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I. ECONOMY

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Sovereign Bonds.

1. A sovereign bond is a specific debt instrument issued by the government in both foreign and domestic currency.
2. The Yield of the sovereign bond is the interest rate that the government pays on issuing bonds.
3. The central banks also control the supply of money within the economy by the use of these bonds.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

A sovereign bond is a specific debt instrument issued by the government. They can be denominated in both foreign and domestic currency. Just like other bonds, these also promise to pay the buyer a certain amount of interest for a stipulated number of years and repay the face value on maturity. They also have a rating associated with them which essentially speaks of their credit worthiness.

The Yield of the sovereign bond is the interest rate that the government pays on issuing bonds. Countries with volatile economies and high inflation rates have to issue higher interest returns on their bonds compared to more stable ones.

The Yield of the bonds are dependent on primarily 3 factors:

- **Creditworthiness** – The issuing countries’ perceived ability to repay their debts. This can be obtained from rating agencies.
- **Country Risk** – External/Internal factors like unrest and wars tend to jeopardize a country’s ability to pay off their debts.
- **Exchange Rates** – In cases where bonds are issued in foreign currency, fluctuations in exchange rate may lead to increased pay out pressure on the issuing government.

The central banks also control the supply of money within the economy by the use of these bonds. When the government is in expansionist mode, the central bank will back debt in exchange for cash to raise capital for the expenditure. In case it is in the contracting mode, the banks hope to slow growth by selling more securities to take out liquidity from the system.

Source: https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/sovereign-bond

(Q) The practice of kurki was banned by the Punjab government. Kurki refers to

a) Stubble burning.
b) A prescription drug.
c) Attachment of farmers’ land by banks in the event of non-payment of loan.
d) None of the above
(Q) Consider the following statements about International Finance Corporation (IFC)

1. It is a sister organization of the IMF.
2. It is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries.
3. Its goals are to increase sustainable agriculture opportunities, improve healthcare and education.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

IFC—a sister organization of the **World Bank** and member of the World Bank Group—is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries. The Bank Group has set two goals for the world to achieve by 2030: end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity in every country.

- The IFC is owned and governed by its member countries, but has its own executive leadership and staff that conduct its normal business operations.

- It is a corporation whose shareholders are member governments that provide paid-in capital and which have the right to vote on its matters.

**Functions:**

1. It offers an array of debt and equity financing services and helps companies face their risk exposures, while refraining from participating in a management capacity.

2. The corporation also offers advice to companies on making decisions, evaluating their impact on the environment and society, and being responsible.

3. It advises governments on building infrastructure and partnerships to further support private sector development.

Since 2009, the IFC has focused on a set of development goals that its projects are expected to target. Its goals are to increase sustainable agriculture opportunities, improve healthcare and education, increase access to financing for microfinance and business clients, advance infrastructure, help small businesses grow revenues, and invest in climate health.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Regulatory Sandbox.

1. A regulatory sandbox refers to live testing of new products or services in a controlled environment for which regulators may permit certain regulatory relaxations for the limited purpose of the testing.

2. It will help fintech companies launch innovative products at a lower cost and in less time.
3. With the aim of financial inclusion, all fintech companies are allowed access to the Regulatory Sandbox.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued the final framework for regulatory sandbox in order to enable innovations in the financial technology space.

- A regulatory sandbox usually refers to live testing of new products or services in a controlled/test regulatory environment for which regulators may permit certain regulatory relaxations for the limited purpose of the testing.
- RBI said the objective of the sandbox was to foster responsible innovation in financial services, promote efficiency and bring benefit to consumers.
- RBI will launch the sandbox for entities that meet the criteria of minimum net worth of ₹25 lakh as per their latest audited balance sheet.
- The entity should either be a company incorporated and registered in the country or banks licensed to operate in India.
- While money transfer services, digital know-your customer, financial inclusion and cybersecurity products are included, crypto currency, credit registry and credit information have been left out.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/business/rbi-issues-final-norms-for-regulatory-sandbox/article29086487.ece

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Market Intervention Scheme (MIS).

1. **The Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is the price support announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season for horticultural commodities and other agricultural commodities which are perishable in nature.**
2. **It provides remunerative prices to the farmers in case of glut in production and fall in prices.**

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

The Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is an ad-hoc scheme under which are included horticultural commodities and other agricultural commodities which are perishable in nature and which are not covered under the minimum price support scheme. In order to protect the growers of these horticultural/agricultural commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop during the peak arrival period when prices fall to very low level, Government implements M.I.S. for a particular commodity on the request of a State Government concerned.
Consider the following statements regarding Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).

1. Generalized System of Preferences is an exclusive European Union’s trade programme designed to promote economic growth in the developing world by providing preferential duty-free entry for various products.
2. The concept of GSP is very different from the concept of WTO’s Most Favored Nation (MFN) clause.
3. Generalized System of Preferences does not come under the purview of WTO.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: c)

Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) is a U.S. trade program designed to promote economic growth in the developing world by providing preferential duty-free entry for up to 4,800 products from 129 designated beneficiary countries and territories.

- The objective of GSP was to give development support to poor countries by promoting exports from them into the developed countries. GSP promotes sustainable development in beneficiary countries by helping these countries to increase and diversify their trade with the United States.
- Under the normal trade laws, the WTO members must give equal preferences to trade partners. There should not be any discrimination between countries. This trade rule under the WTO is called the Most Favored Nation (MFN) clause.
- The MFN instructs non-discrimination that any favorable treatment to a particular country. At the same time, the WTO allows members to give special and differential treatment to from developing countries (like zero tariff imports). This is an exemption for MFN.
- Both MFN and GSP comes under the purview of WTO.

Consider the following statements about National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA).

1. The Authority’s main function is to ensure that traders are not realizing unfair profit by charging high price from consumers in the name of GST.
2. NAA is headed by the Ministry of Finance.
3. The GST law also provides for the creation of a Consumer Welfare Fund wherein undue benefits made by businesses under the GST law have to be deposited, in case it cannot be passed on to the identified recipient.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2
b) 2, 3
c) 1, 3
d) 1, 2, 3
The National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA) has been constituted under Section 171 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017.

- The Authority's main function is to ensure that traders are not realizing unfair profit by charging high price from consumers in the name of GST.
- The Authority's core function is to ensure that the benefits of the reduction is GST rates on goods and services made by GST Council and proportional change in the Input tax credit passed on to the ultimate consumers and recipient respectively by way of reduction in the prices by the suppliers.
- The National Anti-Profiteering Authority shall be headed by a senior officer of the level of a Secretary to the Government of India and shall have four technical members from the Centre and/or the States.
- In the event the National Anti-profiteering Authority confirms the necessity of applying anti-profiteering measures, it has the power to order the business concerned to reduce its prices or return the undue benefit availed along with interest to the recipient of the goods or services.
- If the undue benefit cannot be passed on to the recipient, it can be ordered to be deposited in the Consumer Welfare Fund.
- In extreme cases the National Anti-profiteering Authority can impose a penalty on the defaulting business entity and even order the cancellation of its registration under GST.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Advisory Board for Banking Frauds (ABBF).

1. Advisory Board for Banking Frauds (ABBF) is been constituted by the RBI to examine bank fraud of over ₹50 crore and recommend action.
2. It would function as the first level of examination of all large fraud cases before references are made to the investigative agencies.
3. It would also give inputs for policy formulation related to the fraud to the RBI.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has constituted an ‘Advisory Board for Banking Frauds (ABBF)’ to examine bank fraud of over ₹50 crore and recommend action.

1. The board's jurisdiction would be confined to those cases involving the level of officers of General Manager and above in the Public Sector Banks in respect of an allegation of fraud in a borrowal account.
2. It would function as the first level of examination of all large fraud cases before recommendations or references are made to the investigative agencies by the respective public sector banks (PSBs).
3. Lenders would refer all large fraud cases above ₹50 crore to the board and on receipt of its recommendation or advice, the bank concerned would take further action in such matter.
4. The Central Bureau of Investigation may also refer any case or matter to the board where it has any issue or difficulty or in technical matters with the PSB concerned.
5. It would also periodically carry out frauds analysis in the financial system and give inputs for policy formulation related to the fraud to the RBI.
(Q) Which of the following are the possible implications when a country adopts negative rate policy.

1. Increases borrowing costs.
2. Help weaken a country’s currency rate by making it a less attractive investment than that of other currencies.
3. Boosts Inflation

Select the correct answer code:

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

Solution: c)

Under a negative rate policy, financial institutions are required to pay interest for parking excess reserves with the central bank.

- That way, central banks penalise financial institutions for holding on to cash in hope of prompting them to boost lending.

**What are the pros of negative rates?**

1. Lowers borrowing costs.
2. Help weaken a country's currency rate by making it a less attractive investment than that of other currencies.
3. A weaker currency gives a country's export a competitive advantage and boosts inflation by pushing up import costs.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Yield curve.

1. The yield curve is a graph showing the relationship between interest rates earned on lending money for different durations.
2. The yield curve turns positive when near-term Treasurys yield more than their long-term counterparts.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: b)

The yield curve is a graph showing the relationship between interest rates earned on lending money for different durations.

• Normally, someone who lent to the government or a corporation for one year (by buying a one-year government or corporate bond) would expect to get a lower interest rate than someone who lent for five or ten years, making the yield curve upward-sloping.

• In the US in recent days the ten-year bond rate has fallen to the point at which the ten-year rate is below the two-year rate – so the yield curve is inverted.

• The yield curve turns negative when near-term Treasurys yield more than their long-term counterparts.
II. GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

(Q) Consider the following statements about Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).

1. They are the landscapes of aesthetic beauty that combine agricultural biodiversity, resilient ecosystems and a cultural heritage.
2. Kuttanad region is designated as GIAHS.
3. GIAHS is the initiative of UNEP.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

“Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems” (GIAHS) are outstanding landscapes of aesthetic beauty that combine agricultural biodiversity, resilient ecosystems and a valuable cultural heritage. It is designated by FAO.

- Located in specific sites around the world, they sustainably provide multiple goods and services, food and livelihood security for millions of small-scale farmers.
- Unfortunately, these agricultural systems are threatened by many factors including climate change and increased competition for natural resources. They are also dealing with migration due to low economic viability, which has resulted in traditional farming practices being abandoned and endemic species and breeds being lost.
- These ancestral agricultural systems constitute the foundation for contemporary and future agricultural innovations and technologies.

The sites in India designated as GIAHS are: Kuttanad Below Sea Level Farming System, Koraput Traditional Agriculture and Saffron Heritage of Kashmir.


(Q) Which of the following are the members of BASIC countries.

1. Brazil
2. Australia
3. South Africa
4. Indonesia
5. China

Select the correct answer code:

a) 1, 2, 3, 5
b) 1, 3, 4, 5
c) 1, 3, 5
d) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Solution: c)
The **BASIC countries** (also Basic countries or BASIC) are a bloc of four large newly industrialized countries – Brazil, South Africa, India and China – formed by an agreement on 28 November 2009.

BASIC countries broadly have common position on **reducing greenhouse gas emissions** and raising the massive funds that are needed to **fight climate change**.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2019.

1. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has amended the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2010.
2. Under the Amendment Rules, 2019, Solid plastic waste import into the country is allowed only from few developing and least developed countries.
3. Electrical and electronic assemblies and components manufactured in and exported from India, if found defective can now be imported back into the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Some of the salient features of the **Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2019** are as follows:

- Solid plastic waste has been prohibited from import into the country including in Special Economic Zones (SEZ) and by Export Oriented Units (EOU).
- Exporters of silk waste have now been given exemption from requiring permission from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- Electrical and electronic assemblies and components manufactured in and exported from India, if found defective can now be imported back into the country, within a year of export, without obtaining permission from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- Industries which do not require consent under **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974** and **Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981**, are now exempted from requiring authorization also under the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016, provided that hazardous and other wastes generated by such industries are handed over to the authorized actual users, waste collectors or disposal facilities.


(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. Flue-gas desulfurization technology is used to reduce air pollution from coal power plants.
2. The largest source of SO2 in the atmosphere is through vehicular pollution.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

According to an analysis of a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) data released by environmental NGO Greenpeace, India has more than 15% of all anthropogenic sulphur dioxide (SO2) hotspots in the world detected by the OMI (Ozone Monitoring Instrument) satellite.

- The major SO2 emission hotspots in India are Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh, Neyveli and Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Talcher and Jharsuguda in Odisha, Korba in Chhattisgarh, Kutch in Gujarat, Ramagundam in Telangana and Chandrapur and Koradi in Maharashtra.

- The vast majority of plants in India lack flue-gas desulfurization technology to reduce their air pollution, according to the analysis.

- As per country-wise world rankings, India was found at the top position in emitting SO2 as it has the maximum hotspots.

- The report said SO2 emissions are a significant contributor to air pollution. The largest source of SO2 in the atmosphere is the burning of fossil fuels in power plants and other industrial facilities.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding National Policy on Biofuels-2018.

2. The Policy expands the scope of raw material for ethanol production.
3. For providing protection to farmers, the policy does not allow use of food grains for production of ethanol.
4. The Policy encourages setting up of supply chain mechanisms for biodiesel production from non-edible oilseeds and Used Cooking Oil.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The National Policy on Biofuels-2018 approved by the Government envisages an indicative target of 20% blending of ethanol in petrol and 5% blending of bio-diesel in diesel by 2030.

National Policy on biofuels- salient features:

1. **Categorization:** 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 dropin fuels, Third Generation (3G) biofuels, bio-CNG etc. to enable extension of appropriate financial and fiscal incentives under each category.

2. **Scope of raw materials:** 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.

3. **Protection to farmers:** 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.
4. **Viability gap funding**: With a thrust on Advanced Biofuels, the Policy indicates a viability gap funding scheme for 2G ethanol Bio refineries of Rs.5000 crore in 6 years in addition to additional tax incentives, higher purchase price as compared to 1G biofuels.

5. **Boost to biodiesel production**: The Policy encourages setting up of supply chain mechanisms for biodiesel production from non-edible oilseeds, Used Cooking Oil, short gestation crops.

(Q) Consider the following statements about the recently launched India Cooling Action Plan.

1. India is the second country after China to develop such a document.
2. The plan aims at reducing emissions and providing thermal comfort to citizens.
3. Recognizes “cooling and related areas” as a thrust area of research under the national S&T Programme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: b)**

India is the first country in the world to develop such a document (ICAP), which addresses cooling requirements across sectors and lists out actions which can help reduce the cooling demand.

- The overarching goal is to provide **sustainable cooling and thermal comfort for all** while **securing environmental and socio-economic benefits for the society**.
- The India Cooling Action seeks to recognize “**cooling and related areas**” as a thrust area of research under national S&T Programme.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

1. It is an International agreement between governments, that is administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. CITES is legally binding on state parties to the convention, which are obliged to adopt their own domestic legislation to implement its goals.
3. CITES was drafted as a result of a resolution adopted at a meeting of members of IUCN.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: d)**

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an International agreement to regulate worldwide commercial trade in wild animal and plant species.
It restricts trade in items made from such plants and animals, such as food, clothing, medicine, and souvenirs.

It was signed on March 3, 1973 (Hence world wildlife day is celebrated on march 3).

It is administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Secretariat — Geneva (Switzerland).

CITES is legally binding on state parties to the convention, which are obliged to adopt their own domestic legislation to implement its goals.

Source: https://www.cites.org/eng/disc/what.php

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding stubble burning.

1. There is an increase in crop residue burning in North India in 2018 compared with that in 2016.
2. Stubble burning results in emission of carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide along with particulate matter.
3. Stubble burning does not kill weeds that are resistant to herbicide.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

There was 41 per cent reduction in crop residue burning in North India in 2018 compared with that in 2016. As many as 4,500 villages in Haryana and Punjab were declared zero stubble burning villages in 2018.

- Under a central government scheme for promoting agricultural mechanisation for in-situ management of crop residue in North India between 2018-19 and 2019-20, an amount of ₹1,151.80 crore has been allocated. Within the first year of implementation, the Happy Seeder/zero tillage technology was adopted in 8 lakh hectares of land in these States.
- Stubble burning results in emission of harmful gases such as carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide along with particulate matter.

Advantages of stubble burning:
1. It quickly clears the field and is the cheapest alternative.
2. Kills weeds, including those resistant to herbicide.
3. Kills slugs and other pests.
4. Can reduce nitrogen tie-up.

Source: https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/study-lists-alternatives-to-straw-burning/article29039569.ece

(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. Bureau of Indian Standards is the national agency that is responsible for carrying out certification for instruments and equipment for monitoring emissions and ambient air.
2. National Clean Air Programme is a five-year action plan with an aim of 20-30% reduction of PM2.5 and PM10 concentration by 2024.
3. National Clean Air Programme also includes increasing number of monitoring stations in the country including rural monitoring stations.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) recently designated the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL) as a national agency that shall be responsible for carrying out certification for instruments and equipments for monitoring emissions and ambient air.

The ministry issued a notification under Section 3 of the Environment Protection Act, giving CSIR-NPL the authority to certify instruments.

The government launched National Clean Air Programme, a time-bound national level strategy to tackle increasing air pollution.

- The NCAP will be a mid-term, five-year action plan with 2019 as the first year. The main aim of the programme would be 20-30% reduction of PM2.5 and PM10 concentration by 2024. The programme would take 2017 as the base year for the comparison of concentration.
- The approach for NCAP includes collaborative, multi-scale and cross-sectoral coordination between the relevant central ministries, state governments and local bodies.
- Other features of NCAP include, increasing number of monitoring stations in the country including rural monitoring stations, technology support, emphasis on awareness and capacity building initiatives, setting up of certification agencies for monitoring equipment, source apportionment studies, emphasis on enforcement, specific sectoral interventions etc.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Indian star tortoise.

1. Recently Indian star tortoise has been moved from Appendix II to Appendix I of CITES.
2. Appendix I of CITES lists species that are the most endangered among CITES-listed animals and plants.
3. There is complete prohibition of the species listed on Appendix I of CITES.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

India’s proposal to upgrade the protection of star tortoises (Geochelone elegans), the smooth-coated otter (Lutrogale perspicillata) and small-clawed otters (Anonyx cinereus) in CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species on Wild Fauna and Flora) have been approved.
• These species have been listed under Appendix I of CITES and will now enjoy the highest degree of protection as there will be a complete international ban enforced on their trade.

• **Appendix I** of CITES lists species that are the most endangered among CITES-listed animals and plants. “They are threatened with extinction and CITES prohibits international trade in specimens of these species except when the purpose of the import is not commercial, for instance for scientific research.

III. GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES

(Q) “Web- Wonder Women” Campaign recently seen in news is related to
   a) Recognising the achievements made by women led start-ups.
   b) Acknowledge the efforts of women doctors serving in rural areas.
   c) Making women as brand ambassadors for schemes related to women.
   d) Celebrating women who have impacted society through social media.

Solution: d)
The Campaign has been launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India in association with the NGO Breakthrough and Twitter India.

- Through the campaign, the Ministry aims to recognize the fortitude of Indian women stalwarts from across the globe who have used the power of social media to run positive & niche campaigns to steer a change in society.
- The Campaign is aimed at encouraging, recognizing and acknowledging the efforts of these meritorious Women.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana (AHVY).

1. The scheme which was launched in Union Budget 2019-20 aims to mobilize the artisans into Self Help Groups and training the groups on various aspects of forming and running the community business enterprises for self-sustainability of artisans.
2. It provides training to artisans and expose them to greater market to sell their handicraft products.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?
   a) 1 only
   b) 2 only
   c) Both
   d) None

Solution: b)
The scheme was launched with a view to mobilize the artisans into Self Help Groups and training the groups on various aspects of forming and running the community business enterprises for self-sustainability of artisans.

The objective of this scheme is to:
1. Mobilise and generate awareness of typical handicraft arts for their overall development and progress.
2. Provide training to artisans and expose them to greater market to sell their handicraft products.
3. Provide proper education and market knowledge to artisans so that they learn the market techniques to get better results.
(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).

1. The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 and rules framed under it regulate the receipt and usage of foreign contribution by non-governmental organisations in India.
2. The intent of the Act is to prevent use of foreign contribution for any activity detrimental to the national interest.
3. It is not applicable to NRIs and overseas branches of Indian companies.
4. It is implemented by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2
b) 1, 2, 3

Solution: a)

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 and rules framed under it (the "FCRA" or "Act") regulate the receipt and usage of foreign contribution by non-governmental organisations ("NGOs") in India.

- The intent of the Act is to prevent use of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality for any activity detrimental to the national interest. It has a very wide scope and is applicable to a natural person, body corporate, all other types of Indian entities (whether incorporated or not) as well as NRIs and overseas branches/subsidiaries of Indian companies and other entities formed or registered in India. It is implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

- The Act permits only NGOs having a definite cultural, economic, educational, religious or social programme to accept foreign contribution, that too after such NGOs either obtain a certificate of registration or prior permission under the Act.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs).

1. Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) with a vision to ‘Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators’.
2. At present, only schools managed by Government and local body can set up Atal Tinkering Laboratories.
3. Financial assistance is provided as grant-in-aid for both establishment and operational expenses of Atal Tinkering Laboratories.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2
b) 1, 3

c) 2, 3

d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: b)

With a vision to ‘Cultivate one Million children in India as Neoteric Innovators’, Atal Innovation Mission is establishing Atal Tinkering Laboratories (ATLs) in schools across India.
• **Objective**: The objective of this scheme is to foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds; and inculcate skills such as design mindset, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing etc.

• **Financial Support**: AIM will provide grant-in-aid that includes a one-time establishment cost of Rs. 10 lakh and operational expenses of Rs. 10 lakh for a maximum period of 5 years to each ATL.

• **Eligibility**: Schools (minimum Grade VI – X) managed by Government, local body or private trusts/society can set up ATL.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN).

1. PM KISAN is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from Government of India.
2. Under this programme, vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land upto 2 acres, will be provided direct income support at the rate of Rs. 6,000 per year.
3. Definition of family for the scheme is husband, wife and minor children.
4. All Institutional Land holders are eligible beneficiaries.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2, 3
b) 1, 3

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

**Solution: b)**

**PM KISAN** is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from Government of India

• It has become operational from 1.12.2018.

• Under the scheme an income support of Rs.6000/- per year in three equal instalments will be provided to small and marginal farmer families having combined land holding/ownership of upto 2 hectares.

• Definition of family for the scheme is husband, wife and minor children.

• State Government and UT Administration will identify the farmer families which are eligible for support as per scheme guidelines.

• The fund will be directly transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

• All Institutional Land holders shall not be eligible for benefit under the scheme.

Source: [http://www.pmkisan.gov.in/](http://www.pmkisan.gov.in/)

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding One Nation-One Ration Card scheme.

1. ‘One Nation One Ration Card’ scheme, will allow migrant workers to buy subsidised rice and wheat from any ration shop in the country.
2. For availing the benefits under the scheme, it is not mandatory to link ration cards to Aadhaar.
3. If a beneficiary moved to a State where grains were given for free, that person would be able to access those benefits.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2
b) 1 only

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

‘One Nation One Ration Card’ scheme, which will allow portability of food security benefits, will be available across the country from July 1, 2020. This means poor migrant workers will be able to buy subsidised rice and wheat from any ration shop in the country, so long as their ration cards are linked to Aadhaar.

- While Aadhaar linkage is not necessary to access NFSA benefits in a beneficiary’s local registered ration shop, located closest to her home address, it will be necessary to access the portability scheme.
- Migrants would only be eligible for the subsidies supported by the Centre, which include rice sold at Rs. 3/kg and wheat at Rs. 2/kg. Even if a beneficiary moved to a State where grains were given for free, that person would not be able to access those benefits, as they were funded by the State exchequer.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding SANKALP scheme.

1. SANKALP is an outcome-oriented centrally sponsored programme of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE).
2. It includes Inclusion of marginalised population in skill development.
3. World Bank has provided free grants assistance to the SANKALP scheme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Review meeting of World Bank loan assisted "Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP)" programme was recently held.

- SANKALP is an outcome-oriented centrally sponsored programme of Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) with a special focus on decentralised planning and quality improvement. It focuses on the overall skilling ecosystem covering both Central & State agencies. SANKALP aims to implement the mandate of the National Skill Development Mission (NSDM).
- Under SANKALP four key result areas have been identified viz: (i) Institutional Strengthening (at National, State & District level); (ii) Quality Assurance of skill development programs; (iii) Inclusion of marginalised population in skill development; and (iv) Expanding Skills through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).

Source: https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=192464

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding BS-VI Emission Norms.

1. Bharat Stage norms are the automotive emission norms which the automotive manufacturers have to comply to sell their vehicles in India.
2. Only those vehicles will be sold and registered in India from 1st April 2020 onwards, which comply to these norms.
3. These norms are applicable to all two wheelers, three wheelers, four wheelers, construction equipment vehicles and Armoured and Specialised Vehicles of Armed/ Paramilitary Forces.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Armoured and Specialised Vehicles of Armed/ Paramilitary Forces Exempted from BS-VI Emission Norms that will Come into Force in April 2020. The exemption has been granted because these vehicles operate in remote and inhospitable terrains with most challenging operational and environmental conditions.

- Bharat Stage norms are the automotive emission norms which the automotive manufacturers have to comply to sell their vehicles in India.
- These norms are applicable to all two wheelers, three wheelers, four wheelers and construction equipment vehicles.
- Only those vehicles will be sold and registered in India from 1st April 2020 onwards, which comply to these norms.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Institutions of Eminence scheme.

1. The institutes of eminence scheme under the Union human resource development (HRD) ministry aims to project Indian institutes to global recognition.
2. The selected institutes will enjoy complete academic and administrative autonomy.
3. The selection shall be made through challenge method mode by the Empowered Expert Committee constituted for the purpose.
4. All higher education institutions can apply for the eminence tag.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The institutions of eminence scheme under the Union human resource development (HRD) ministry aims to project Indian institutes to global recognition.

- The selected institutes will enjoy complete academic and administrative autonomy.
- The government will run 10 of these and they will receive special funding.
- The selection shall be made through challenge method mode by the Empowered Expert Committee constituted for the purpose.
- Eligibility: Only higher education institutions currently placed in the top 500 of global rankings or top 50 of the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) are eligible to apply for the eminence tag.
- The private Institutions of Eminence can also come up as greenfield ventures provided the sponsoring organisation submits a convincing perspective plan for 15 years.

(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. UchhatarAvishkar Yojana (UAY) is a pan-IIT and IISc joint collaboration to develop a blueprint for research of immediate relevance to society.
2. IMPRINT India scheme aims to promote innovation of a higher order that directly impacts the needs of the Industry and thereby improves the competitive edge of Indian manufacturing.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

‘IMPRINT India’, is a pan-IIT and IISc joint collaboration to develop a blueprint for research of immediate relevance to society requiring innovation, direct scientific research into identified areas, ensure higher funding support for research into these areas and measure outcomes of the research efforts with reference to the impact on the standard of living in rural/urban areas.

UchhatarAvishkar Yojana (UAY) was announced on October 6, 2015 with a view to promoting innovation of a higher order that directly impacts the needs of the Industry and thereby improves the competitive edge of Indian manufacturing.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding National Population Register (NPR).

1. The objective of the National Population Register is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country.
2. National Population Register is similar to decennial Census, which records biometric and family-tree details of Indian citizens.
3. It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The next round of recording biometric and family-tree details of Indian citizens under the National Population Register (NPR) will be conducted in September 2020.

- The exercise is different from the decennial Census and is not linked to the National Register of Citizens (NRC).
- The objective of the NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country. The database would contain demographic as well as biometric particulars.
- The exercise was conducted earlier in two phases in 2010 and 2015.
- For the purpose of NPR, a usual resident is defined as a person who has resided in a local area for six months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next six months or more.
- It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Common Services Centre (CSC) programme.

1. Common Services Centre (CSC) programme is an initiative of Ministry of Rural Development for delivery of various electronic services to villages in India.
2. They are positioned as change agents, promoting rural entrepreneurship and building rural capacities and livelihoods.
3. CSCs offer web-enabled e-governance services in rural areas.
4. Under the Digital India programme, at least one CSC is envisaged in 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats for delivery of various electronic services to citizens across rural India.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Common Services Centre (CSC) programme is an initiative of the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY), Government of India. CSCs are the access points for delivery of various electronic services to villages in India, thereby contributing to a digitally and financially inclusive society.

- CSCs are more than service delivery points in rural India. They are positioned as change agents, promoting rural entrepreneurship and building rural capacities and livelihoods. They are enablers of community participation and collective action for engendering social change through a bottom-up approach with key focus on the rural citizen.
- Under the Digital India programme, at least one CSC (preferably more than one) is envisaged in 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats for delivery of various electronic services to citizens across rural India.

Source: http://vikaspedia.in/e-governance/resources-for-vles/common-service-centres-programme

(Q) Consider the following statements about National Knowledge Network (NKN).

1. It aims to connect all universities, research institutions, libraries and agricultural institutions across the country.
2. Agencies in the fields of nuclear, space and defence research are also part of NKN.
3. Its goal is to facilitate distance education in engineering, science and medicine.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

In India, NKN with its multi-gigabit capability aims to connect all universities, research institutions, libraries, laboratories, healthcare and agricultural institutions across the country to address such paradigm shift. The leading mission-oriented agencies in the fields of nuclear, space and defence research are also part of NKN. By facilitating the flow of information and knowledge, the network addresses the critical issue of access and creates a new paradigm of collaboration to enrich the research efforts in the country.

Role of NKN:

Establishing a high-speed backbone connectivity which will enable knowledge and information sharing amongst NKN connected institutes

1. Enabling collaborative research, development and innovation amongst NKN connected institutes
2. Facilitating advanced distance education in specialized fields like engineering, science, medicine etc.
3. Facilitating an ultra-high speed e-governance backbone
4. Facilitating connection between different sectoral networks in the field of research.
(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Khadi & Village Industries Commission.

1. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body which seeks to – plan, promote, facilitate, organise and assist in the establishment and development of khadi and village industries in the rural areas.
2. Its objective is to provide employment in rural areas and create self-reliance amongst people and building up a strong rural community spirit.
3. It functions under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament (Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956). In April 1957, it took over the work of former All India Khadi and Village Industries Board.

Functions: It is an apex organization under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, with regard to khadi and village industries within India, which seeks to – “plan, promote, facilitate, organise and assist in the establishment and development of khadi and village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.”

The Commission has three main objectives which guide its functioning. These are:

1. The Social Objective – Providing employment in rural areas.
2. The Economic Objective – Providing salable articles.
3. The Wider Objective – Creating self-reliance amongst people and building up a strong rural community spirit.


(Q) The recently launched scheme SHREYAS is related to.

a) Scale up an ecosystem of entrepreneurship for youngsters.  
b) Portal for effective implementation of the National Child Labour Project (NCLP)  
c) Equipping all teachers across the nation with advanced digital technology.  
d) Providing industry apprenticeship opportunities to the general graduates

Solution: d)

Union HRD Minister launches the Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS) for providing industry apprenticeship opportunities to the general graduates exiting in April 2019 through the National Apprenticeship Promotional Scheme (NAPS).

The program aims to enhance the employability of Indian youth by providing ‘on the job work exposure’ and earning of stipend.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Know India Programme.

1. Know India Programme is a flagship programme of Ministry of External Affairs for engagement with Indian origin youth to enhance their awareness about India and its cultural heritage.
2. Any Indian origin youth between 18-30 years is eligible for participating in KIP.
3. Those who have not visited India before will be given preference.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

Know India Programme is a flagship programme of Ministry of External Affairs for engagement with Indian origin youth (between 18-30 years) to enhance their awareness about India, its cultural heritage, art and to familiarise them with various aspects of contemporary India.

Eligibility: Minimum qualification required for participating in KIP is graduation from a recognized University /Institute or enrolled for graduation and ability to speak in English. The applicant should not have visited India through any previous Programme of Government of India. Those who have not visited India before will be given preference.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Consumer Protection Act, 1986

1. It makes provision for the establishment of consumer councils and other authorities for the settlement of consumers’ disputes.
2. Wherever possible it assures access to goods and services at competitive prices.
3. It protects the consumers against marketing of hazardous goods and services.
4. Seek redressal on account of unscrupulous exploitation of consumers.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The objectives of the Central Consumer Protection Council is to promote and to protect the rights of the consumers such as:-

1. The right to be protected against the marketing of goods and services which are hazardous to life and property.
2. The right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods or services, as the case may be so as to protect the consumer against unfair trade practices;
3. The right to be assured, wherever possible, access to a variety of goods and services at competitive prices;
4. The right to be heard and to be assured that consumer’s interest will receive due consideration at appropriate forums;
5. The right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices or restrictive trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers; and
6. The right to consumer education.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding National Essential Diagnostics List (NEDL).

1. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has finalised the National Essential Diagnostics List (NEDL) that aims to bridge the current regulatory system’s gap that does not cover all the medical devices and in-vitro diagnostic device (IVD).
2. India has become the first country to compile Essential Diagnostics List that would provide guidance to the government for deciding the kind of diagnostic tests that different healthcare facilities in villages and remote areas require.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: d)
India has got its first National Essential Diagnostics List (NEDL) finalised by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

- NEDL aims to bridge the current regulatory system’s gap that does not cover all the medical devices and in-vitro diagnostic device (IVD).
- With this, India has become the first country to compile such a list that would provide guidance to the government for deciding the kind of diagnostic tests that different healthcare facilities in villages and remote areas require.
- NEDL builds upon the Free Diagnostics Service Initiative and other diagnostics initiatives of the Health Ministry to provide an expanded basket of tests at different levels of the public health system.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding e-course on ‘Vulnerability Atlas of India’.

1. The e-course on ‘Vulnerability Atlas of India’ has been launched by NITI Ayog.
2. The objective of the course is to create awareness and understanding about natural hazards and help in identification of regions with high vulnerability such as earthquakes, and landslides.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)
The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** launched an e-course on ‘**Vulnerability Atlas of India**’. The objective of the course is to create awareness and understanding about natural hazards and help in identification of regions with high vulnerability such as earthquakes, and landslides.

- The e-course would be a tool for effective and efficient disaster mitigation and management in the field of architecture, civil engineering, urban and regional planning, housing and infrastructure planning, construction engineering.
- The Ministry also launched “**Angikaar Campaign**”, which aims to converge with schemes/services of various urban missions and other central ministries. The campaign will be rolled out in all PMAY(U) cities.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).

1. The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) is under Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
2. The Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 and rules 1945 have entrusted various responsibilities to central & state regulators for regulation of drugs & cosmetics.
3. The regulation of manufacture, sale and distribution of Drugs is primarily the concern of the Central Authorities.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

The **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)** under **Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**, Government of India is the **National Regulatory Authority** (NRA) of India.

- The **Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940** and rules 1945 have entrusted various responsibilities to central & state regulators for regulation of drugs & cosmetics.
- The regulation of manufacture, sale and distribution of Drugs is primarily the concern of the State authorities while the Central Authorities are responsible for approval of New Drugs, Clinical Trials in the country, laying down the standards for Drugs, control over the quality of imported Drugs, coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organisations and providing expert advice with a view of bringing about the uniformity in the enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

IV. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Lightning.

1. Lightning is a very rapid and massive discharge of electricity in the atmosphere which are generated in giant moisture-bearing clouds that are 10-12 km tall.
2. Lightning always strike tall objects such as trees, towers or buildings.
3. Lightning occurs commonly during thunderstorms.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Lightning is a very rapid — and massive — discharge of electricity in the atmosphere, some of which is directed towards the Earth's surface.

These discharges are generated in giant moisture-bearing clouds that are 10-12 km tall.

There is a greater probability of lightning striking tall objects such as trees, towers or buildings.

Source: https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-how-lightning-strikes-why-it-kills-5848028/

(Q) “Colistin”, recently seen in news is a

a) Cryptocurrency
b) Dragon tree species
c) Antibiotic
d) Herbicide

Solution: c)

Manufacture, sale and distribution of colistin and its formulations for food-producing animals, poultry, aqua farming and animal feed supplements have been prohibited in an order issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

- Colistin is a valuable, last-resort antibiotic that saves human lives in critical care units.
- Indiscriminate use of colistin has led to rise of anti-microbial resistance in the country.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding South Atlantic Anomaly (SAA).

1. SAA is a region above the South Atlantic Ocean where there are a large number of charged particles that can damage sensitive instruments.
2. All space telescopes are shut down when they pass through the SAA.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only  b) 2 only  c) Both  d) None
(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. India has been allotted some area in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the UN Security Council for exploitation of polymetallic nodules (PMN).
2. Polymetallic nodules (PMN) are rocks scattered on the seabed containing iron, manganese, nickel and cobalt.
3. The ‘Deep Ocean Mission (DOM)’ to be led by the Union Earth Sciences Ministry focus on deep-sea mining, ocean climate change advisory services, underwater vehicles and underwater robotics related technologies.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Ministry of Earth Sciences Plans Rs 8000 Crore ‘Deep Ocean Mission’ To Boost India’s Sea Exploration Capabilities.

- The focus of the mission will be on deep-sea mining, ocean climate change advisory services, underwater vehicles and underwater robotics related technologies.
- The ‘Deep Ocean Mission’ plan will enable India to develop capabilities to exploit resources in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB).

India has been allotted 75,000 square kilometres in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by UN International Sea Bed Authority for exploration of poly-metallic nodules. CIOB reserves contain deposits of metals like iron, manganese, nickel and cobalt.

- Polymetallic nodules (also known as manganese nodules) are potato-shaped, largely porous nodules found in abundance carpeting the sea floor of world oceans in deep sea.
- Composition: Besides manganese and iron, they contain nickel, copper, cobalt, lead, molybdenum, cadmium, vanadium, titanium, of which nickel, cobalt and copper are considered to be of economic and strategic importance.


(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. Microplastics are small pieces of plastic, less than 5 mm in length, that occur in the environment as a consequence of plastic pollution.
2. Microplastics are present in cosmetics, synthetic clothing, plastic bags and bottles.
3. Normal Plastic is not biodegradable, whereas Microplastics are biodegradable.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Microplastics**, small pieces of plastic, less than 5 mm (0.2 inch) in length, that occur in the environment as a consequence of plastic pollution. Microplastics are present in a variety of products, from cosmetics to synthetic clothing to plastic bags and bottles. Many of these products readily enter the environment in wastes.

- **Microplastics** are **not biodegradable**. Thus, once in the environment, primary and secondary microplastics accumulate and persist.

Source: [https://www.britannica.com/technology/microplastic](https://www.britannica.com/technology/microplastic)

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Microdot technology.

1. Microdot technology involves spraying the body and parts of the vehicle or any other machine with microscopic dots, which give a unique identification.
2. These microdots can be read physically with a microscope and identified with ultra violet light source.
3. The microdots cannot be removed without damaging the vehicle itself.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

The **Ministry of Road Transport & Highways** has issued a draft notification amending **Central Motor Vehicle Rules**, allowing motor vehicles and their parts, components, assemblies, sub-assemblies to be affixed with permanent and nearly invisible microdots.

- **Microdot technology** involves spraying the body and parts of the vehicle or any other machine with microscopic dots, which give a unique identification.
- These microdots can be read physically with a microscope and identified with ultra violet light source.
- The microdots and adhesive will become permanent fixtures/affixation which cannot be removed without damaging the asset, that is the vehicle itself.
- **Benefits**: Use of this technology will help check theft of vehicles and also use of fake spare parts.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Ethanol.

1. In India, ethanol is produced from sugarcane only.
2. It allows the engine to more completely combust the fuel.
3. Ethanol is considered as non-renewable fuel.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)
Ethanol, an anhydrous ethyl alcohol having chemical formula of C₂H₅OH, can be produced from sugarcane, maize, wheat, etc which are having high starch content. In India, ethanol is mainly produced from sugarcane molasses by fermentation process. Ethanol can be mixed with gasoline to form different blends. As the ethanol molecule contains oxygen, it allows the engine to more completely combust the fuel, resulting in fewer emissions and thereby reducing the occurrence of environmental pollution. Since ethanol is produced from plants that harness the power of the sun, ethanol is also considered as renewable fuel.

Source: http://vikaspedia.in/energy/policy-support/renewable-energy-1/ethanol-blended-petrol-programme

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Iodine.

1. Iodine is a vital macro-nutrient for optimal mental and physical development of human beings.
2. Deficiency of iodine can lead to hypothyroidism, abortion, still births, mental retardation and psychomotor defects.
3. Children born in iodine deficient areas may have low intelligence quotient (IQ).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Iodine is a vital micro-nutrient for optimal mental and physical development of human beings. Deficiency of iodine can result in a range of disabilities and disorders such as goitre, hypothyroidism, cretinism, abortion, still births, mental retardation and psychomotor defects. Children born in iodine deficient areas may have up to 13.5 IQ points less than those born in iodine sufficient areas.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding PUNCH mission.

1. European Space Agency’s PUNCH mission will image regions beyond the Sun’s outer corona.
2. The mission will track the solar wind and also the coronal mass ejections – which are huge masses of plasma that get thrown out of the Sun’s atmosphere.
3. India’s planned satellite Aditya-L1 will also study the Sun’s corona.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

NASA has selected Texas-based Southwest Research Institute to lead its PUNCH mission which will image the Sun. This is a landmark mission that will image regions beyond the Sun’s outer corona. Dipankar Banerjee, solar physicist from Indian Institute of Astrophysics is also a Co-Investigator of the PUNCH mission. PUNCH, which stands for “Polarimeter to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere,” is focused on understanding the transition of particles from the Sun’s outer corona to the solar wind that fills interplanetary space.
India is planning to send up its own satellite Aditya-L1, a mission to study the Sun's corona.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/indian-scientist-to-be-co-i-for-nasas-punch-mission/article28228527.ece

(Q) Consider the following statements about Trans-fats.

1. Trans-fat is a type of unsaturated fat.
2. Trans fats also occur naturally.
3. Trans fats give food a desirable taste and texture.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Trans fat, also called trans-unsaturated fatty acids or trans fatty acids, is a type of unsaturated fat that occurs in small amounts in nature, but became widely produced industrially from vegetable fats starting in the 1950s for use in margarine, snack food, packaged baked goods, and for frying fast food.

- Naturally-occurring trans fats are produced in the gut of some animals and foods made from these animals (e.g., milk and meat products) may contain small quantities of these fats. Artificial trans fats (or trans fatty acids) are created in an industrial process that adds hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils to make them more solid.
- Trans fats are easy to use, inexpensive to produce and last a long time. Trans fats give foods a desirable taste and texture.

Source: https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/fats/trans-fat

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Total Polar Compounds (TPC).

1. TPC is used to measure the quality of cooking oil.
2. The level of TPC increases every time oil is re-heated.
3. According to FSSAI regulations, the maximum permissible limits for Total Polar Compounds (TPC) have been set at 50%, beyond which the cooking oil is unsafe for consumption.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

What are Total Polar Compounds (TPC)?

- In many countries, TPC is used to measure the quality of oil. The level of TPC increases every time oil is re-heated. Some of the studies show that TPC accumulation in oil without food is slower than that in oil frying with food.
• Higher level of TPC in cooking oil leads to health issues like hypertension, atherosclerosis, Alzheimer's disease and liver disease. One of the studies also noticed high levels of glucose, creatinine and cholesterol with declined levels of protein and albumin in cooking oil.

• According to FSSAI regulations, the maximum permissible limits for Total Polar Compounds (TPC) have been set at 25%, beyond which the cooking oil is unsafe for consumption.

(Q) Researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM) developed “Shakti” is related to

a) Climate vulnerability maps developed for Himalayan states
b) Utilising black carbon soot for treating industrial waste
c) Microprocessor
d) Magnetic Graphene

Solution: c)

India’s first and indigenous microprocessor “Shakti” developed by Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM).


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding C-Sat-Fi technology.

1. C-Sat-Fi technology is based on satellite communication to extend connectivity to the unserved areas including the remote islands and difficult terrains.
2. C-Sat-Fi can work on any WiFi enabled phone.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

C-Sat-Fi (C-DOT Satellite WiFi) is based on the optimal utilization of wireless and satellite communication to extend connectivity to the unserved areas including the remote islands and difficult terrains. Besides offering the ease of deployment, the solution is ideally suited to addressing disasters and emergencies when no other means of communication are available. This cost-effective solution does not require the expensive Satellite Phones and can work on any WiFi enabled phone.

Source: https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=192821

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Biometric Seafarer Identity Document (BSID).

1. India became the first country in the world to issue Biometric Seafarer Identity Document (BSID), capturing the bio-metric data of seafarers.
2. Biometric Seafarer Identity Document (BSID) is based on finger and iris-based bio-metric data.
3. BSID will give a foolproof identification to Indian seafarers which will facilitate their movement and help in identifying them from any location in the world.

www.insightsactivelearn.com
Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: c)**

India launches world’s first facial **biometric-based ID** for seafarers.

- The new document will give a foolproof identification to Indian seafarers which will facilitate their movement and help in identifying them from any location in the world.
- The BSID is a marked improvement over the **two finger or iris based bio-metric data**, with modern security features.
- It will make the identification of the SID holder more reliable and efficient, while protecting their dignity and privacy.

The new card is in confirmation of the **Convention No. 185** of the **International Labour Organisation** on BSID. India ratified the Convention in October 2015.

V. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

(Q) Consider the following statements about South-East Asia Regulatory Network (SEARN).

1. It promotes timely access to affordable medical products of assured quality in countries of the South-East Asia region and beyond.
2. SEARN includes all ASEAN countries.
3. Information Sharing Platform Gateway for South-East Asia Regulatory Network (SEARN) is developed by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Information Sharing Platform Gateway for South-East Asia Regulatory Network (SEARN) developed by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing has been launched. It will promote regulatory and health collaboration among the countries of the South-East Asia Region.

- The South East Asia Research Network (SEARN), based at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, is a platform to facilitate research collaboration.
- It provides a forum to support the communication and dissemination of research findings, highlight research areas and a network connecting people and collaborators outside with an interest in South East Asia.

Vision: Healthy populations with timely access to affordable medical products of assured quality, safety and efficacy in all countries of the South-East Asia region and beyond.

- SEARN includes all ASEAN countries.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

1. UNIDO is the specialized agency of the United Nations that promotes industrial development for poverty reduction.
2. UNIDO is also a member of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
3. UNIDO's programmatic focus is on Safeguarding the environment.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  
b) 1, 3  
c) 2, 3  
d) 1, 2, 3
UNIDO is the specialized agency of the United Nations that promotes industrial development for poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability.

- It is also a member of UNDP.
- Members regularly discuss and decide UNIDO’s guiding principles and policies in the sessions of the Policymaking Organs.
- The mission of UNIDO, as described in the Lima Declaration adopted at the fifteenth session of the UNIDO General Conference in 2013, is to promote and accelerate inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) in Member States.
- UNIDO’s mandate is fully recognized in SDG-9, which calls to “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”.

UNIDO’s programmatic focus is structured in four strategic priorities:

1. Creating shared prosperity.
2. Advancing economic competitiveness.
3. Safeguarding the environment.
4. Strengthening knowledge and institutions.

Source: [https://www.unido.org/who-we-are/unido-brief](https://www.unido.org/who-we-are/unido-brief)

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).

1. UNRWA is the only UN agency dedicated to helping refugees from a specific region or conflict.
2. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN Member States.
3. India’s contribution to UNRWA has been decreasing from the past 3 years.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b) India has contributed USD 5 million in 2019 to UN Palestine refugee agency. The contribution was provided in support of UNRWA's core programmes and services, including education, health care, and relief and social services.

- India has increased its annual financial contribution fourfold to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) core budget, from USD 1.25 million in 2016 to USD 5 million in 2018.
- UNRWA is a relief and human development agency that was established in 8 December 1949.
- Following the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict, UNRWA was established by United Nations General Assembly to carry out direct relief and works programmes for Palestine refugees. The Agency began operations on 1 May 1950.
- UNRWA is the only UN agency dedicated to helping refugees from a specific region or conflict and is separate from UNHCR.
• **Funding**: UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN Member States. UNRWA also receives some funding from the Regular Budget of the United Nations, which is used mostly for international staffing costs.

• Aid is provided in five areas of operation: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem; aid for Palestinian refugees outside these five areas is provided by UNHCR.

Source: [https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are](https://www.unrwa.org/who-we-are)

(Q) **Windrush Scheme**, recently seen in news is related to which country

a) Australia  

b) Japan  

c) Germany  

d) United Kingdom

**Solution: d)**

UK Home Secretary had issued a personal apology for the Windrush scandal, involving migrants being wrongly denied their British citizenship rights.

The Windrush Scheme enables Commonwealth citizens, their children, and some other long term residents of the UK to obtain documentation confirming their status free of charge.

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

1. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established on the initiative of the G20.

2. FATF works to generate the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

3. A country is blacklisted if it is non-cooperative in the global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

4. 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.

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 **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** is an inter-governmental body established in **1989** on the initiative of the **G7**. 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.

• The FATF monitors the progress of its members in implementing necessary measures, reviews money laundering and terrorist financing techniques and counter-measures, and promotes the adoption and implementation of appropriate measures globally.

• FATF maintains two different lists of countries: those that have deficiencies in their AML/CTF regimes, but they commit to an action plan to address these loopholes, and those that do not end up doing enough. The former is commonly known as grey list and latter as blacklist.

• Once a country is blacklisted, FATF calls on other countries to apply enhanced due diligence and counter measures, increasing the cost of doing business with the country and in some cases severing it altogether.

Source: https://www.fatf-gafi.org/about/

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding UN Security Council.

1. Each year, the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members out of a total of 10, for a two-year term.
2. India has been a non-permanent member of the Security Council seven times previously with the most recent being the 2011–12 term.
3. India’s candidature for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the 2021-22 term has been supported by Pakistan and China.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

India’s candidature for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the 2021-22 term has been endorsed unanimously by the Asia Pacific group, which comprises 55 countries, including Pakistan.


• Each year, the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members out of a total of 10, for a two-year term.

Distribution of seats: These 10 seats are distributed among the regions thus: five for African and Asian countries; one for Eastern European countries; two for Latin American and Caribbean countries; two for Western European and other countries.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding G20 Forum and G20 Summit.

1. 2019 G20 Summit was the first G20 summit to be hosted by Japan.
2. Pakistan is not a member of G20 Forum.
3. G20 summits focus only on macroeconomy and trade.
4. India has hosted G20 summits twice since its inception.
Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

a) 1, 2, 4

b) 3, 4

c) 2, 3, 4

d) 1, 3, 4

Solution: b)

The 2019 G20 Osaka summit was the fourteenth meeting of the G20, a forum of 19 countries and the EU that together represent most of the world economy. It was the first G20 summit to be hosted by Japan.

- The 19 countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Republic of South Africa, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America.
- The recent G20 summits have focused not only on macroeconomy and trade, but also on a wide range of global issues which have an immense impact on the global economy, such as development, climate change and energy, health, counter-terrorism, as well as migration and refugees.

India was the host country in 2002. The 2020 Summit will be in Saudi Arabia and 2022 in India.

(Q) Consider the following statements about International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

1. It is a United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies.
2. India was recently elected as a Member of ITU Council.
3. ITU allocates global radio spectrum and satellite orbits.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2

b) 2, 3

c) 1, 3

d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: d)

ITU is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies – ICTs.

- Founded in 1865 to facilitate international connectivity in communications networks, they allocate global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, develop the technical standards that ensure networks and technologies seamlessly interconnect, and strive to improve access to ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.
- ITU is committed to connecting all the world’s people – wherever they live and whatever their means.
- ITU embodies principles of public-private partnership, with its current membership of 193 countries and over 800 private-sector entities and academic institutions.
- ITU membership represents a cross-section of the global ICT sector, from the world’s largest vendors, manufacturers and telecom operators to small, innovative players and SMEs working with new and emerging technologies, along with leading R&D institutions and academia.
- Founded on the principle of international cooperation between governments (Member States) and the private sector (Sector Members, Associates and Academia), ITU is the premier global forum through which parties work towards consensus on a wide range of issues affecting the future direction of the ICT industry.

India has been elected as a Member of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Council for another 4-year term (2019-2022).
By securing 165 votes, India ranked third among the 13 countries elected to the Council from the Asia-Australasia region, and eighth among the 48 countries elected to the Council globally.

Source: http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=184619

(Q) Consider the following regarding Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB).

1. The Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) is the largest association of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) worldwide which aimsto foster efficiency and effectiveness in conducting free, fair, transparent and participative elections worldwide.
2. In 2019, India became the Executive Board Member of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB).
3. India will be the A-WEB’s Chair for the 2019-21 term.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Election Commission is hosting the 4th General Assembly of Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) at Bengaluru.

- India will take over as A-WEB’s Chair for the 2019-21 term.

Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) is the largest association of Election Management Bodies (EMBs) worldwide.

✓ Established on October 14, 2013 in Song-do, South Korea.
✓ Permanent secretariat is located at Seoul.
✓ Aims to foster efficiency and effectiveness in conducting free, fair, transparent and participative elections worldwide. 

VI. POLITY

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Foreigners Tribunals.

1. Only the Centre can set up Foreigners tribunals to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not.
2. The amended Foreigners (Tribunal) Order, 2019 empowers individuals to approach the Tribunals to decide if they are foreigners or not.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

The MHA has amended the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964.

- It has empowered district magistrates in all States and Union Territories to set up tribunals to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not.
- The amended Foreigners (Tribunal) Order, 2019 also empowers individuals to approach the Tribunals.
- So far, the powers to constitute tribunals were vested only with the Centre. The 1964 order on Constitution of Tribunals said: "The Central Government may by order, refer the question as to whether a person is not a foreigner within meaning of the Foreigners Act, 1946 (31 of 1946) to a Tribunal to be constituted for the purpose, for its opinion."

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/all-states-can-now-constitute-foreigners-tribunals/article27706366.ece

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Renaming of states in India.

1. The procedure of renaming of the state can be initiated by either the Parliament or the State Legislator.
2. Article 3 lays down that a bill to alter the name of any state can be introduced in the Parliament, only with the prior recommendation of the President.
3. After recommending the bill to alter the name of any state to the Parliament, the President has to refer the same to the state legislature concerned for expressing its views within a specified period.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The procedure of renaming of the state can be initiated by either the Parliament or the State Legislator and the procedure is as follows:
1. The renaming of a state requires Parliamentary approval under Article 3 and 4 of the Constitution.
2. A bill for renaming a state may be introduced in the Parliament on the recommendation of the President.
3. Before the introduction of the bill, the President shall send the bill to the respective state assembly for expressing their views within a stipulated time. The views of the state assembly are not binding, neither on the President nor on the Parliament.
4. On the expiry of the period, the bill will be sent to the Parliament for deliberation. The bill in order to take the force of a law must be passed by a simple majority.
5. The bill is sent for approval to the President. After the approval of the said bill, the bill becomes a law and the name of the state stands modified.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).

1. 75 tribal groups have been categorized by Ministry of Tribal Affairs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).
2. Priority is assigned to PVTGs under the schemes of Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Scheme (TSS) and Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations working for the welfare of Schedule Tribes.
3. Among the listed PVTG’s the highest number are found in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
4. They are not entitled to the habitat rights under Forest Rights Act.

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

a) 3, 4  

b) 1, 2, 3  

c) 2, 3, 4  

d) 1, 3, 4

**Solution: d)**

The Chhattisgarh government is processing habitat rights for **Abujh Marias**, a **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)**. Since Abujh Marias is a PVTG community, they are entitled to the habitat rights under FRA.

- PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups.
- **75** tribal groups have been categorized by **Ministry of Home Affairs** as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). PVTGs reside in **18 States** and UT of A&N Islands. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs implements the Scheme of “Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)” exclusively for them.
- Under the scheme, Conservation-cum-Development (CCD)/Annual Plans are to be prepared by each State/UT for their PVTGs based on their need assessment, which are then appraised and approved by the Project Appraisal Committee of the Ministry.
- Priority is also assigned to PVTGs under the schemes of Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Scheme (TSS), Grants under Article 275(1) of the Constitution, Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations working for the welfare of Schedule Tribes and Strengthening of Education among ST Girls in Low Literacy Districts.

**Source:** [http://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/scheduled-tribes-welfare/primitive-vulnerable-tribal-groups](http://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/scheduled-tribes-welfare/primitive-vulnerable-tribal-groups)
Consider the following statements regarding appointment of judges to the Supreme Court.

1. The judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the Collegium.
2. A distinguished jurist is eligible to become a judge of the Supreme Court with final approval of the President.
3. To become a judge of the Supreme court, the person should not exceed 65 years of age.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Who appoints judges to the SC?

- In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (2) of Article 124 of the Constitution of India, the appointments are made by the President of India.
- The names are recommended by the Collegium.

Eligibility to become a Supreme Court judge:

1. The norms relating to the eligibility has been envisaged in the Article 124 of the Indian Constitution.
2. To become a judge of the Supreme court, an individual should be an Indian citizen.
3. In terms of age, a person should not exceed 65 years of age.
4. The person should serve as a judge of one high court or more (continuously), for at least five years or the person should be an advocate in the High court for at least 10 years or a distinguished jurist.

Is the collegium’s recommendation final and binding?

- The collegium sends its final recommendation to the President of India for approval. The President can either accept it or reject it. In the case it is rejected, the recommendation comes back to the collegium. If the collegium reiterates its recommendation to the President, then he/she is bound by that recommendation.

Consider the following statements regarding Bharat Ratna.

1. It is awarded in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour.
2. Bharat Ratna is awarded to Indian citizens only.
3. In terms of Article 18 (1) of the Constitution, the award cannot be used as a prefix or suffix to the recipient’s name and he/she may not use the expression in their biodata/letterhead/visiting card.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: d)
Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award of the Republic of India. The provision of Bharat Ratna was introduced in 1954.

Eligibility: Any person without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex is eligible for these awards.

- There is no written provision that Bharat Ratna should be awarded to Indian citizens only.
- It is awarded in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour.
- The award was originally limited to achievements in the arts, literature, science and public services but the government expanded the criteria to include “any field of human endeavour” in December 2011.

In terms of Article 18 (1) of the Constitution, the award cannot be used as a prefix or suffix to the recipient’s name. However, should an award winner consider it necessary, he/she may use the expression in their biodata/letterhead/visiting card etc. to indicate that he/she is a recipient of the award.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding legislative council of a state.

1. Parliament may by law create or abolish the legislative council in a state if the Legislative Assembly of that state passes a resolution to that effect by a simple majority.
2. As per the Indian Constitution, the total number of members in the legislative council of a state shall not exceed one sixth of the total number of the members in the legislative Assembly of that state.
3. Members of municipalities do not take part in electing the members of legislative council.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: d)

Under Article 169 of the constitution, Parliament may by law create or abolish the second chamber in a state if the Legislative Assembly of that state passes a resolution to that effect by a special majority.

As per article 171 clause (1) of the Indian Constitution, the total number of members in the legislative council of a state shall not exceed one third of the total number of the members in the legislative Assembly of that state and the total number of members in the legislative council of a state shall in no case be less than 40.

How are members of the Council elected?

- 1/3rd of members are elected by members of the Assembly.
- 1/3rd by electorates consisting of members of municipalities, district boards and other local authorities in the state.
- 1/12th by an electorate consisting of teachers.
- 1/12th by registered graduates.
- The remaining members are nominated by the Governor from among those who have distinguished themselves in literature, science, art, the cooperative movement, and social service.

Legislative Councils are permanent Houses, and like Rajya Sabha, one-third of their members retire every two years.
Consider the following statements regarding Delimitation of Constituencies.

1. In the delimitation process, the number of seats allocated to different states in Lok Sabha and the total number seats in a Legislative Assembly remains the same.
2. The Delimitation Commission in India is a high-power body whose orders have the force of law and cannot be called in question before any court.
3. The first delimitation exercise in 1950-51 was carried out by the President with the help of the Election Commission.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: a)

Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of *Lok Sabha and state Assembly seats* to represent changes in population.

- In this process, the number of seats allocated to different states in Lok Sabha and the total number seats in a Legislative Assembly may also change.
- The main objective of delimitation is to provide equal representation to equal segments of a population.
- It also aims at a fair division of geographical areas so that one political party doesn’t have an advantage over others in an election.

Delimitation is carried out by an independent Delimitation Commission.

1. The Constitution mandates that its orders are final and cannot be questioned before any court as it would hold up an election indefinitely.
2. Under Article 82, the Parliament enacts a Delimitation Act after every Census.
3. Once the Act is in force, the Union government sets up a Delimitation Commission.

The first delimitation exercise in 1950-51 was carried out by the President (with the help of the Election Commission), as the Constitution at that time was silent on who should undertake the division of states into Lok Sabha seats.

This delimitation was temporary as the Constitution mandated redrawing of boundaries after every Census. Hence, another delimitation was due after the 1951 Census. Subsequently, the Delimitation Commission Act was enacted in 1952.


Source: [https://eci.gov.in/delimitation-website/delimitation/](https://eci.gov.in/delimitation-website/delimitation/)
VII. HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding GI tag.

1. GI is an indication used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
2. Once the GI protection is granted, no other producer can misuse the name to market similar products.
3. Tawlhlohpuan, a medium to heavy, compactly woven, good quality fabric from Tamil Nadu is recently bestowed with the GI tag.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

GI is an indication used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. Such a name conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness which is essentially attributable to its origin in that defined geographical locality.

Once the GI protection is granted, no other producer can misuse the name to market similar products.

Tawlhlohpuan, a medium to heavy, compactly woven, good quality fabric from Mizoram is known for warp yarns, warping, weaving and intricate designs that are made by hand. Tawlhloh, in Mizo language, means 'to stand firm or not to move backward'. Tawlhlohpuan, which holds high significance in the Mizo society, is produced throughout the state of Mizoram. Aizawl and Thenzawl town are the main centre of production.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Quit India Movement.

1. The Quit India movement was started by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942.
2. The Congress was declared an unlawful association.
3. The entire movement was violent with raids and setting fire at post offices, government buildings and railway stations.

Which of the above statement was incorrect?

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

Solution: c)

It was in 1942 when the world was going through the havoc caused by World War II. India too was facing the heat and after the Cripps Mission had failed, and on 8 August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi made a Do or Die call through the Quit India movement. Several national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Abdul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were arrested.
• The Congress was declared an unlawful association, leaders were arrested and its offices all over the country were raided and their funds were frozen.

• The first half of the movement was peaceful with demonstrations and processions. The peaceful protest was carried till Mahatma Gandhi’s release.

• The second half of the movement was violent with raids and setting fire at post offices, government buildings and railway stations. Lord Linlithgow adopted the policy of violence.

(Q) Consider the following events.

1. Munda Rebellion
2. Bodo Movement
3. Santhal rebellion
4. Kuki Uprising

Arrange the above in the chronological order and select the correct answer codes:

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

Solution: d)

The Santhal rebellion (June 30, 1855 to January 3, 1856): Also known as the Santhal Hool, it was a native rebellion in eastern India against both the British colonial authority and zamindari system by the Santhal people.

The Munda Rebellion: Birsa Munda led the movement in the region south of Ranchi in 1899-1900, seeking the establishment of Munda Raj and independence after the system of khuntkattidar was corroded by the jagirdars and thikadars who came as moneylenders and as traders.

1917-1919 Kuki Uprising in Manipur against British colonialism under the leadership of their chieftains called haosa.

The Bodo Movement: The official movement of the Bodos for an independent state of Bodoland started under the leadership of Upendranath Brahma of All Bodo Students’ Union (ABSU) on March 2, 1987.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Vikram Sarabhai.

1. Union Government recently announced “Vikram Sarabhai Journalism Award in Space Science, Technology and Research” to reward journalists who have actively contributed towards the field of space science, applications, and research.
2. Vikram Sarabhai is known as the father of India’s missile programme.
3. Vikram Sarabhai was responsible for bringing cable television to India.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: a)
As part of centenary year celebrations of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, father of Indian space programme, ISRO has announced its “Vikram Sarabhai Journalism Award in Space Science, Technology and Research”.

- The award recognizes and rewards journalists who have actively contributed towards the field of space science, applications, and research.
- Vikram Sarabhai set up India’s first rocket launch site in **Thumba**, a small village near the Thiruvananthapuram airport in Kerala.
- Vikram Sarabhai was also responsible for bringing cable television to India. His constant contact with NASA paved a way for the establishment of Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE) in 1975.
- Sarabhai was the mastermind behind building India’s first satellite, Aryabhata.
- He was one of the founding members of the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA).

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding ‘Ek Bharat-Vijayee Bharat’ programme.

1. ‘Ek Bharat-Vijayee Bharat’ is a major contact programme to commemorate 50th year of Vivekanand rock memorial.
2. The programme will also focus on making people aware of the inspiring story of Vivekanand Rock Memorial.
3. Vivekanand rock memorial has been an iconic landmark at the Tri-junction of Indian ocean, Bay of Bengal and Arabian sea in Kanyakumari.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

**Vivekanand rock memorial** has been an iconic landmark at the **Tri-junction of Indian ocean**, Bay of Bengal and Arabian sea in Kanyakumari.

- In order to commemorate **50th year of Vivekanand rock memorial**, a major contact programme, “EK BHARAT-VIJAYEE BHARAT” has been planned from 2nd September across the country.
- The programme will also focus on making people aware of the inspiring story of Vivekanand Rock Memorial and the activities of Vivekanand Kendra.

VIII. STATES

(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. Tirur betel vine from Kerala having many medicinal, industrial and cultural usages has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
2. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) promotes GI products and does not market it.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: a)

Tirur betel vine from Kerala, which is mainly cultivated in Tirur, Tanur, Tirurangadi, Kuttippuram, Malappuram and Vengara block panchayaths of Malappuram District, is valued both for its mild stimulant action and medicinal properties.

- “Though it is commonly used for making pan masala for chewing, it has many medicinal, industrial and cultural usages and is considered as a remedy for bad breath and digestive disorders.

GI products can benefit the rural economy in remote areas, by supplementing the incomes of artisans, farmers, weavers and craftsmen and the DPIIT has been taking initiatives to promote and market GI products.

IX. DEFENCE & SECURITY

(Q) While Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Consider the following statements regarding Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).

1. CDS will act as the military advisor to the Prime Minister on nuclear issues.
2. CDS cannot engage in procurements, training and logistics of the three services, as it is the duty of Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS).
3. The proposal for a CDS was first made by the K. Subrahmanyam committee appointed after the Kargil conflict of 1999 to recommend higher military reforms.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) who will be above the three Service Chiefs.

- The CDS is meant to be a single-point military advisor to the government, and to coordinate long-term planning, procurements, training and logistics of the three services.
- The CDS, being above the three Service Chiefs, is expected to play this role by optimising procurement, avoiding duplication among the services and streamlining the process. India being a nuclear weapons state, the CDS will also act as the military advisor to the Prime Minister on nuclear issues.

The proposal for a CDS has been there for two decades. It was first made by the K. Subrahmanyam committee appointed after the Kargil conflict of 1999 to recommend higher military reforms. However, lack of consensus and apprehensions among services meant it never moved forward.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/all-you-need-to-know-about-chief-of-defence-staff/article29100176.ece

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding recently amended Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

1. It empowers the Government to designate organisations as terrorist organisations and not individuals as terrorists.
2. It empowers the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to seize properties.
3. This was the first amendment since Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967 came into force.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

The Ministry of Home Affairs on Wednesday declared four individuals as terrorists under the recently amended Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. A look at its provisions:

- It empowers the government to designate individuals as terrorists. Previously, only an organisation could be designated as one.
- It empowers the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to seize properties, which previously required permission from the Director General of Police.
- Also, it allows NIA officers, of the rank of Inspector or above, to investigate cases. Before, only Deputy Superintendent or Assistant Commissioner of Police or above, could do so.

- Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar, Hafiz Saeed of the Lashkar-e-Talba, his deputy Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi and underworld don Dawood Ibrahim have been designated as terrorists.

Under Masood Azhar’s leadership, JeM carried out an attack on the Pathankot air base.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Territorial Army.

1. It is an organization where volunteers apply for a short period of training every year, so as to be ready to tackle any emergent situation.
2. Territorial Army is not part of a Regular Army and its present role is to assist civil administration in dealing with natural calamities and maintenance of essential services.
3. Territorial Army comes under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: c)

India’s first Governor General Shri C Rajagopalachari formally inaugurated the Indian Territorial Army on October 9 in 1949.

- It is an organization where volunteers apply for a short period of training every year, so as to be ready to tackle any emergent situation or to serve for the Defence of India.
- The Territorial Army, also known as the ‘Terriers’, is considered the second line of national defence after the regular Army.
- The Territorial Army is part of a Regular Army and its present role is to relieve the Regular Army from static duties and assist civil administration in dealing with natural calamities and maintenance
of essential services in situations where life of the communities is affected or the security of the
country is threatened and to provide units for Regulars Army as and when required.

- Territorial Army comes under the Defence Ministry.

(Q) Mission Reach Out, recently seen in news is associated with which state?
   a) Jammu and Kashmir
   b) Assam
   c) Kerala
   d) Karnataka

Solution: a)
The Army has launched "Mission Reach Out" in Jammu to ensure basic necessities and essential services are available in the region post the abrogation of the provisions of Article 370 and reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir.

(Q) Consider the following pairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Operation Thirst</td>
<td>Curb the menace of selling unauthorised packaged drinking water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Operation Sunrise</td>
<td>Assure the safety and security of the Indian vessels transiting through Persian Gulf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Operation Sankalp</td>
<td>India-Myanmar target insurgent groups camp in North East.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the above are correctly matched?
   a) 1, 2
   b) 1 only
   c) 1, 3
   d) 2, 3

Solution: b)
Operation Thirst – it is an all-India drive launched by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) to curb menace of selling unauthorised packaged drinking water in railway stations.

Operation Sankalp – Indian Navy launched Operation Sankalp in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman to reassure Indian flagged vessels transiting through the area following the recent maritime incidents in the region.

Operation Sunrise – India-Myanmar target insurgent groups camp in North East. The strategy is aimed at hitting militant groups that are impacting both India and Myanmar.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding “no first use nuclear doctrine”.

1. It refers to a pledge or a policy by a nuclear power not to use nuclear weapons as a means of warfare unless first attacked by an adversary using nuclear weapons.
2. Now the concept is also applied to chemical and biological warfare.
3. India became the first nation to propose and pledge no first use nuclear policy when it conducted nuclear tests under Pokhran-II in 1998.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: c)

No first use nuclear doctrine refers to a pledge or a policy by a nuclear power not to use nuclear weapons as a means of warfare unless first attacked by an adversary using nuclear weapons. Earlier, the concept had also been applied to chemical and biological warfare.

- China became the first nation to propose and pledge NFU policy when it first gained nuclear capabilities in 1964, stating “not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances”.
- India first adopted a “No first use” policy after its second nuclear tests, Pokhran-II, in 1998.
X. REPORTS & INDICES

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Rooftop Solar.

1. Government has set a target for installation of Rooftop Solar projects (RTS) of 40,000 MegaWatt (MW) by 2022.
2. State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index (SARAL) has been designed by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) to encourage each State to assess the initiatives taken so far, and what it can do to improve its solar rooftop ecosystem.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Karnataka has emerged as the best state for setting up a roof top solar project according to the State Rooftop Solar Attractiveness Index–SARAL released by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. Telangana, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh come next in the rankings but all four have been graded A++.

- This rating has been designed collaboratively by MNRE, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and Ernst & Young (EY).
- Government has set a target for installation of Rooftop Solar projects (RTS) of 40,000 MegaWatt (MW) by 2022 in the country including installation of RTS on rooftop of houses.


(Q) The report titled ‘Skin and Bones Unresolved: An Analysis of Tiger Seizures from 2000-2018’ was recently released by

a) TRAFFIC  
b) CITES  
c) National Tiger Conservation Authority  
d) Global Tiger Forum

Solution: a)

India, with the world’s largest wild tiger population, topped in the trafficking of tigers and tiger body parts over 19 years since 2000, a new TRAFFIC analysis from Geneva has revealed.

The report titled ‘Skin and Bones Unresolved: An Analysis of Tiger Seizures from 2000-2018’ was the fourth in a series on tiger trade by TRAFFIC, a wildlife trade monitoring network headquartered in the United Kingdom.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Composite Water Management Index (CWMI 2.0).

1. The report on Composite Water Management Index (CWMI 2.0) has been released by Jal Shakti Ministry.
2. The CWMI is an important tool to assess and improve the performance of States/Union Territories in efficient management of water resources.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

To supplement the efforts of Jal Shakti Ministry, NITI Aayog has prepared the second Round of Composite Water Management Index (CWMI 2.0).

- NITI Aayog first launched and conceptualized the Composite Water Management Index in 2018 as a tool to instill the sense of cooperative and competitive federalism among the states.
- The CWMI is an important tool to assess and improve the performance of States/Union Territories in efficient management of water resources. This has been done through a first of its kind water data collection exercise in partnership with Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Rural Development and all the States/Union Territories. The index would provide useful information for the States and also for the concerned Central Ministries/Departments enabling them to formulate and implement suitable strategies for better management of water resources.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Tiger Estimation Report 2018.

1. Highest number of tigers are found in Karnataka.
2. All states witnessed increase in their tiger numbers in last five years.
3. The wild tiger population in India as per tiger census has been increasing since 2006.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Solution: c)

On the eve of Global Tiger Day, a census report of tigers in India- ‘The Tiger Estimation Report 2018’- has been released.

Key findings:

1. 2967 tigers are present in India.
2. Highest number of tigers have found in Madhya Pradesh (526), after that Karnataka has 524 and Uttarakhand is accommodating 442 tigers.
3. In five years, the number of protected areas increased from 692 to over 860, community reserves from 43 to over 100.
4. While the 2014 census pegged the total number of striped big cats in the country at 2,226, the 2010 census put the figure at 1,706 and the 2006 version at 1,411, indicating that tiger numbers have been on the up.

5. While Pench Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest number of tigers, Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu registered the “maximum improvement” since 2014.

6. Chhattisgarh and Mizoram saw a decline in their tiger numbers while tiger numbers in Odisha remained constant. All other states witnessed a positive trend.

(Q) Time Release Study, sometimes seen in news is related to
a) Tracking the flow of funds from the Government till it reaches the Beneficiary
b) Faster transmission of monetary policy
c) Measure the time required for movement of cargo
d) None of the above

Solution: c)

The Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, will conduct 1st National Time Release Study to enable faster movement of cargo across borders to benefit traders.

The World Customs Organization (WCO) Time Release Study is a strategic and internationally recognized tool to measure the actual time required for the release and/or clearance of goods, from the time of arrival until the physical release of cargo.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Report.

1. It is referred to as UN Environment’s flagship environmental assessment, released annually.
2. It provides an integrated analysis of social, economic and environmental trends that have shaped the environment.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?
a) 1 only
b) 2 only
c) Both
d) None

Solution: b)

Global Environment Outlook report has been released. The report is the sixth and is the UN’s most comprehensive report on the state of the global environment since the fifth edition in 2012.

1. The GEO is often referred to as UN Environment’s flagship environmental assessment.
2. The first publication was in 1997 and was originally requested by Member States.

GEO global assessments provide an integrated analysis (e.g. social, economic, environmental) of major trends that have shaped the environment. These reports provide world leaders with policy options to take immediate action to address environmental issues by turning environmental discussions into practice.

Source: https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/global-environment-outlook
"Global Assessment of Forest Biodiversity" report has been released by
a) International Union for Conservation of Nature
b) UN Environment
c) World Wide Fund for Nature
d) Both b and c

Solution: c)

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has released the first-ever global assessment of forest biodiversity.

Key findings:
1. There has been a 53% decline in the number of forest wildlife populations since 1970.
2. Of the 455 monitored populations of forest specialists, more than half declined at an annual rate of 1.7 per cent, on average between 1970 and 2014.
3. While the decline was consistent in these years among mammals, reptiles and amphibians (particularly from the tropical forests), it was less among birds (especially from temperate forests).

Consider the following statements regarding Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).
1. Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) is the World Bank standard to guide member countries in the dissemination of national statistics to the public.
2. According to “Annual Observance Report of the Special Data Dissemination Standard for 2018”, India is in the top position among Asian countries to comply with multiple requirements prescribed in the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?
a) 1 only 
b) 2 only 
c) Both 
d) None

Solution: d)

According to the IMF’s “Annual Observance Report of the Special Data Dissemination Standard for 2018”, India failed to comply with multiple requirements prescribed in the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).

Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) is an International Monetary Fund standard to guide member countries in the dissemination of national statistics to the public.

- It was established in April 1996.
- SDDS subscription indicates that a country meets the test of “good statistical citizenship.”
- Countries that subscribe to the SDDS agree to follow good practices in four areas: the coverage, periodicity, and timeliness of data; public access to those data; data integrity; and data quality.
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XI. MAPS/ PLACES

(Q) Okjokull glacier, recently seen in news is located in
a) Canada
b) Greenland
c) Antarctica
d) Iceland

Solution: d)
The **Okjokull glacier** became the **first Icelandic glacier lost due to climate change**.

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Kosi-Mechi Interlinking project.
1. Kosi-Mechi Interlinking project is the third major river interlinking project in the country to be approved by Central Government.
2. Kosi is an international river originating from Tibet and flows through plains of North Bihar.
3. Mechi river is a tributary of river Mahanadi.
Which of the above statements is/are **incorrect**?
a) 1, 2  
b) 1 only  
c) 1, 3  
d) 2, 3

Solution: c)
Union Government has approved Rs 4,900 crore **Kosi-Mechi Interlinking project** for interlinking of Kosi and Mechi rivers of **Bihar**. This is the second major river interlinking project in the country to be approved by Central Government after the Ken-Betwa project in Madhya Pradesh.

- The river Kosi is an international river originating from Tibet and flowing through Nepal in Himalayan Mountains and the lower portion through plains of North Bihar.
- River Mechi is a tributary of river **Mahananda**.

(Q) Consider the following statements.
1. It is located on the north bank of the Brahmaputra River.
2. It is the only stronghold of rhinoceros on the north bank of the Brahmaputra river.
3. It is also known as ‘Mini Kaziranga National Park’.
The above statements refer to.
a) Manas National Park  
b) Nameri National Park  
c) Orang National Park  
d) Dibru-Saikhowa National Park
Solution: c)
The **Orang National Park** is located on the **north bank** of the **Brahmaputra** River in the Darrang and Sonitpur districts of **Assam**.

- The park has a rich flora and fauna, including great Indian one-horned rhinoceros, pygmy hog, elephants, wild buffalo and tigers. It is the only stronghold of rhinoceros on the north bank of the Brahmaputra river.
- The Orang National Park is popularly known as the “mini Kaziranga.” The reason behind this is that both the parks have the same kind of climate and ecology.

(Q) Mitra crater, recently seen in news is present on
a) Jupiter
b) Mars
c) Titan
d) None of the above

Solution: d)
Chandrayaan-2’s orbiter or mother spacecraft has zeroed in on a crater on the **moon** named after 20th century’s acclaimed radio physicist Sisir Kumar Mitra. The Mitra crater is on the edge of another crater.

Source: [https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/chandrayaan-2-scans-mitra-crater/article29262668.ece](https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/chandrayaan-2-scans-mitra-crater/article29262668.ece)

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Gundla Brahmeswaram Sanctuary.
1. Gundla Brahmeswaram Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Nallamala forests in Kurnool district.
2. Tiger population has seen a massive decline here due to Red sanders smuggling.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?
   a) 1 only
   b) 2 only
   c) Both
   d) None

Solution: a)
Twenty-three tigers have so far been counted in the **Gundla Brahmeswaram Wildlife Sanctuary**, located in Nallamala forests in Kurnool district. Of the 23, 17 are female and five are male and one cub.

The big cat numbers have been seeing a constant increase in the last 15 years, and it is expected to increase this year as well.

(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. India is the largest producer and consumer of silk in the world.
2. India is the only country in the world that produces all 5 varieties of silk on a commercial scale.
3. Central Silk Board has initiated Silk Samagra programme to empower downtrodden, poor & backward tribal families through various activities of sericulture in the country.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2  

b) 1, 3  

c) 2 only  

d) 2, 3

Solution: d)

India is the 2nd largest producer of silk in the world after China.

- It is largest consumer of silk in the world.
- It is the only country in the world that produces all 5 varieties of silk on a commercial scale—Mulberry, Oak Tasar & Tropical Tasar, Muga and Eri.
- Holds the global monopoly for production of the famed golden ‘Muga’ silk.

About Silk Samagra:

- It is initiated by the Central Silk Board.
- The main objective of the scheme is to maintain Breeders stock, Breed improvement through R&D Projects, Development of mechanized practices, Technology translation through Sericulture Information Linkages and Knowledge System (SILKS) Portal, Mobile Application for Stakeholders and for seed quality monitoring etc.
- The main aim of “Silk Samagra” Scheme is to empower downtrodden, poor & backward tribal families through various activities of sericulture in the country including women.

(Q) Consider the following statements about Measles.

1. Measles is a highly contagious bacterial disease.
2. It remains an important cause of death among young children.
3. India, along with ten WHO South-East Asia Region member countries, plans to eliminate measles by 2030.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

a) 1, 3  

b) 2 only  

c) 2, 3  

d) 1 only
**Solution: a)**

**Measles** is a highly contagious viral disease. It remains an important cause of death among young children globally, despite the availability of a safe and effective vaccine.

- India, along with ten **WHO South-East Asia Region** member countries, plans to eliminate measles and control rubella/congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) by 2020.

Source: [https://www.who.int/immunization/diseases/measles/en/](https://www.who.int/immunization/diseases/measles/en/)

(Q) Consider the following statements.

1. In India, Rajasthan is the largest producer of salt followed by Gujarat.
2. Rajasthan and Gujarat together account for more than 80% of the salt production in the country.
3. India has made fortification of salt with iodine mandatory for direct human consumption.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: c)**

Rajasthan is the second largest producer of salt. **Gujarat** produces 71% of salt in the country, followed by Rajasthan at 17% and Tamil Nadu at 11%. The rest of the country accounts for a mere 1% of salt produced.

India made **fortification of salt with iodine mandatory** for direct human consumption in 1992. This was relaxed in 2000 and then reimposed in 2005. In 2011, the Supreme Court, too, mandated **universal iodisation** for the control of iodine deficiencies.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Kyasanur Forest disease (KFD).

1. It is a tick-borne viral haemorrhagic fever endemic to South India.
2. Viruses related to KFDV have been identified in China and Saudi Arabia.
3. There is widespread person to person transmission of the disease.
4. A vaccine for KFD is not yet available.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: a)**

**Kyasanur forest disease (KFD)** is a tick-borne viral haemorrhagic fever **endemic to South India**. The disease is caused by a **virus** belonging to the family Flaviviridae, which also includes yellow fever and dengue fever.

- Viruses related to KFDV have been identified in **China** and **Saudi Arabia**.
• Transmission to humans may occur after a tick bite or contact with an infected animal, most importantly a sick or recently dead monkey. No person-to-person transmission has been described.
• A vaccine does exist for KFD and is used in endemic areas of India. Additional preventative measures include insect repellents and wearing protective clothing in areas where ticks are endemic.

(Q) Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), often in news is
a) An international independent medical humanitarian organisation
b) A group of NGOs working on non-communicable diseases
c) UN organ working for medical assistance for African Nations
d) Evaluation of Border Entry Screening for Infectious Diseases in Humans

Solution: a)

Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), is an international, independent medical humanitarian organisation. It provides medical assistance to people affected by conflict, epidemics, disasters, or exclusion from healthcare. The teams are made up of tens of thousands of health professionals, logistic and administrative staff – most of them hired locally. The actions are guided by medical ethics and the principles of impartiality, independence and neutrality.

Source: https://msf-seasia.org/4818

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Nipah virus.
1. Nipah virus is a zoonotic virus and can also be transmitted through contaminated food or directly between people.
2. Currently, there are no vaccines for both humans and animals.
3. There are no known outbreaks of Nipah virus infection in South India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

The deadly Nipah Virus has resurfaced in Kerala.

- According to WHO, the Nipah virus infection is a newly emerging zoonosis, that is, a disease transmitted from animals to humans. The virus belongs to a new genus termed Henipavirus (subfamily Paramyxovirinae).
- The natural host of the virus are fruit bats belonging to the family Pteropodidae. In 2004, humans were affected after eating the date palm contaminated by infected fruit bats. Pigs can also act as intermediate hosts.
- Currently, there are no vaccines available against Nipah virus. Intensive supportive care is given to humans infected by Nipah virus.

Source: https://www.who.int/csr/disease/nipah/en/
(Q) Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) had caused the death of five Asiatic lions in Gir forest, Gujarat. Consider the following statements about Canine Distemper Virus (CDV).

1. CDV causes a highly contagious and life-threatening disease in dogs.
2. CDV can only be spread through direct contact.
3. The virus infects the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and central nervous systems.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1 only  

b) 1, 3  

c) 2, 3  

d) 1, 2, 3

**Solution: b)**

CDV causes a highly contagious and life-threatening disease in dogs. CDV also affects other wild carnivores, including wolves, foxes, raccoons, red pandas, ferrets, hyenas, tigers, and lions.

- CDV spreads through aerosol droplets and through contact with infected bodily fluids, including nasal and ocular secretions, feces, and urine.
- The virus then enters the blood stream and infects the respiratory, gastrointestinal, urogenital, epithelial, and central nervous systems, and optic nerves.


(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Fixed Dose Combinations (FDCs).

1. Fixed dose combinations (FDCs) are the cocktail of two or more active drug ingredients in a fixed ratio of doses.
2. They are less popular in India.
3. The Government is promoting Fixed Dose Combinations (FDCs) through Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana Programme.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

a) 1, 2  

b) 1, 3  

c) 2, 3  

d) 1, 2, 3

**Solution: c)**

An FDC is a cocktail of two or more active drug ingredients in a fixed ratio of doses.

- FDCs’ popularity in India is due to advantages such as increased efficacy, better compliance, reduced cost and simpler logistics of distribution.
- Fixed dose combinations (FDCs) were declared “irrational” by a Health Ministry expert committee set up in 2014.
(Q) Consider the following statements about Poliomyelitis.

1. It is a highly infectious viral disease, which mainly affects young children.
2. The virus is transmitted by person-to-person and spread through contaminated water or food.
3. With latest developments in medicine, Polio disease can be cured.
4. India became the first country globally to introduce fractional doses of IPV in childhood immunisation programme.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

Poliomyelitis (polio) is a highly infectious viral disease, which mainly affects young children. The virus is transmitted by person-to-person spread mainly through the faecal-oral route or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (e.g. contaminated water or food) and multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and can cause paralysis.

- Initial symptoms of polio include fever, fatigue, headache, vomiting, stiffness in the neck, and pain in the limbs. In a small proportion of cases, the disease causes paralysis, which is often permanent. There is no cure for polio, it can only be prevented by immunization.

Source: https://www.who.int/topics/poliomyelitis/en/

(Q) Consider the following statements with reference to E-2020 initiative.

1. E-2020 is the initiative supported by WHO where countries were identified by WHO in 2016 as having the potential to become malaria-free by 2020.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: c)

Four countries from Asia — China, Iran, Malaysia and Timor-Leste — and one from Central America — El Salvador — reported no indigenous cases of malaria in 2018, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

- The countries were part of the global health body’s E-2020 initiative, launched in 2016, working in 21 countries, spanning five regions, to scale up efforts to achieve malaria elimination by 2020.
- Creating a malaria-free world is a bold and important public health and sustainable development goal. It is also the vision of the Global technical strategy for malaria 2016-2030, which calls for the elimination of malaria in at least 10 countries by the year 2020.

Source: https://www.who.int/malaria/media/e-2020-initiative-qa/en/
(Q) WHO's REPLACE campaign is related to
   a) Replace all petrol and diesel vehicles to Electric Vehicles by 2030.
   b) Replace all cooling systems in government buildings with energy efficient cooling system.
   c) Provide protein rich food to children in the government schools.
   d) Eliminate industrially produced trans-fatty acids from the global food supply.

Solution: d)

WHO released REPLACE, a step-by-step guide for the elimination of industrially-produced trans-fatty acids from the global food supply.


(Q) Consider the following statements about Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STH).

1. STH infections can lead to malnutrition, impaired mental and physical & cognitive development.
2. STH Infections cannot be prevented by Wearing slippers and shoes.
3. National Deworming Day is observed to deworm all preschool and school-age children between the ages of 1-19 years through schools and Anganwadi Centers.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

a) 1, 2 

b) 2, 3 

c) 1, 3 

d) 1, 2, 3

Solution: c)

Helminths (worms) which are transmitted through soil contaminated with faecal matter are called soil-transmitted helminths (Intestinal parasitic worms).

STH infections can lead to anemia, malnutrition, impaired mental and physical & cognitive development, and reduced school participation.

STH Infections can be prevented by:

- Using sanitary toilets, not defecating outside
- Hand-washing, particularly before eating and after using toilets
- Wearing slippers and shoes
- Washing fruits and vegetables in safe and clean water
- Eating properly cooked food

Objective of National Deworming Day:

The objective of National Deworming Day is to deworm all preschool and school-age children (enrolled and non-enrolled) between the ages of 1-19 years through the platform of schools and Anganwadi Centers in order to improve their overall health, nutritional status, access to education and quality of life.

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the nodal agency for providing all States/UTs with guidelines related to National Deworming Day (NDD) implementation at all levels.

Source: [https://www.nhp.gov.in/national-deworming-day_pg](https://www.nhp.gov.in/national-deworming-day_pg)
(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Notifiable Disease.

1. A notifiable disease is any disease that is required by law to be reported to government authorities.
2. The onus of notifying any disease and the implementation lies with the state government.
3. Any failure to report a notifiable disease is a criminal offence and the state government can take necessary actions against defaulters.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: d)

A **notifiable disease** is any disease that is required by law to be reported to government authorities.

- The process helps the government keep track and formulate a plan for elimination and control.
- The onus of notifying any disease and the implementation lies with the state government.
- Any failure to report a notifiable disease is a criminal offence and the state government can take necessary actions against defaulters.
- The Centre has notified several diseases such as cholera, diphtheria, encephalitis, leprosy, meningitis, pertussis (whooping cough), plague, tuberculosis, AIDS, hepatitis, measles, yellow fever, malaria dengue, etc.


(Q) Consider the following statements about West Nile Virus.

1. Mosquitoes are the natural hosts of West Nile virus.
2. West Nile virus is mainly transmitted to people through the bites of infected mosquitoes.
3. Human infections occur through organ transplant, blood transfusions and breast milk.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solution: b)

**West Nile Virus (WNV)** is a member of the flavivirus genus and belongs to the Japanese encephalitis antigenic complex of the family Flaviviridae.

- WNV is commonly found in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America and West Asia. WNV is maintained in nature in a cycle involving transmission between birds and mosquitoes. Humans, horses and other mammals can be infected.
- The virus may also be transmitted through contact with other infected animals, their blood, or other tissues.
A very small proportion of human infections have occurred through organ transplant, blood transfusions and breast milk.

**Key Facts:**
1. West Nile virus is mainly transmitted to people through the bites of infected mosquitoes.
2. Birds are the natural hosts of West Nile virus.
3. Vaccines are available for use in horses but not yet available for people.
4. The virus can cause severe disease and death in horses.
5. Infection with WNV is either asymptomatic (no symptoms) in around 80% of infected people, or can lead to West Nile fever or severe West Nile disease.
6. About 20% of people who become infected with WNV will develop West Nile fever. Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, occasionally with a skin rash (on the trunk of the body) and swollen lymph glands.

Source: [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/west-nile-virus](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/west-nile-virus)

(Q) Consider the following statements regarding Tuberculosis.
1. Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease caused by bacteria that are spread from person to person through the air.
2. TB affects the lungs, the brain, the kidneys and the spine.
3. People with Tuberculosis who do not respond to at least isoniazid and rifampicin, are said to have multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB).

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: d)**

**What is tuberculosis (TB)?**
- It is a disease caused by bacteria that are spread from person to person through the air. TB usually affects the lungs, but it can also affect other parts of the body, such as the brain, the kidneys, or the spine.
- In most cases, TB is treatable and curable; however, persons with TB can die if they do not get proper treatment.
- People with TB who do not respond to at least isoniazid and rifampicin, which are first-line TB drugs are said to have MDR-TB.
- People who are resistant to isoniazid and rifampin, plus any fluoroquinolone and at least one of three injectable second-line drugs (amikacin, kanamycin, or capreomycin) are said to have XDR-TB.

**U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA)** has approved a new drug **Pretomanid** for treating drug-resistant tuberculosis — multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) and extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB).

**Pretomanid** is only the third new **anti-TB drug** approved for use by FDA in more than 40 years.