consider the following statements about H5N1 Virus.
1. H5N1 is a type of influenza virus that causes a highly infectious, severe respiratory disease in birds.
2. In human cases, the infection is easily transmitted from person to person.
3. The virus is not sensitive to heat.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

a) 2 only  b) 2, 3
c) 1, 2  d) 1, 3
Solution: b)

H5N1 is a type of influenza virus that causes a highly infectious, severe respiratory disease in birds called avian influenza (or "bird flu"). Human cases of H5N1 avian influenza occur occasionally, but it is difficult to transmit the infection from person to person. When people do become infected, the mortality rate is about 60%.

- Almost all cases of H5N1 infection in people have been associated with close contact with infected live or dead birds, or H5N1-contaminated environments. The virus does not infect humans easily, and spread from person to person appears to be unusual. There is no evidence that the disease can be spread to people through properly prepared and thoroughly cooked food.
- It is safe to eat properly prepared and cooked poultry and game birds. The virus is sensitive to heat.

Source: https://www.who.int/influenza/human_animal_interface/avian_influenza/h5n1_research/faqs/en/

(Q) Consider the following statements about Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme

1. A ‘Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme’ was organized by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
2. Cochlear Implant is a modern technology to help young children who have severe to profound deafness in both ears.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: b)

A ‘Cochlear Implant Awareness Programme’ was organized by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

- Cochlear Implant is a modern technology to help young children who have severe to profound deafness in both ears.
- Because of hearing impairment they are not able to speak.
- Cochlear Implant provides such children to hear normally in one ear and with post-surgical rehabilitation they are able to speak also.
- Cochlear Implants are costly and were not affordable by all. The DEPwD, Ministry of SJ&E is providing benefit of modern technology to poor persons also. It is in this direction, the Ministry has introduced Cochlear Implant programme under revised Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP) for the poor and needy young children.

Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=179139

(Q) Consider the following statements about Advanced Motor Fuels Technology Collaboration Programme

1. Advanced Motor Fuels (AMF) is the International Energy Agency’s (IEA) transportation related Technology Collaboration Programme.
2. It provides scientific information and technology assessments that allow citizens to make science-based decisions about options involving the use of advanced fuels for transportation systems.
3. India is the contracting party to the programme.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

- **Advanced Motor Fuels (AMF)** is one of the International Energy Agency’s (IEA) transportation related Technology Collaboration Programmes. AMF provides an international platform for cooperation to promote cleaner and more energy efficient fuels and vehicle technologies.
- The mission of AMF is to provide sound scientific information and technology assessments that allow citizens and policy makers to make informed and science-based decisions about options involving the use of advanced fuels for transportation systems.
- **Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas** (India) is the contracting party to the programme.

Source: [https://www.iea-amf.org/](https://www.iea-amf.org/)

**Q** Consider the following statements about Fixed Dose Combinations (FDCs)

1. A FDC is a cocktail of two or more active drug ingredients in a fixed ratio of doses.
2. One of the main disadvantages of FDCs is that they are not useful in the treatment of infectious diseases like HIV, malaria and tuberculosis.
3. In India FDCs are used very minimal due to high cost of the drugs.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

- An **FDC** is a cocktail of two or more active drug ingredients in a fixed ratio of doses. (Statement 1)
- According to US healthcare provider IMS Health, almost half the drugs sold in India in 2014 were FDC, making it a world leader in combination drugs. (Statement 3)
- FDCs have shown to be particularly useful in the treatment of infectious diseases like HIV, malaria and tuberculosis (Statement 2)

**Q** Consider the following statements about Formalin in Fish.

1. The amount of formalin in fish decreases overtime during storage and can be removed completely.
2. Less than 10 p.p.m. of Formaldehyde is permitted for use in foods as per Food Safety and Standards Regulations 2011.
3. Formalin is used to artificially improve the sensory attributes i.e. appearance

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  
b) 2, 3  
c) 3 only  
d) 1, 2, 3
Solution: c)
Formalin is a toxic, colourless solution that is derived by dissolving formaldehyde gas in water.

- It is a cancer-inducing chemical used to preserve fish and is used as a disinfectant.
- Formaldehyde is not permitted for use in foods as per Food Safety and Standards Regulations 2011. The amount of formalin in fish decreases overtime during storage but cannot be removed completely.

The motive of using formalin on fish (either as a dip or through ice laced/or made with formalin as an ingredient) is:

- to extend the storage life of fresh or chilled fish
- to artificially improve the sensory attributes i.e. appearance, so as to give a facade of fresh fish.

Source: http://vikaspedia.in/health/health-campaigns/beware-of-adulteration/formalin-in-fish

(Q) Opportunity Rover is the mission of
   a) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)
   b) European Space Agency
   c) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
   d) China National Space Administration (CNSA)

Solution: c)

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced that its Mars Mission, Opportunity has come to an end.
- This marked the conclusion of the 15-year saga. The decision to end the mission was made after all the efforts to restore contact with the Opportunity Mars rover didn't yield desired results.

Source: https://www.forbes.com/sites/jonathanocallaghan/2019/02/18/this-was-the-last-photo-taken-by-nasas-opportunity-rover-on-mars/#15a63d785a9a

(Q) Consider the following statements about Atmospheric Water Generator (AWG) unveiled by Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL).
1. The Atmospheric Water Generator is being manufactured by BEL in collaboration with Israel.
2. It extracts water from the humidity present in the atmosphere.
3. The water extracted is Non-potable water.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?
   a) 1, 2
   b) 2 only
   c) 1, 3
   d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: c)

- The Atmospheric Water Generator is being manufactured by BEL in collaboration with CSIR-IICT and MAITHRI, a start-up company based in Hyderabad.
- BEL's Atmospheric Water Generator employs a novel technology to extract water from the humidity present in the atmosphere and purify it.
• It uses **heat exchange** for condensing the atmospheric moisture to produce pure, safe and clean potable water.


(Q) Recently the government launched National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS). CPS and its associated technologies include:

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI)
2. Big Data Analytics
3. Quantum Computing
4. Cyber Security for physical infrastructure

Select the correct code:

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

**Solution: d)**

The **NM-ICPS** is a comprehensive Mission which would address technology development, application development, human resource development & skill enhancement, entrepreneurship and start-up development in CPS and associated technologies.

CPS and its associated technologies, like Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Machine Learning (ML), Deep Learning (DL), Big Data Analytics, Robotics, Quantum Computing, Quantum Communication, Quantum encryption (Quantum Key Distribution), Data Science & Predictive analytics, Cyber Security for physical infrastructure and other infrastructure, have pervaded and is playing a transformative role in almost every field of human endeavour all most in all sectors.


(Q) Which of the following is the purpose of ISRO’s GSAT-7A satellite, which was launched recently?

a) Bulk data transfer for a host of emerging telecommunication applications.
b) Provide satellite-based internet to remote places.
c) Augmenting Indian Air Force’s existing communication capabilities.
d) Imaging satellite for advanced earth observation.

**Solution: c)**

- ISRO has launched **military communication satellite GSAT-7A**. GSAT-7A was successfully injected into its orbit by **GSLV-F11**.
- GSAT-7A has been placed in the **geostationary orbit** and this communication satellite is expected to help the **IAF** to **interlink different ground radar stations, airbases** and **AWACS** (Airborne Warning And Control System) aircraft. The idea is to improve the IAF’s **network-centric warfare** capabilities.
- The satellite, being dubbed as ‘**angry bird**’ by some, is likely to enhance the range of communication and also aid in aircraft to aircraft communication.

(Q) *Hayabusa2*, the spacecraft that landed on an asteroid is from

   a) China National Space Administration (CNSA)
   b) Korea Aerospace Research Institute (KARI)
   c) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
   d) Japan Space Exploration Agency (JAXA)

**Solution: d)**

Japan Space Exploration Agency (JAXA) has announced that a probe, Hayabusa2, had successfully landed on an asteroid- Ryugu – **300 million km** from Earth.

Notably, Hayabusa2 is the second Japanese spacecraft to land on an asteroid, after Hayabusa achieved a similar feat back in 2005.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hayabusa2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hayabusa2)
V. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

(Q) Consider the following statements about International Energy Agency (IEA)
2. India is the member of IEA.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

MISSION – The IEA works to ensure reliable, affordable and clean energy for its 30 member countries and beyond. Our mission is guided by four main areas of focus: energy security, economic development, environmental awareness and engagement worldwide.

- A candidate country must be a member country of the OECD. But all OECD members are not IEA members (Ex: Chile, Iceland, Israel, Latvia and Slovenia).

To focus on the "3Es" of effectual energy policy:

- Energy security  Economic development  Environmental protection

Reports:
World Energy Balances 2017  Energy Technology Perspectives

(Q) Which among the following are the members of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation?
1. People’s Republic of China
2. India
3. Japan
4. Russia
5. The United States
6. Republic of Korea

Select the correct code:

a) All except 1 and 2
b) All except 1 and 6
c) All except 2
d) All of the above

Solution: c)

- The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific. APEC’s 21 members aim to create greater
prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration.

**APEC Members**

- Australia
- Brunei Darussalam
- Canada
- Chile
- People's Republic of China
- Hong Kong, China
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Republic of Korea
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- Peru
- The Philippines
- Russia
- Singapore
- Chinese Taipei
- Thailand
- The United States
- Viet Nam

Source: [https://www.apec.org/About-Us/About-APEC](https://www.apec.org/About-Us/About-APEC)

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development

1. The centre has been opened by the Italian government in association with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO).
2. The centre would facilitate coordination among the G7 and African countries to achieve the goals set by the Paris Agreement.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only  

b) 2 only  

c) Both  

d) None

**Solution: b)**

The *Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development* was inaugurated by the Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte at Rome.
• The centre has been opened by the Italian government in association with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO).

• The centre would facilitate coordination among the G7 and African countries on common initiatives in Africa to achieve the goals set by the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.


(Q) INSTEX recently in news is related to

a) A network to send and receive information about financial transactions in a secure environment.

b) The platform that aims to create an enabling ecosystem for blockchain-based projects to access infrastructure and financing.

c) A system that forms rules and standards for facilitating international trade among the nations.

d) Payment mechanism being setup by the European Union to secure trade with Iran.

Solution: d)

• (INSTEX) Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges is a project of the three governments of UK, France and Germany to bypass US sanctions on Iran.

• INSTEX is a payment system which will help to save the Iran nuclear deal by allowing Tehran to keep trading with EU companies despite Washington re-imposing sanctions.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

1. It is a partnership organization designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics.

2. It is a partnership between the governments of the disease affected countries only.

3. The organization maintains its secretariat in Hague, Netherlands.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only

b) 1, 3

c) 2, 3

d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: a)

• The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (or simply the Global Fund) is an international financing organization that aims to “attract, leverage and invest additional resources to end the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to support attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations.”

• Founded in 2002, the Global Fund is a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and people affected by the diseases.

• The organization maintains its secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland.

Source: [https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/overview/](https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/overview/)
Consider the following statements about G-20 grouping.

2. The G20 is supported by United Nations and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
3. The 2017 G20 summit was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

- The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for its members' international economic cooperation and decision-making. Its membership comprises 19 countries plus the European Union. Each G20 president invites several guest countries each year.
- The G20 started in 1999 as a meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis.
- The G20 is supported by international organisations, including the Financial Stability Board, the International Labour Organisation, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.
- The 2018 G20 Buenos Aires summit, was the thirteenth meeting of Group of Twenty (G20), which was held in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Consider the following statements about Global Compact for Migration.

1. It is the first, intergovernmentally negotiated agreement, prepared under the auspices of the United Nations to cover all dimensions of international migration.
2. The global compact is legally binding.
3. It addresses the risks and challenges for individuals and communities in countries of origin and destination.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

The Global Compact for Migration is the first-ever UN global agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions. The global compact is non-legally binding.

It is grounded in values of state sovereignty, responsibility-sharing, non-discrimination, and human rights, and recognizes that a cooperative approach is needed to optimize the overall benefits of migration, while addressing its risks and challenges for individuals and communities in countries of origin, transit and destination.

Source: [https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/migration-compact](https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/migration-compact)
(Q) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) work towards
1. Making agriculture more productive
2. Help to eliminate malnutrition
3. Reduce rural poverty
4. Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

Select the correct code:
   a) 1, 2, 3
   b) 2, 3, 4
   c) 1, 2, 4
   d) 1, 2, 3, 4

Solution: d)
FAO work towards:
- Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
- Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable
- Reduce rural poverty
- Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems
- Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises


(Q) Consider the following statements about Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS).
1. KPCS was launched in 2010.
2. India is the founding member of KPCS and is the current chair of the scheme.
3. The Kimberley Process (KP) is a commitment to remove conflict diamonds from the global supply chain.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?
   a) 1, 2
   b) 2, 3
   c) 1, 3
   d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: b)
The Kimberley Process (KP) is a commitment to remove conflict diamonds from the global supply chain. Today, participants actively prevent 99.8% of the worldwide trade.

Uniting governments, civil society and the wider industry, the Kimberley Process (KP) defines conflict diamonds as: ‘rough diamonds used to finance wars against governments’ – around the world.

KP members are responsible for stemming 99.8% of the global production of conflict diamonds.
The Kimberley Process (KP) is a multilateral trade regime established in 2003 with the goal of preventing the flow of conflict diamonds. The core of this regime is the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) under which States implement safeguards on shipments of rough diamonds and certify them as “conflict free”.

Source: https://www.kimberleyprocess.com/en/what-kp
(Q) Consider the following statements about International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)

1. IRRI is known for its work in developing rice varieties that contributed to the Green Revolution in the 1960s.
2. It aims to reduce poverty and hunger, improve the health of rice farmers and consumers.
3. It is the largest non-profit agricultural research center in Asia.
4. Recently, the 6th International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), South Asia Regional Center (ISARC) was dedicated to the nation.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The Prime Minister dedicated the 6th International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), South Asia Regional Center (ISARC) to the nation. The Institute is built at the campus of National Seed Research and Training Center (NSRTC) in Varanasi.

- The **International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)** is an international agricultural research and training organization known for its work in developing rice varieties that contributed to the Green Revolution in the 1960s.
- **Aim**: The Institute, established in 1960 aims to reduce poverty and hunger, improve the health of rice farmers and consumers, and ensure environmental sustainability of rice farming.
- It is also the largest **non-profit agricultural research center in Asia**.

(Q) United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2019 as the International Year of

a) International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development
b) International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies
c) International Year of Small Island Developing States
d) International Year of Indigenous Languages

Solution: d)

On 19 December 2016 the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2019 as the **International Year of Indigenous Languages** based on a resolution of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The General Assembly resolution requested the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as the lead UN agency for coordination of the year.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

1. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established by World Bank.
2. It is a policy-making body and promotes implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.
3. India is a full-fledged member of FATF.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  
b) 1, 3  
c) 2 only  
d) 2, 3
Solution: d)

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by the Ministers of its Member jurisdictions. The objectives of the FATF are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

- The FATF is therefore a “policy-making body” which works to generate the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas.
- The FATF has developed a series of Recommendations that are recognised as the international standard for combating of money laundering and the financing of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- India has become a full-fledged member of Financial Action Task Force (FATF). FATF membership is very important for India in its quest to become a major player in the International finance. It will help India to build the capacity to fight terrorism and trace terrorist money and to successfully investigate and prosecute money laundering and terrorist financing offences. India will benefit in securing a more transparent and stable financial system by ensuring that financial institutions are not vulnerable to infiltration or abuse by organized crime groups.

Source: [http://www.fatf-gafi.org/about/](http://www.fatf-gafi.org/about/)

(Q) Astana Declaration, recently seen in news is related to

a) Intellectual Property Rights
b) Rights of Indigenous Peoples
c) Combat Trafficking in Persons
d) Primary Health Care

Solution: d)

The Global Conference on Primary Health Care in Astana, Kazakhstan in October 2018 endorsed a new declaration emphasizing the critical role of primary health care around the world. The declaration aims to refocus efforts on primary health care to ensure that everyone everywhere is able to enjoy the highest possible attainable standard of health.

Source: [https://www.who.int/primary-health/conference-phc/declaration](https://www.who.int/primary-health/conference-phc/declaration)
VI. POLITY

(Q) Renke Commission sometimes seen in news is related to
a) To study use and application of artificial intelligence (AI) in military.
b) Management of water resources in North-Eastern Region.
c) Study developmental aspects of denotified and nomadic tribes in India.
d) Desiltation of River Ganga.

Solution: c)

• The Renke Commission and the Idate Commission have done commendable work in studying the various problems faced by Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities and recommending measures to address the issues more comprehensively.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/business/budget/new-panel-for-welfare-of-nomadic-communities/article26155346.ece

(Q) Consider the following statements about Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)

1. It is an independent verification printer machine and is attached to electronic voting machines.
2. The slip contains the name of the candidate and the political party.
3. VVPAT machines can be accessed by polling officers only.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) is a method that provides feedback to voters.

• It is an independent verification printer machine and is attached to electronic voting machines.
• It allows voters to verify if their vote has gone to the intended candidate.
• When a voter presses a button in the EVM, a paper slip is printed through the VVPAT.
• The slip contains the poll symbol and name of the candidate.
• It allows the voter to verify his/her choice. After being visible to the voter from a glass case in the VVPAT for seven seconds, the ballot slip will be cut and dropped into the drop box in the VVPAT machine and a beep will be heard.
• The slip dropped in a box but the voter cannot take it home.
• VVPAT machines can be accessed by polling officers only.

(Q) Consider the following statements about languages recognized by the Constitution of India.

1. Languages recognized by the Constitution are under Eighth Schedule of the constitution.
2. Originally, it had 14 languages but presently there are 24 languages.
3. Maithili, Nepali and Konkani are included under Eighth Schedule of the constitution.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Eighth Schedule: Languages recognized by the Constitution. Originally, it had 14 languages but presently there are 22 languages.

They are: Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri (Dongri), Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Mathili (Maithili), Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Santhali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.
VII. HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

(Q) For the first time in 13 years, the nomadic natives of Banni grassland, left their villages due to scarcity of water.

The above statement refers to which tribe.

a) Bharwad
b) Gaderia
c) Kuruba
d) Maldhari

Solution: d)

- Situated near the Great Rann of Kutch, Banni, the largest grassland of Asia, spread over 2,717 sq.km, is in the grip of a severe drought as winter sets in. While the area is known for its scarce rainfall and semi-drought conditions, it is for the first time in 13 years that the Maldharis, the nomadic natives of Banni, are leaving their villages in droves as water gets scarce.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM)

1. It is the annual theatre festival established in 2010 and organized by the National School of Drama (NSD).
2. It is a national festival showcasing the work of the most creative theatre workers in India and does not host theatre groups from other countries.
3. It is the largest theatre festival of Asia.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

- Bharat Rang Mahotsav (BRM), the annual theatre festival is organized by the National School of Drama (NSD), was established two decades ago to stimulate the growth and development of theatre across India. Originally a national festival showcasing the work of the most creative theatre workers in India, BRM has evolved to international scope, hosting theatre groups from around the world, and is now the largest theatre festival of Asia.

- The 20th edition of BRM: This year, the festival pays a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, the ‘Father of the Nation’, on his 150th birth anniversary and will stage plays depicting the Gandhian philosophy and the dilemmas Bapu had as a person. The 20th Bharat Rang Mahotsav also hold parallel festival in other cities including Dibrugarh (Assam), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Mysore (Karnataka), and Rajkot (Gujarat).

Source: https://20brm.nsd.gov.in/about-20th-brm/
VIII. STATES

(Q) The Project "Millet Village" intended for rejuvenating the traditional tribal agriculture is the initiative of which state?
   a) Sikkim
   b) Telangana
   c) Kerala
   d) Karnataka

Solution: c)
- The Project "Millet Village" is intended for rejuvenating the traditional tribal agriculture in selected hamlets in Attappady in Palakkad district, Kerala.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/state-catching-up-with-superfoods/article26167994.ece

(Q) Golden Langur Conservation Breeding Programme is implemented by which state?
   a) Sikkim
   b) West Bengal
   c) Assam
   d) Meghalaya

Solution: c)
- Assam's Golden Langur Conservation Breeding Programme has achieved its maiden success with the birth of a female offspring at the Assam State Zoo, widely known as Guwahati Zoo, recently. With funds being provided by Central Zoo Authority (CZA), the project for conservation was started in 2011-12.

IX. DEFENCE & SECURITY

(Q) Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) recently seen in news is
a) Counter-terrorism effort launched by ASEAN  
b) Counter-terrorism effort launched by BIMSTEC  
c) Setup by India to counter terrorism and extremism in the Indian sub-continent.  
d) Permanent organ of the SCO which deals with terrorism, separatism and extremism.

Solution: d)
- The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, is a permanent organ of the SCO which serves to promote cooperation of member states against the three evils of terrorism, separatism and extremism. The Head of RATS is elected to a three-year term. Each member state also sends a permanent representative to RATS.

(Q) Operation Blue Star was related to
a) Indian military’s capture of the majority of Siachen Glacier.  
b) Humanitarian tasks in J&K  
c) Military operation to remove Sikh militants from the Harmandir Sahib Complex  
d) Indian operation to push back the infiltrators from the Kargil Sector

Solution: c)
- Carried out to remove militant religious leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his armed followers from the buildings of the Harmandir Sahib complex in Amritsar, Punjab.

(Q) Which of the following statements about Exercise Sea Vigil is correct?
 a) Maritime exercise between India and Russia.  
b) Bilateral Naval Exercise between India and Indonesia held at the port of Surabaya, Indonesia.  
c) Coastal defence Exercise conducted by the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard.  
d) Operational interaction between India and Sri Lankan navies wherein regular ships visits are being undertaken between the two countries.

Solution: c)
- The first coastal defence Exercise Sea Vigil, conducted by the Navy and Coast Guard, in close coordination with State Governments and Union Territories concluded on 23 Jan 2019.
- It was the largest such exercise the country had ever witnessed in recent times and saw participation by more than 100 ships, aircraft and patrol boats manned and operated by various security agencies.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Operation MUSKAAN

1. It is to rescue/rehabilitate missing children.
2. It is the initiative of Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only  
b) 2 only  
c) Both  
d) None

Solution: a)

- **Operation Smile** also called as **Operation MUSKAAN** is an initiative of the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** to rescue/rehabilitate missing children. It is a dedicated campaign for a month where several activities are taken up by the State Police personnel to trace and rescue the missing children and reunite them with their families.

- The **“Operation MUSKAAN -III”** was taken up during July, 2017 throughout the country as a follow up of the earlier campaigns to rescue/rehabilitate the missing children.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).

1. It is a voluntary initiative that brings together navies of littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.
2. It was launched by India in 2008.
3. China and Japan are the observer countries.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

- The **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)** is an inclusive and voluntary initiative that brings together navies of littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region with the aim of increasing maritime cooperation and enhancing regional security. It is a forum for discussion, policy formulation as well as numerous aspects of naval operations, all of which are crucial elements of a cooperative mechanism.

- The inaugural IONS was held on 14 February 2008 in New Delhi.

- Year 2018 marks the 10th anniversary of the IONS. The 10th anniversary celebration of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) was held in Kochi, Kerela.

- It has 35 member nations. Nine states with observer status: China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Netherlands, Russia and Spain.


(Q) Consider the following statements about the Missile Helina.

1. Helina is the helicopter-launched version of the Nag anti-tank guided missile.
2. Helina is the indigenously designed and built missile system.
3. Helina’s range is estimated at between 50 to 60 kilometres.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

- Indigenously designed and built, **Helina** is the air-launched variant of the **Nag**, a fire-and-forget ATGM.
- Helina range is estimated at between 7 to 8 kilometres.
- It is guided by an infrared imaging seeker (IIR) operating in the lock-on before-launch mode and helps in further strengthening the defence capabilities of the country.


(Q) Which of the following organisations has “Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)” as the counter terrorism wing?

a) North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)  
b) Quadrilateral Grouping  
c) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)  
d) Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)

Solution: c)

SCO comprises of two regional bodies – SCO Secretariat and **SCO-RATS** (Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure). SCO-RATS is a permanent body of the SCO and is intended to facilitate coordination and interaction between competent authorities of the SCO Member States in the fight against terrorism, extremism and separatism. The main functions of SCO-RATS are coordination and information sharing.

India became a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation on 09 June 2017 with the support of all the SCO Member States. Since becoming a member India has been participating in the activities of SCO-RATS.
X. REPORTS & INDICES

(Q) Consider the following statements about ‘Status of trace and toxic metals in Indian rivers 2018’.

1. It is published by Central Water Commission.
2. According to the report, Ganga is polluted with five heavy metals—chromium, copper, nickel, lead and iron.
3. Heavy metals are carcinogenic and also slowly biodegradable.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

- 42 rivers in India are polluted with at least two toxic heavy metals reveals this report published by Central Water Commission. Ganga, the national river, is polluted with five heavy metals—chromium, copper, nickel, lead and iron.
- Unlike organic contaminants, heavy metals are non-biodegradable and also carcinogenic. Heavy metals such as Zinc, Copper, Nickel, Mercury, Cadmium, Lead, Chromium and Arsenic tend to accumulate in organisms, which may lead to a reduction in species diversity.
- Central Water Commission under Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR has been playing a major role in the monitoring water quality of river water since year 1963 and at present, is observing water quality at 429 key locations covering all major river basins of India. The present report attempts to provide the water quality scenario of Indian rivers in respect of trace & toxic metals.

Source: http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/content/454984/status-of-trace-and-toxic-metals-in-indian-rivers-2018/

(Q) Consider the following statements about “The Future of Rail” Report.

1. It is released by the International Energy Agency (IEA).
2. According to the report, rail is among the most energy efficient modes of transport for freight and passengers.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only  
b) 2 only  
c) Both  
d) None

Solution: c)

“The Future of Rail” Report has been released by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

- It examines how the role of rail in global transport might be elevated as a means to reduce the energy use and environmental impacts associated with transport.
Key findings from The Future of Rail:

- Rail is among the most energy efficient modes of transport for freight and passengers – while the rail sector carries 8% of the world's passengers and 7% of global freight transport, it represents only 2% of total transport energy demand.

Source: [https://www.iea.org/futureofrail/](https://www.iea.org/futureofrail/)

(Q) Global Wage Report is realised by

a) World Bank
b) International Monetary Fund
c) International Labour Organisation
d) United Nations Development Programme

**Solution: c)**

Source: [https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/wage-drag/article25637382.ece](https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/wage-drag/article25637382.ece)

(Q) As per agriculture Census consider the following Categorisation of Farmers:

1. Small Farmer - Below 2.00 hectare
2. Medium Farmer - 4.00-10.00 hectare
3. Large Farmer - 10.00 hectare and above

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: c)**

In agriculture Census, the operational holdings are categorised in five size classes as follows:

- **Marginal**: Below 1.00 hectare.
- **Small**: 1.00-2.00 hectare.
- **Semi-Medium**: 2.00-4.00 hectare.
- **Medium**: 4.00-10.00 hectare.
- **Large**: 10.00 hectare and above.


(Q) Consider the following statements about 2018 Human Development Report (HDR).

2. India ranks 130 on 2018 Human Development Index.
3. Between 1990 and 2017, India's HDI value has been continuously increasing.

Which of the above statement is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  
 b) 2, 3  
 c) 1, 3  
 d) 1, 2, 3
**Solution: d)**

The **Human Development Report (HDR)** is an annual report published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

India climbed one spot to **130 out of 189 countries** in the **2018** human development rankings released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). India’s HDI value for **2017 is 0.640**, which put the country in the medium human development category. Between 1990 and 2017, India's HDI value increased from 0.427 to 0.640, an increase of **nearly 50 percent** – and an indicator of the country’s remarkable achievement in lifting millions of people out of poverty.


(Q) Consider the following statements about ‘Status of trace and toxic metals in Indian rivers 2018’.

1. It is published by Central Water Commission.
2. According to the report, Ganga is polluted with five heavy metals—chromium, copper, nickel, lead and iron.
3. Heavy metals are carcinogenic and also slowly biodegradable.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

42 rivers in India are polluted with at least two toxic heavy metals reveals this report published by Central Water Commission. Ganga, the national river, is polluted with five heavy metals—chromium, copper, nickel, lead and iron.

Unlike organic contaminants, heavy metals are non-biodegradable and also carcinogenic. Heavy metals such as Zinc, Copper, Nickel, Mercury, Cadmium, Lead, Chromium and Arsenic tend to accumulate in organisms, which may lead to a reduction in species diversity. Central Water Commission under Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR has been playing a major role in the monitoring water quality of river water since year 1963 and at present, is observing water quality at 429 key locations covering all major river basins of India. The present report attempts to provide the water quality scenario of Indian rivers in respect of trace & toxic metals.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Global Soil Biodiversity Atlas.

1. It is prepared by United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
2. India is among countries whose soil biodiversity faces the highest level of risk.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  
b) 2, 3  
c) 1, 3  
d) 1, 2, 3
Solution: b)
India's soil biodiversity is in grave peril, according to the Global Soil Biodiversity Atlas prepared by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The WWF’s ‘risk index’ for the globe — indicating threats from loss of above-ground diversity, pollution and nutrient over-loading, over-grazing, intensive agriculture, fire, soil erosion, desertification and climate change — shows India among countries whose soil biodiversity faces the highest level of risk.

- **Soil biodiversity** encompasses the presence of micro-organisms, micro-fauna (nematodes and tardigrades for example), and macro-fauna (ants, termites and earthworms).


(Q) The report ‘Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (RISE) 2018’ is released by

a) International Energy Agency
b) UNDP
c) OECD
d) World Bank

Solution: d)
World Bank has released its report — Regulatory Indicators for Sustainable Energy (RISE) 2018 — charting global progress on sustainable energy policies.

XI. MAPS/ PLACES

(Q) Consider the following statements about Chilika Lake

1. Chilika Lake is the largest coastal lagoon in India and the second largest coastal lagoon in the world.
2. Chilika Lake was designated the first Indian wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
3. The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) will have its first regional centre at Barkul in Odisha for better management of the Chilika Lake.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chilika_Lake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chilika_Lake)

(Q) Which of the following wetlands in India are in the list of Ramsar sites?

1. Ashtamudi Wetland – Kerala
2. Bhitarkanika Mangroves – Odisha
3. Deepor Beel – Assam
4. Keoladeo National Park – Rajasthan

Select the correct code.

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

Solution: d)

- India currently has 27 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Ramsar_sites_in_India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Ramsar_sites_in_India)

(Q) Consider the following statements about Pulicat Lake

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

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  
 b) 1, 3  
 c) 2, 3  
 d) 1, 2, 3
Pulicat Lagoon is the second largest brackish water lagoon in India, after Chilika Lake. The lake encompasses the Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary.

- Flamingo festival is an annual three-day festival held in the Pulicat Lake.

(Q) North Korea is located between which of the following seas?

a) Yellow Sea and Sea of Japan
b) Korea Bay and Sea of Japan
c) Korea Bay and Yellow Sea
d) Yellow Sea and East China Sea

Solution: b)

(Q) In India the strategic crude oil storages are currently located in

1. Mangalore
2. Chennai
3. Padur
4. Chandikhole

Select the correct code:

a) 1, 2, 3
b) 2, 3, 4
c) 1, 3
d) 1, 3, 4
Solution: c)
- India’s strategic crude oil storages are currently located at Visakhapatnam (1.33mt), Mangaluru (1.5 mt) and Padur (2.5mt).
- In the 2017-18 budget, it was announced that two more such caverns will be set up Chandikhole in Jaipur district of Odisha and Bikaner in Rajasthan.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Elum Valley which was recently in news:
1. Elum Valley is located near Arunachal Pradesh.
2. It has been a site of divinity and pilgrimage for both the Hindu and the Buddhist communities.
Which of the above Statements is/are correct?
   a) 1 only
   b) 2 only
   c) Both
   d) None

Solution: b)
- The Khyber Pakthunkhwa province in Pakistan is planning to construct a heritage park in Elum Valley, which carries a historical significance to both the Hindus and the Buddhists.
- Elum Valley is located between the Swat and Buner districts in the province.


(Q) Consider the following statements
1. Established in the year 1936 as Hailey National Park
2. It is the place where Project Tiger was first launched in 1973.
3. Its whole area comprises of hills, marshy depressions, riverine belts, grasslands and large lake.
4. The park has sub-Himalayan belt geographical and ecological characteristics.
The above statements refer to which of the following national parks?
   a) Balphakram National Park
   b) Dudhwa National Park
   c) Manas National Park
   d) Jim Corbett National Park

Solution: d)
Jim Corbett National Park is the oldest national park in India and was established in 1936 as Hailey National Park to protect the endangered Bengal tiger. It is located in Nainital district of Uttarakhand and was named after Jim Corbett who played a key role in its establishment. The park was the first to come under the Project Tiger initiative.
The park has sub-Himalayan belt geographical and ecological characteristics. An ecotourism destination.
XII. Miscellaneous

(Q) Indira Gandhi Prize for peace, disarmament and development for 2018 has been awarded to
a) Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh
b) Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)
c) Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)
d) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Solution: c)

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), the New Delhi (India)-based independent research and advocacy think tank, was awarded the prestigious Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for the year 2018

- CSE has been awarded for “its pioneering work over almost four decades in environmental education and protection, for its steadfast advocacy of measures to combat environmental deterioration, for its success in influencing public policies and programmes that have benefitted social and economic development in India, and for keeping the issue of environmental sustainability at the forefront of national attention and public policy.”


(Q) Which of the following has been recognised as the ‘World Capital of Architecture’ by UNESCO?

a) Rome
b) Melbourne
c) Rio de Janeiro
d) Paris

Solution: c)

The UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has named the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro as the World Capital of Architecture for 2020.

Having defeated Paris and Melbourne, Rio will be the first city to receive the title under a programme launched together by UNESCO and the International Union of Architects (UIA) in November 2018


(Q) Consider the following statements about Akshaya Patra Foundation.

1. It is a not-for-profit organisation implementing the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in the government schools and government-aided schools.
2. Akshaya Patra is the world’s second largest not-for-profit run Mid-Day Meal Programme serving food every school day to school children.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None
Solution: a)

- The Akshaya Patra Foundation is a **not-for-profit organisation** headquartered in Bengaluru, India. Our organisation strives to eliminate classroom hunger by implementing the Mid-Day Meal Scheme in the government schools and government-aided schools. Alongside, Akshaya Patra also aims at countering malnutrition and supporting the right to education of socio-economically disadvantaged children.

- Today, Akshaya Patra is the world’s largest (not-for-profit run) Mid-Day Meal Programme serving wholesome food every school day to over 1.76 million children from 14,702 schools across 12 states in India.

Source: [https://www.akshayapatra.org/about-us](https://www.akshayapatra.org/about-us)

(Q) Consider the following statements about Vande Bharat Express.

1. It is India’s first indigenously built engineless semi-high speed train.
2. It runs between Delhi and Ahmedabad at a maximum speed of 160 kmph.
3. The train is a 100% ‘Make in India’ project.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: c)**

- It is India’s first indigenously built engineless semi-high speed train. Earlier, it was known by the name Train 18.

- It runs between Delhi and Varanasi at a maximum speed of 160 kmph.

- It has been built by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai, in a record time of 20 months.

- The train is a 100% ‘Make in India’ project and is claimed to be built at half the cost of a similar train set that is imported.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

1. The RRTS is a first-of-its-kind, rail-based, high-speed regional transit system to be implemented in India.
2. The RRTS aims to streamline the rural transportation system by providing the people a safe, secure and comfortable public transport.
3. It is implemented by Indian Railways.

Which of the above statements is/are **incorrect**?

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

**Solution: d)**
The Union Cabinet approved construction of Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Corridor of Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) covering a distance of 82.15 kms.

- The RRTS is a first-of-its-kind, rail-based, high-speed regional transit system to be implemented in India.
- Once operational, it will be the fastest, most comfortable and safest mode of commuter transport in the National Capital Region (NCR).
- The RRTS aims to streamline the urban transportation system, which is stressed due to intensive developments, and increase in the number of private vehicles.
- The project is meant to ensure 'Universal Access' by being sensitive to the needs of women, children and vulnerable sections of the society.

Source: http://pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1565296

(Q) The VISION ZERO conference is related to

a) Eliminating Occupational Blindness by 2022.
b) Treating Children who are born blind
c) Improve the occupational safety and health situation.
d) NITI Ayog initiative towards achieving zero pollution in metropolitan cities.

Solution: c)

The concept of 'Vision Zero' is fast gaining international acceptance and is expected to leverage the efforts of the Government of India to raise the occupational safety and health standards in the country so as to improve the occupational safety and health situation. The concept of Vision Zero is based on four fundamental principles viz. life is non-negotiable, humans are fallible, tolerable limits are defined by human physical resistance, and people are entitled to safe transport and safe workplaces. The Vision is based on principles of Controlling Risks, Ensuring Safety and Health in Machines, Equipment and Workplaces and Skill Upgradation of Workforce.

Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=188696