

ForumIAS

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Prelims Marathon

27th July to 2nd August,
2020

*HISTORY
ECONOMICS
POLITY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT*

History

Q.1) The “**Urn System**” in ancient period is related to which of the following?

- a) Irrigation system
- b) Housing methods
- c) Burial system
- d) Barter exchange

ANS: C

Explanation: The burial system followed by the people of Neolithic period continued into the Megalithic period.

- A circular tomb using big stone slabs built upon the place of burials known as a megalith. Such megaliths have been found in many parts of Tamil Nadu.
- **The urn burial system** was another type of practice and is evidenced in Adichanallur (present Thoothukudi district).
- Black-ware is peculiar to burial sites in Tamil Nadu.
- Interestingly, black-ware is found mostly in burial mounds and not in human habitations. In a majority of urn burials, the use of stone is almost non-existent.
- However, urn burials are grouped under megalithic because the materials - the pottery, iron objects, beads of semi-precious stones kept in them - are identical to those found in the stone burials.

Q.2) Recently which of the following country was declared **Theravada Tripitaka** as national heritage?

- a) Cambodia
- b) Sri Lanka
- c) Nepal
- d) Thailand

ANS: B

Explanation: Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena today handed over a proposal seeking to declare the Theravada Tripitaka, the sacred ure of Buddhists, as a UNESCO World Heritage.

- The proposal was officially handed over during a national ceremony held in Kandy to the UN resident coordinator in Sri Lanka, Hanaa Singer.
- **The Theravada Tripitaka was declared a National heritage of Sri Lanka by President in January 2019.**
- Buddha’s teachings were initially propagated through word of mouth for generations till the Tripitaka was finally written down in Sri Lanka about 100 years BC.
- The teachings are contained in three volumes titled ‘Sutta, Vinaya and Abhidhamma’.
- They were first compiled and written on palm leaves with more than 1000 monks involved in the task in Aluvihare near Matale.

Q.3) The **Digha Nikaya** is the compilation of the long discourses of Buddha - was translated in English by which of the following?

- a) James Prinsep
- b) Max Mueller

- c) Sir Charles Wilkins
- d) Alexander Cunningham

ANS: B

Explanation: The Digha Nikaya is the compilation of the long discourses of Buddha. The book is translated in English as part of Max Mueller's 50-volume Sacred Books of the East. Muller himself studied Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, French, German and English, and of course Latin and ancient Greek.

Q.4) Which of the following are the **Buddhist schools of thought**?

- 1. Mahayana
- 2. Hinayana
- 3. Vajrayana
- 4. Tantrayana
- 5. Sahajayana

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Buddhism faced divisions from time to time. Division into various splinter groups like 'Hinayana', 'Mahayana', 'Vajrayana', 'Tantrayana' and 'Sahajayana' led Buddhism to lose its originality.

Q.5) The **Takshashila or Taxila** is an important centre of learning and culture in ancient period was **excavated** by which of the following?

- a) Sir John Marshall
- b) Alexander Cunningham
- c) Mortimer Wheeler
- d) Iravatham Mahadevan

ANS: A

Explanation: Takshashila or Taxila is situated in present day Pakistan.

- Between the fifth century and fourth century BCE, it was part of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia.
- Because of its strategic location on the trade route between the East and the West, it emerged as an important centre of learning and culture.
- Students came from far and wide to Taxila in search of knowledge.
- **The city was brought to light by the excavation carried out in the 1940s by Sir John Marshall.**
- Taxila is considered "one of the greatest intellectual achievements of any ancient civilization".
- Panini seems to have compiled his well-known work, Ashtadhyayi, here.

Q.6) The "**Padayani folk dance**" is famous in which of the following state?

- a) Tamil Nadu
- b) Karnataka
- c) Goa
- d) Kerala

ANS: D

Explanation: Padayani dance is the traditional dance form and is linked up with many festivals and events of Kerala.

- This dance form is even performed in various districts of Kerala such as Kollam, Alappuzha, Kottayam and Pathanamthitta.
- Also this dance is connected with folk art and even it is mainly associated with series of semi divine and divine impersonations in their dance.
- Padayani dance includes various distinctive steps and movements. The costumes used in the dance are more of kolams which represent the situation of devil killing.
- Furthermore in this dance form the musical instruments used in it are known as Thappu and Chendas. Also the dancers in this Padayani dance form decorate themselves in most attractive way.
- They wear most colorful masks with unique images. This dance is worth watching and surprising as the performers make few movements with their eyes and ears.
- Even the accessories in this dance play a vital role as they create a real image in the battle field of dance.
- This dance requires lot of energy and boost as wearing heavy mask and then performing with it is not an easy task.
- In numerous temples of Kerala this dance is widely enjoyed and performed.

Q.7) Consider the following statements regarding the **Chhau dance**:

1. It is a tradition from North Eastern India that enacts episodes from epics including the Mahabharata and Ramayana.
2. The dance movement includes mock combat techniques, stylized gaits of birds and animals and movements modeled on the chores of village housewives.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Chhau dance is a tradition from eastern India that enacts episodes from epics including the Mahabharata and Ramayana, local folklore and abstract themes.

- Its three distinct styles hail from the regions of Seraikella, Purulia and Mayurbhanj, the first two using masks.
- Chhau dance is intimately connected to regional festivals, notably the spring festival Chaitra Parva. Its origin is traceable to indigenous forms of dance and martial practices.
- **Its vocabulary of movement includes mock combat techniques, stylized gaits of birds and animals and movements modelled on the chores of village housewives.**
- Chhau is taught to male dancers from families of traditional artists or from local communities.
- The dance is performed at night in an open space to traditional and folk melodies, played on the reed pipes mohuri and shehnai.
- The reverberating drumbeats of a variety of drums dominate the accompanying music ensemble. Chhau is an integral part of the culture of these communities.
- It binds together people from different social strata and ethnic background with diverse social practices, beliefs, professions and languages.

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- However, increasing industrialization, economic pressures and new media are leading to a decrease in collective participation with communities becoming disconnected from their roots.

Q.8) “Kathi Samu” is an ancient and historical martial art is related to which of the following state?

- a) Odisha
- b) Tamil Nadu
- c) Andhra Pradesh
- d) Karnataka

ANS: C

Explanation: Kathi Samu is an ancient and historical martial art which originated in Andhra Pradesh, India.

- Kathi basically means sword and Kathi Samu is a martial art which is fighting with swords.
- Kathi Samu is an ancient skill which was mastered by the royal armies of Andhra Pradesh.
- The Royal Kings practiced this skill as it was used in wars against their enemies and also it was considered to be a matter of pride to master Kathi Samu.
- The soldiers of the army were taught this martial art for the sole purpose of wars against enemies.
- According to research, Kathi Samu is said to be in existence for over 7000 years even before Aryan dynasty came into India.

Q.9) The “Kurumba Art” is recently in news is related to which of the following state?

- a) Odisha
- b) Karnataka
- c) Andhra Pradesh
- d) None

ANS: D

Explanation: Kurumba art is a unique tribal art form found in the Nilgiris. It was discovered by the C.P.Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation and presented to the world.

- Eluthu paarai is an ancient 3000-year-old rock-art site in the Kothagiri region of the Nilgiris.
- The Kurumbas – a tribe of hunters and medicine men – believe that the art were the work of their ancestors.
- In the late 20th century during the course of a project of the C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation to survey and document the art and craft traditions of four Nilgiri tribes, the existence of an old artist - the only one left in the tribe – was discovered.
- The art are primarily ritualistic, describing various facets of tribal life in the remote forests of the Nilgiris.
- The Kurumbas love the hills and have an exquisite style of art. Originally, they drew with burnt twigs and coloured the art with a resin extracted from the bark of the Kino tree (*Pterocarpus marsupium*).
- Some of the art still use this method, which is slow and cumbersome, but beautiful. On paper, they have learned to use water and poster colours, which flow easier.
- The figures are flat and similar to Warli, with rectangular bodies. However, in spite of the 2-dimensional nature of the stick figures, the Kurumba artists are able to create lines of simple and fluids movements.

- The Kurumba trainees made large art on handmade paper and board, besides painted cards, notepad covers, etc.
- The choice of themes became more versatile as they gained confidence, and their choice varied from the vegetables and tubers to weddings and functions in their community.
- The depictions were of nature – trees and mountains, driving away bees while gathering honey, weddings and festivals.
- The solemnity of tribal life with prayers to the forefathers and communal participation at every stage of life was also brought out in the art.

Q.10) The “**Pattachitra paintings**” is recently in news is related to which of the following state?

- a) Odisha
- b) Maharashtra
- c) Uttar Pradesh
- d) Nagaland

ANS: A

Explanation: Pattachitra or Patachitra is a general term for traditional, cloth-based scroll painting, based in the eastern Indian states of Odisha and West Bengal.

- Pattachitra art form is known for its intricate details as well as mythological narratives and folktales inscribed in it.
- The name Pattachitra has evolved from the Sanskrit words patta, meaning canvas, and chitra, meaning picture.
- Pattachitra is thus a painting done on canvas, and is manifested by rich colourful application, creative motifs, and designs, and portrayal of simple themes, mostly mythological in depiction.
- The traditions of pattachitra paintings are more than thousand years Most of these paintings depict stories of Hindu deities.
- A traditional per formative art from eastern India- the patachitra tradition is an integral part of intangible heritage and is an important essence of folk and traditional media.

Economy

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**:

1. It was created under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.
2. It has been incorporated as a not for profit organization under the provisions of Societies Registration Act, 1860.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: A

Explanation: National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India, is an initiative of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA) under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, for creating a robust Payment & Settlement Infrastructure in India.

- Considering the utility nature of the objects of NPCI, it has been incorporated as a "Not for Profit" Company under the provisions of Section 25 of Companies Act 1956 (now Section 8 of Companies Act 2013), with an intention to provide infrastructure to the entire Banking system in India for physical as well as electronic payment and settlement systems.
- The Company is focused on bringing innovations in the retail payment systems through the use of technology for achieving greater efficiency in operations and widening the reach of payment systems.
- The ten core promoter banks are State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda, and Union Bank of India, Bank of India, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Citibank N. A. and HSBC.
- In 2016 the shareholding was broad-based to 56 member banks to include more banks representing all sectors.

Q.2) Consider the following statements regarding the **National Productivity Council (NPC)**:

1. It is headed by Prime Minister of India.
2. It was established after economic reforms of 1991 to promote research and growth of Indian economy.
3. NPC is a constituent of the Asian Productivity Organization (APO).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: National Productivity Council of India (NPC), established in the year 1958, is an autonomous organization under Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India (Chairman of NPC).

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- Besides undertaking research in the area of productivity, NPC has been providing consultancy and training services in areas of Industrial Engineering, Agri-Business, Economic Services, Quality Management, Human Resources Management, Information Technology, Technology Management, Energy Management, Environmental Management etc., to the Government and Public & Private sector organizations.
- **NPC is a constituent of the Tokyo-based Asian Productivity Organization (APO), an Inter-Governmental Body of which the Government of India is a founding member.**

Q.3) Consider the following statements regarding the **Merger of Banks in India:**

1. The merger of public sector banks was proposed by Sukhamoy Chakravarty committee.
2. Merger of banks can do by Cabinet approval without referring to parliament.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Maidavolu Narasimham, the 13th governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in 1991 recommended merger of public sector banks to make them stronger.

- It had envisaged a three-tier banking structure with three large banks with international presence at the top, eight to 10 national banks at tier two, and a large number of regional and local banks at the bottom.
- Bank consolidation procedures are laid out in the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- **Any two public sector banking entities can initiate merger talks, but the scheme of the merger must be finalized by the government in consultation with the central bank and it must be placed in Parliament.**
- Parliament reserves the right to modify or reject the scheme. In case of a merger between a public sector bank and a private bank too, parliamentary approval is a must.

Q.4) The “**Draft Scheme of Reconstruction**” is recently in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Banking
- b) Retail business
- c) Agriculture reforms
- d) Employment

ANS: A

Explanation: RBI has placed the financially troubled Yes Bank under a moratorium (temporary suspension).

- After placing this bank under a moratorium, the RBI announced a **draft Scheme of Reconstruction**.
- This scheme entails the State Bank of India (SBI) investing capital to acquire a 49% stake in the restructured private lender.

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding the **Circuit breakers of stock market:**

1. It halts trading in all equity and equity derivative markets nationwide for a specified time.
2. It is applicable to both Company stocks and individual stocks.

3. It is introduced by SEBI in 2018 to control unprecedented rise in Stock markets of India. Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: In the stock markets, the circuit breaker halts trading in all equity and equity derivative markets nationwide for a specified time, when the index hits predefined levels.

- **Circuit breakers are applicable for individual securities as well.**
- The market regulator, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) **has introduced circuit breakers to curb severe market selling/volatility in the stock markets, with effect from July 2, 2001.**
- The market-wide circuit breakers would be triggered by the movement of either BSE Sensex or NSE S&P CNX Nifty, whichever is breached earlier.
- Circuit breakers are triggered when either of the indices moves either ways (upside/downside) by 10 per cent or 15 per cent and 20 per cent, compared to the previous day's closing level of the index.

Q.6) Recently which of the following country **removed India from its list of countries** that are classified as **“developing” economies** for trade purposes?

- a) China
- b) United States of America
- c) France
- d) United Kingdom

ANS: B

Explanation: On February 10 - 2020, the U.S. **removed more than a dozen countries, including India, from its list of countries that are classified as “developing” for trade purposes.**

- These countries will now be classified instead as “developed” economies, thus stripping them of various trade benefits.
- The office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) maintains a list of countries that it classifies as “developing”, “developed”, and “least-developed”.
- Countries that are classified as “developing” are allowed to export certain goods to the U.S. without being hit by punitive tariffs that are usually imposed on goods from “developed” countries.
- The “developing country” status owes its origin to **the U.S. Trade Act of 1974**, which authorised the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) to help poor countries develop faster.
- These benefits were extended further under the World Trade Organization wherein rich countries agreed to grant trade benefits to countries that classified themselves as poor.
- It is worth noting that about two-thirds of countries that are members of the WTO classify themselves as “developing” countries and avail benefits.

Q.7) Recently which international institution announced the **first global consortium** focused on designing a framework for the **governance of digital currencies**?

- a) International Monetary Fund
- b) World Bank

- c) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
- d) World Economic forum

ANS: D

Explanation: The World Economic Forum on Friday announced the first global consortium focused on designing a framework for the governance of digital currencies, including stablecoins.

- The Global Consortium for Digital Currency Governance will aim to increase access to the financial system through innovative policy solutions that are inclusive and interoperable.
- This is the first initiative to bring together leading companies, financial institutions, government representatives, technical experts, academics, international organizations, NGOs and members of the Forum's communities on a global level.
- This consortium will focus on solutions for a fragmented regulatory system. Efficiency, speed, interoperability, inclusivity and transparency will be at the heart of this initiative.
- It will call for innovative regulatory approaches to achieve these goals and build trust.
- A set of guiding principles will be co-designed to support public and private actors exploring the opportunities that digital currencies present.

Q.8) "Nirvik Scheme" is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Export sector
- b) Rural self-employment
- c) Wage employment in urban areas
- d) Horticulture sector

ANS: A

Explanation: The Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) is optimistic that the Nirvik scheme announced by the Union Government would give a fillip to export lending and insurance cover for export credit.

- Under the Nirvik scheme, ECGC will provide 90% cover.
- The additional outgo, if any, due to the enhanced cover would be supported by the government and the scheme would be valid for five years.
- Currently, the average cover given to banks by the ECGC is 60%.

Q.9) The "PRAKASH portal", sometimes seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Renewable energy
- b) Coal availability to railways
- c) Domestic supply of coal
- d) Self-help groups

ANS: B

Explanation: The ministries of Power, Coal and Railways have formed a web portal to track the movement of coal from the coal mines to power plants.

- **The portal is named PRAKASH — an abbreviation for Power Rail Koyla Availability through Supply Harmony.**
- Speaking at the launch event, Minister for Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs, said: "This portal will help avoid any blame game between ministries on the supply and availability of coal. It will also help coal better plan better coal supplies."

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- “Coal supplies this year were disrupted because of unprecedented rains and strikes. Coal India has been increasing its supplies considerably and we expect to meet all demands of power plants”.
- This portal is designed to help in mapping and monitoring entire the coal supply chain for power plants, through coal stock at the supply end (mines), coal quantities/rakes planned, coal quantity in transit and coal availability at power generating station.
- It aims at bringing better coordination for coal supplies among all stakeholders, namely the Ministry of Power, Ministry of Coal, Coal India, Railways and power utilities.

Q.10) The “**Acceptance Development Fund (ADF)**” is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) To promote bank credit culture
- b) To promote cashless transactions
- c) To promote health insurance
- d) To promote startups

ANS: B

Explanation: An RBI concept paper (March 2016) on expanding the card acceptance infrastructure in the country had suggested that besides card issuers (banks) and card payment networks (such as Visa, MasterCard and RuPay), the government and the RBI to consider contributing to the Acceptance Development Fund (ADF).

- **ADF is to develop debit and credit card acceptance infrastructure in the country.**
- While the government’s contribution to the ADF could be routed through the Financial Inclusion Fund (FIF), which is operated by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard), the RBI’s contribution could come from the Depositors’ Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund.

Polity

Q.1) The term “**hometown diplomacy**” is a bilateral relation between India and which of the following country?

- a) China
- b) United States of America
- c) Japan
- d) Russia

ANS: A

Explanation: On April 1, 2020, China and India usher in the important moment of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

- Looking back at the past 70 years, China-India relations have moved ahead despite wind and rain and gone through an extraordinary development path.
- In the 1950s, the leaders of the older generation of the two countries made the historical decision to establish diplomatic relations between China and India, and jointly advocated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.
- "Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai" (Indians and Chinese are brothers) resounded throughout our two countries.
- From the 1980s, the two sides agreed to solve the boundary question through peaceful and friendly consultation, established strategic and cooperative partnership for peace and prosperity, and achieved all-round development of bilateral relations.

After 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated the "hometown diplomacy", held two informal summits in Wuhan and Chennai respectively, carried out strategic communication on overarching, long-term and strategic issues of global and regional importance, and agreed to strengthen the closer partnership for development between the two countries.

Q.2) Consider the following statements regarding the **Eastern Economic Forum (EEF)**:

1. EEF was established in 2010 and forum conducts its meetings biannually.
2. India pledged to extend \$ 10 billion line of credit to Russia's far eastern region at 5th EEF.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The **Eastern Economic Forum** was established by decree of the **President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in 2015** to support the economic development of Russia's Far East and to expand international cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Unveiling the Russian edition of India's 'Look East, Act East' policy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged on September 2019 to extend a \$1 billion Line of Credit to Russia's Far East region (RFE).

Q.3) The **Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development (GFRID)** is related to which of the following?

- a) The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- b) The United Nations Industrial Development Organization

- c) World Economic Forum
- d) International Fund For Agricultural Development (IFAD)

ANS: D

Explanation: The Global Forum on Remittances, Investment and Development (GFRID) brings together key decision makers, stakeholders and practitioners who are engaged in the field of remittances and migration for development.

- **Since its first forum in 2007, IFAD has gathered** over 1,000 participants from the public and private sector, and the civil society, to facilitate the creation of partnerships and the exchange of best practices in maximizing the impact of remittances to the benefit of migrants' communities of origin.
- In doing so, IFAD partners with key international financial institutions and other prominent organizations, such as the European Commission (2015) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2017).
- **The forum is held biannually, in conjunction with the observance of the International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) on 16 June.**

Q.4) The “**Lucknow Declaration**” is sometimes seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Indo-African joint declaration on terrorism
- b) Indo-African joint declaration on climate change
- c) Indo-China declaration on bilateral investment
- d) Indo-European Union declaration on bilateral investment

ANS: A

Explanation: India and several African countries on February 2020 pledged to deepen cooperation to combat the growing threat of terrorism and preserve maritime security by sharing information, intelligence and surveillance, in a joint declaration (lucknow declaration) adopted at the first India- Africa Defence Ministers conclave at the ongoing Defexpo.

Q.5) The “**Sagarmatha Sambaad**” is sometimes seen in news is an initiative of which of the following country?

- a) Bhutan
- b) India
- c) Nepal
- d) Pakistan

ANS: C

Explanation: Nepal has invited the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan along with several other heads of government and heads of state for the **Sagarmatha Sambaad**.

The first ever multi-stakeholder dialogue event is expected to be the biggest diplomatic initiative in Nepal's recent history that will be attended by many global figures apart from the leaders of the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding the **Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement**:

1. It is a bilateral agreement between India and United States of America.
2. It enhances people-to-people contacts, fostering mobility of students and strengthening cooperation on issues related to irregular migration and human trafficking between the two sides.

3. It is valid for 7 years and it also incorporates automatic approval after 7 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The **Union Cabinet has ratified the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement between India and France** aimed at enhancing people-to-people contacts, fostering Mobility of students, academics, researchers and skilled professionals.

- The Agreement was actually signed in March, 2018 during the State Visit of the French President to India.
- The **Agreement is initially valid for a period of seven years**, incorporates provision for automatic renewal and a monitoring mechanism through a Joint Working Group.

Q.7) The “**West Asia Peace Plan**” is sometimes seen in news is an initiative of which of the following?

- a) United States of America
- b) Permanent Security Council Countries (P5 members)
- c) Russia
- d) China and Russia

ANS: A

Explanation: The **West Asia peace plan unveiled by U.S. President Donald Trump on January 2020 seeks to give the Israelis what they have long wanted — an expansive state with Jerusalem as its “undivided capital” and tight security control over a future Palestinian state.**

- With his plan, Mr. Trump is actually pushing to revive the stalled two-state talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians, but on his own terms.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who had earlier spoken against the two-state solution, has accepted the Trump plan, while appearing beside the President in the White House.
- The Palestinians were absent.

Q.8) The term “**Principle of Jus Cogens**” is recently in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Right against torture
- b) Right to conservation of environment
- c) Right to privacy
- d) Right to migration

ANS: A

Explanation: The opposition party in December, 2019 claimed that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act not only “violates” provisions of the Constitution but also falls afoul of an international convention to which India is a signatory.

- India was a signatory to the international convention on torture that talks about “providing shelter to people who face torture in another country”.
- “India is bound by the **principle of jus cogens** that ensures human rights to those who are tortured and persecuted”.

Q.9) The “**Urban Climate Change Resilience Trust Fund**” is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Global Environment Facility
- b) Asian Development Bank
- c) World Bank
- d) European Reconstruction Development fund

ANS: B

Explanation: The Urban Climate Change Resilience Trust Fund is a \$150 million multi-donor trust fund (2013-2021) administered by Asian Development Bank under the Urban Financing Partnership Facility.

- It aims to support fast-growing cities in Asia to reduce the risks poor and vulnerable people face from floods, storms or droughts, by helping to better plan and design infrastructure to invest against these impacts.
- **Recently grant of \$5 million from the multi-donor Urban Climate Change Resilience Trust Fund (UCCRTF) will be provided to build climate change resilient infrastructure in Visakhapatnam.**

Q.10) The “**Solar Risk Mitigation Initiative (SRMI)**” is recently seen in news is launched by which of the following?

- a) World Bank
- b) UNFCCC
- c) World Economic Forum
- d) United Nations Development Programme

ANS: A

Explanation: The World Bank has operationalised a Solar Risk Mitigation Initiative (SRMI) with \$333 million for 22 African countries.

- The idea was incubated as the Common Risk Mitigation Mechanism by the International Solar Alliance.
- Essentially, the scheme reduces the cost of capital through credit enhancement mechanisms.
- SRMI has given a big push to solar projects in countries like Maldives to start with.
- SRMI is trying to enhance the mechanism both vertically and horizontally.
- Many island countries now want to be covered under the SRMI.
- This unique approach offers technical assistance to help countries develop evidence-based solar targets, implement a sustainable solar program, and maintain robust procurement processes with transaction advisors.

Q.11) The **Eleventh Schedule** was introduced in the Constitution of India during the prime ministership of?

- a) Rajiv Gandhi
- b) Charan Singh
- c) P V Narasimha Rao
- d) Atal Bihari Vajpayee

ANS: C

Explanation: Mahatma Gandhi had first championed the idea of little village republics but it was under P.V. Narasimha Rao that the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, better known as the Panchayati Raj Act, became effective.

Q.12) The “**Article 256**” of Indian constitution is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- Jurisdiction of Union in relation to territories outside India.
- The state government to ensure implementation of the laws made by Parliament.
- Legislation for giving effect to international agreements.
- Power of Parliament to legislate for two or more states by consent.

ANS: B

Explanation: Article 256 of the Constitution obligates the State government to ensure implementation of the laws made by Parliament.

- If the State government fails to do so, the Government of India is empowered to give “such directions to a State as may appear... to be necessary”.
- The refusal to enforce the law even after the Centre issues directions would empower the President to impose President’s Rule in those States under Articles 356 and 365.
- The Supreme Court of India has also confirmed this reading of the law in S.R. Bommai v. Union of India.

Q.13) Who among the following declared Indian Constitution was “**far too large and therefore far too rigid, too caged by its history, and too unwieldy to be moulded into something useful through judicious interpretations**”?

- K C Wheare
- Morris Johnson
- Granville Austin
- Ivor Jennings

ANS: D

Explanation: In 1951 the University of Madras invited Jennings to deliver a series of lectures on the just born Indian Constitution.

- Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer, one of the chief architects of the Constitution, attended them and stayed through all his lectures which Jennings delivered in parts on three successive days.
- Jennings began his address by summing up India’s Constitution in one cynical sentence: “Too long, too rigid, too prolix.” Over the course of three lectures, Jennings elaborated on his views.
- He focused on some primary aspects: The Constitution’s rigidity and its superfluous provisions; fundamental rights and directive principles of state policy; and, finally, key aspects of India’s federalism.
- Jennings finally handed down a largely unfavourable verdict. **India’s Constitution, he declared, was “far too large and therefore far too rigid”, too caged by its history, and too unwieldy to be moulded into something useful through judicious interpretations.**

Q.14) Which of the following language is **NOT** in the list of scheduled languages of eighth schedule of Indian Constitution?

- Tulu
- Sindhi
- Nepali
- Maithili

ANS: A

Explanation: The Eighth Schedule to the Indian Constitution contains a list of 22 scheduled languages viz. **Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri,**

Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Sindhi(added by 21st Amendment Act, 1967) Konkani, Manipuri, Nepali (added by 71st Amendment Act, 1992), Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Santal (added by 92nd Amendment 2003). The list had originally 14 languages only but subsequently through amendments 8 new languages were added.

Q.15) The “**TMA Pai foundation case**” is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Private property
- b) Minority rights
- c) Uniform Civil Code
- d) National Register of Citizens

ANS: B

Explanation: The Supreme Court recently held that the state is well within its rights to introduce a regulatory regime in the “national interest” to provide minority educational institutions with well-qualified teachers in order for them to “achieve excellence in education.”

- The **managements of minority institutions** cannot ignore such a legal regime by saying that it is their fundamental right under **Article 30 of the Constitution** to establish and administer their educational institutions according to their choice.
- “When it comes to the right to appoint teachers, in terms of law laid down in the **TMA Pai Foundation case**, a regulation framed in the national interest must necessarily apply to all institutions regardless whether they are run by majority or minority as the essence of Article 30(1) is to ensure equal treatment between the majority and minority institutions.
- An objection can certainly be raised if an unfavourable treatment is meted out to an educational institution established and administered by minority.
- But if ensuring of excellence in educational institutions is the underlying principle behind a regulatory regime and the mechanism of selection of teachers is so designed to achieve excellence in institutions, the matter may stand on a completely different footing”.

Q.16) The “**Operation Peace Spring**” is recently in news is launched by which of the following country?

- a) Syria
- b) Turkey
- c) Saudi Arabia
- d) Yemen

ANS: B

Explanation: **Turkey** has been active in the eight-year-old civil war in Syria, its recent military incursion significantly ups the ante on the conflict.

- Its egregiously named ‘**Operation Peace Spring**’ aims to create a “safe zone” that is 480 km wide and up to 35 km deep inside Syria.
- Ankara says it intends to relocate some of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees living in Turkey in this “safe zone”.

Q.17) Recently which country is going to launch “**Zero Chance Campaign**” to raise awareness among people trying to enter the country illegally?

- a) Italy
- b) Greece
- c) United States of America

d) Australia

ANS: D

Explanation: The Australian government is launching a campaign 'Zero Chance' to raise awareness among people trying to enter the country illegally by boats.

"The message of Zero Chance is simple. Anyone who tries to come illegally to Australia by boat has zero chance of success".

Q.18) Consider the following statements regarding the **United Nations Peacekeeping**:

1. It is a joint effort between the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support.

2. India is the largest troop contributing country to UN peacekeeping operations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

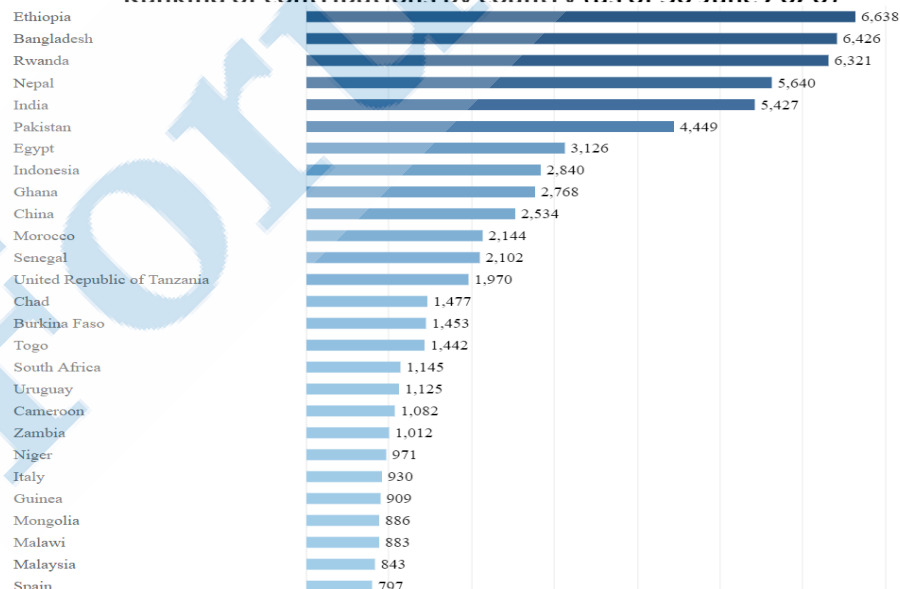
- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANS: A

Explanation: United Nations Peacekeeping is a joint effort between the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support.

- We operate in some of the toughest and most dangerous places in the world, going where others cannot or will not.
- We tailor each deployment to suit the specific needs on the ground and we adapt to new threats and challenges protecting more people than ever before.
- Our peacekeepers are actively engaged in protecting civilian populations, helping prevent conflict, reducing violence and strengthening security in the field where it matters most.
- **Ethiopia is the largest contributor of UN peacekeeping.**

Ranking of contributions by country (as of 30 June 2020)



Q.19) Consider the following statements regarding the **Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS)**:

1. It was developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), in collaboration with the Election Commission of India.

2. It was first used in general election 2019.

3. It enables a service voter to cast his/her vote using an electronically received postal ballot from anywhere outside the constituency.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The ETBPS, developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), in collaboration with the EC is being used for the first time for a general election.

- The system enables a service voter to cast his/her vote using an electronically received postal ballot from anywhere outside the constituency.
- The record officer who receives a batch of postal ballots electronically will download it and operate using a one-time password.
- The voter will exercise his/ her franchise on the postal ballot, sign it and get it signed by his higher-up and despatch it to the Returning Officer.
- The e-postal ballot system can avoid delay in postal ballots reaching recording offices. In the previous system, the ballot papers were sent by the electoral authorities via registered post.
- The ETPBS was first used in a by-election in the Nellithope Assembly constituency in Puducherry in 2016 and on pilot basis in the State during the Chengannur bypoll.
- The pilot and trials were carried out in U.P., Punjab, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur Assembly elections.

Q.20) Consider the following statements regarding the **World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)**:

- 1. It promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability.
- 2. All countries of United Nations are members of UNWTO.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: A

Explanation: As the leading international organization in the field of tourism, UNWTO promotes tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability and offers leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide.

- UNWTO encourages the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, to maximize tourism's socio-economic contribution while minimizing its possible negative impacts.
- And is committed to promoting tourism as an instrument in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), geared towards reducing poverty and fostering sustainable development worldwide.
- UNWTO's membership includes 159 countries, 6 Associate Members and over 500 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

Science and technology

Q.1) The “**FODMAP compounds**” is sometimes seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Carbohydrate molecules
- b) Fruit ripening agents
- c) Pesticide agents
- d) RNA protein compounds

ANS: A

Explanation: Many plant-based products, especially legumes such as chickpeas, beans, soybeans, contain FODMAP compounds that are poorly digestible and cause unpleasant intestinal symptoms, but now researchers have succeeded in breaking down FODMAPs with enzymes and producing new, stomach-friendly plant-based food products.

- FODMAPs are short-chain carbohydrate molecules that are poorly absorbed in the human small intestine.
- These non-absorbed compounds move along to the large intestine, where intestinal microbes feed on them.
- This results in the production of gases that causes symptoms especially for those suffering from intestinal disorders.
- The research team focused on two key FODMAP compounds: galactan and fructan.
- Galactan is abundant in, for example, legumes, while fructan is found in many cereals, among other things.

Q.2) Consider the following statements regarding the “**LUKOSKIN**”:

1. It is a traditional drug for treating vitiligo or leucoderma.
2. It is developed by Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: A traditional drug developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for treating vitiligo or leucoderma is now available for commercial sale in India.

- The herbal drug, called Lukoskin, was developed by scientists of the Defence Bio-Energy Research (DIBER) centre at Haldwani in Uttarakhand.
- Developer conferred 'Science Award' for 'Lukoskin' that treats the skin condition.
- Ahead of the International Vitiligo Day, an herbal drug developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) offers a new hope to those suffering from leucoderma, a condition in which white patches develop on the skin.

Q.3) The “**Project 15B**” often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Submarines
- b) Stealth guided missile destroyers
- c) Man portable anti-tank guided missiles
- d) Unmanned aerial vehicles

ANS: B

Explanation: Project 15B is a class of stealth guided missile destroyers.

- Warships built under Project 15Bravo, with a length of 163 metres and 17.4 metres at the beam and a displacement of 7,300 tonnes, are propelled by four gas turbines to achieve speeds in excess of 30 knots.
- Ships under this project can carry and operate two multiple role helicopters.
- Enhanced stealth features have been achieved through the shaping of hull and use of radar transparent deck fittings which make these ships difficult to detect.

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding the **NIRBHAY Missile**:

1. It is a supersonic cruise missile.
2. It has a range of 700 km to 1,000 km.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: NIRBHAY, the long-range, sub-sonic, cruise missile was successfully tested today with a sharper 'terrain hugging capability'.

- The **NIRBHAY missile has a range of 700 km to 1,000 km.**
- After its launch in typical missile style, it can be controlled in aircraft mode.
- Travelling at sub-sonic speeds of different Mach (speed of sound), the hit capacity is enhanced by control and by homing in on targets at different altitudes.

Q.5) Recently which **institute** used defected silica as a catalyst to produce methane from carbon dioxide?

- a) Indian Institute of technology – Madras
- b) Indian Institute of technology – Bombay
- c) Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR)
- d) Indian Institute of Science

ANS: C

Explanation: Converting the global-warming compound carbon dioxide into a useful fuel has been engaging the attention of scientists for some time.

- **Scientists at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) have discovered an easier and cheaper way of converting CO₂ into methane.** Scientists have generally used metal nanoparticles as catalysts for this process.
- But TIFR employed 'defected silica' — silicon dioxide with a few oxygen atoms knocked off — instead of the costlier metal nanoparticles.
- 'Defected silica' has 'holes', where the oxygen atoms used to be. These holes get filled by hydrogen atoms to form silicon hydride. For this, hydrogen molecules, that exist in nature in pairs (hence H₂) are ripped apart.
- Each hydrogen atom, then, is desperate to join hands with something; alongside, defected silica is agonising for something to fill the gap where earlier oxygen atoms used to be.
- A happy marriage results. But this marriage is short-lived because carbon dioxide dives in to break the marriage.
- The carbon in CO₂ and the hydrogen in silicon hydride desert their spouses and join hands to become methane.

- The leftovers, silicon and oxygen, re-marry to form silicon dioxide — the original catalyst.

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding the **GISAT-1**:

1. It is India's first earth imaging satellite in a geostationary orbit.
2. It is going to be launched by PSLV – XL.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: A

Explanation: GISAT-1 or Geo Imaging Satellite-1 is India's first earth imaging satellite in a geostationary orbit.

- A satellite in geostationary orbit (about 36,000 km above earth) has an orbital period equal to earth's rotational period.
- **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F10) will launch GISAT-1.** This will be the fourteenth flight of the GSLV.
- After the launch, GISAT-1 will reach the final geostationary orbit of around 36,000 km using its onboard propulsion system.
- The earth observing satellite that weighs around 2,275 kg has a lifespan of 7 years. It carries a multi- and hyper-spectral imager along with the 700 mm Ritchey-Chretien telescope for earth observation and data collection. Also it has a high resolution camera.

Objectives of GISAT-1

- Facilitates near real time observation of the Indian sub-continent, under cloud free condition, at frequent intervals.
- Helps quick monitoring of natural disasters.
- Keep a constant watch on borders.
- Monitor any changes in the geographical condition of the country.
- Helps to obtain spectral signatures of agriculture, forestry, mineralogy, disaster warning, cloud properties, snow, glaciers and oceanography.

Q.7) The term "**Juice Jacking**" often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Cyber attacks
- b) Fibre extracting method
- c) Automobile lubricant
- d) Crude oil extraction

ANS: A

Explanation: Mobile phones can get infected through a type of cyber attack called Juice Jacking. A USB port is not simply a power socket, you can also use it to transfer and sync your data.

- A hacker can tamper with a USB charging port at a public charging station to steal passwords and export data.
- The main way to avoid juice jacking is to stay away from public charging stations or portable wall chargers.
- Carry a personal charger or a power bank or use USB condoms which are adaptors that allow the power transfer but don't connect the data transfer pins.
- Switch off your phone or lock your phone and then plug it into the charging port. But this technique only works on few mobile models

Q.8) Recently scientists mapped the complete genome of basmati rice variety – “**Dom Sufid**” belongs to which of the following country?

- a) Pakistan
- b) India
- c) Iran
- d) Bangladesh

ANS: C

Explanation: Scientists have mapped the complete genome of two basmati rice varieties, including one that is drought-tolerant and resistant to bacterial disease.

- The researchers focused on two basmati rice varieties: Basmati 334 from Pakistan, known to be drought tolerant and resistant to rice-killing bacterial blight, and **Dom Sufid from Iran**, aromatic long-grain rice that is one of the most expensive on the market.
- Most genetic material in **basmati comes from japonica** —a rice group found in East Asia — followed by the rice group **aus found in Bangladesh**.

Q.9) The “**Curd Maestro refrigerator**”, which is the world’s first that prepares curd – is developed by which of the following?

- a) Tesla
- b) Samsung
- c) LG electronics
- d) Apple

ANS: B

Explanation: Introducing its 2020 refrigerator line-up, Samsung unveiled its Curd Maestro refrigerator, which is the world’s first that prepares curd.

- Samsung says Curd Maestro enables curd preparation in five to six hours — five hours for soft curd, six hours for thick curd.
- One needs to boil and cool the milk and mix the curd culture manually while Curd Maestro does the most crucial part of the job — fermentation.
- It will not only ferment the curd but will store it too.
- **According to the company, National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) has tested and recommended the process of curd making in Samsung’s Curd Maestro.**
- Samsung says Curd Maestro makes curd with the same consistency each time and eliminates all the hassle of curd-making in different weather conditions.

Q.10) Recently which of the following nuclear power plant is attacked by malware?

- a) Kaiga nuclear power plant
- b) Tarapur nuclear power plant
- c) Kudankulam nuclear power plant
- d) Kalpakkam nuclear power plant

ANS: C

Explanation: The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL) confirmed that a malware had indeed infected its system at the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP), a day after KKNPP officials had categorically asserted that the systems at the plant could not be accessed by anyone outside the network as they were all isolated.

- The cyberintrusion came to light on Monday after the website VirusTotal uploaded a data dump that seemed to point to a data breach in the KKNPP system.
- The dump pointed to a ‘dtrack’ malware, which can be used as a remote administrator tool, having infected systems at the KKNPP.

Geography

Q.1) Which of the following constitutional provision (s) is/are related to “**water**”?

1. Union list
2. State list
3. Concurrent list

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: All the major river basins and some among the medium river basins are of inter-state nature.

As the development of projects by one State on an inter-state river may affect the interests of other basin States, inter-state differences arise with regard to use, distribution and control of waters of inter-state river basins.

- **Subject of ‘water’ is a matter at Entry 17 of List –II, i.e. State List.**
- **This Entry is subject to the provisions of Entry 56 of List –I, the Union List.**
- Entry – 56 of Union list: Regulation and development of inter-State rivers and river valleys to the extent to which such regulation and development under the control of the Union are declared by Parliament by law to be expedient in the public interest.
- Entry – 17: Water that is to say, water supplies, irrigation and canals, drainage and embankments, water storage and water power subject to the provisions of Entry 56 of List - I.

Q.2) The “**Aqueduct's global water risk atlas**” is sometimes seen in news is released by which of the following?

- a) World Resources institute
- b) World Economic Forum
- c) World Meteorological organization
- d) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

ANS: A

Explanation: Aqueduct's global water risk mapping tool helps companies, investors, governments, and other users understand where and how water risks and opportunities are emerging worldwide.

- **The Atlas uses a robust, peer reviewed methodology and the best-available data to create high-resolution, customizable global maps of water risk.**
- With the support of a diverse group of partners, the **World Resources Institute** built Aqueduct to help companies, investors, governments, and communities better understand where and how water risks are emerging around the world.
- The World Resources Institute is committed to transparency and open data. The data and methodology behind Aqueduct are documented and available for download.

Q.3) The “**Feni River**” is recently in news is originated in which of the following state?

- a) Gujarat
- b) Goa
- c) Tripura

d) Mizoram

ANS: C

Explanation: The **Feni River, which forms part of the India-Bangladesh border, originates in the South Tripura district**, passes through Sabroom town on the Indian side, and meets the Bay of Bengal after it flows into Bangladesh.

In November 2019 the Union Cabinet approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bangladesh on the withdrawal of 1.82 cusecs (cubic feet per second) of water from the Feni River by India for a drinking water supply scheme for Sabroom town in Tripura.

Q.4) Which of the following is/are **west flowing rivers** in India?

1. Netravati
2. Periyar
3. Varrar

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The west flowing rivers of southern basin between Tadri to Kanyakumari extends over states of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Puducherry having an area of 54,825 Sq. km, which is 1.66% of total geographical area of the country.

- The basin is bounded by Sahyadri hills on the north, by the Western Ghats on the east, by Indian Ocean on the south and by the Arabian Sea on the west.
- **The basin is comprised of three sub-basins; Netravati and associated sub basin, Periyar and associated sub basin and Varrar and associated sub basin.**
- The major independent rivers in the basin are Varahi, Netravati, Payaswani, Valapattanam, Chaliyar, Kadalundi, Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Muvattupula, Minachil, Pamba, Achankovil, Kallada and Vamanapuram.

Q.5) The “**Sisseri River Bridge**” is recently in news is located in which of the following state?

- a) Himachal Pradesh
- b) Arunachal Pradesh
- c) Uttar Pradesh
- d) Madhya Pradesh

ANS: B

Explanation: Union Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the **Sisseri River Bridge at Lower Dibang Valley in Arunachal Pradesh** and called for bolstering the border infrastructure, saying that national security is the topmost priority of the government.

The **200-metre long bridge between Jonai-Pasighat-Ranaghat-Roing roads will provide connectivity between Dibang Valley and Siang** to meet the long-pending demand of the people of Arunachal Pradesh as it would cut down the travel time from Pasighat to Roing by about five hours.

Q.6) Which of the following **tribe (s)** is/are significantly located in Arunachal Pradesh?

1. Adi tribe

2. Apatani tribe

3. Nyishi tribe

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Arunachal Pradesh has the highest concentration of scheduled tribes in India. Additionally, this region is probably one of the last remaining outposts in the country where tribes still live a primitive existence, seeking out a living from the land and maintaining a harmonious relation with nature.

- The word '**Nyishi**' literally translates to a 'civilised human being'. The Nyishis are the most populous tribe of Arunachal Pradesh and inhabit the Papum Pare, Kurung Kumey, East Kameng, and the Lower and Upper Subansiri districts of Arunachal Pradesh. They are mainly involved in shifting cultivation and produce rice, millet, cucumber, etc.
- The **Apatanis** have a distinct culture with systematic land use techniques and rich traditional ecological knowledge. Their sustainable development ways, and natural resources' management and conservation, that has been acquired over the centuries through informal experimentation, is simply exemplary.
- UNESCO has proposed that the Apatani valley be listed as a World Heritage Site for its 'extremely high productivity' and 'unique' way of preserving ecology.
- The tribe, mainly found in the Ziro Valley in the Lower Subansiri district, is known for its wetland paddy cultivation, which produces high yields even without the use of farm animals and agricultural machines.
- The **Adi tribe celebrates** a number of festivals but the most important ones are Aran, Solung and Etor. Solung is a harvest festival that is observed in the first week of September for about five days.
- It is marked by songs, dances, display of weaponry, etc. Etor is celebrated in the month of May and men perform various war dances (collectively called Tapu) during the ceremonies. Aran is observed in the month of March.

Statement-1: Population of Major STs, 2001 Census

SL. No	Name of the ST	Population returned in 2001 Census
1	All Scheduled Tribes	705,158
2	Abor	19,927
3	Adi	32,582
4	Adi Gallong	48,126
5	Adi Minyong	33,984
6	Adi Padam	11,625
7	Aka	5,140
8	Any Naga Tribes	6,978
9	Apatani	27,576
10	Bangni	7,870
11	Dafra	45,276
12	Deori	5,693
13	Galong	27,239
14	Idu/Chulikata Mishmi	9,350
15	Khampti	12,890
16	Miji	5,721
17	Mishing/Miri	13,591
18	Mishmi	25,161
19	Monpa	41,983
20	Nishang	21,907
21	Nissi	87,656
22	Nocte	33,680
23	Tagin	39,091
24	Tangsa	20,962
25	Tawang Monpa	7,500
26	Wancho	47,788

Q.7) The terms “**Dakshin Gangotri, Maitri, Bharati, Himadri and Himansh**” sometimes seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Polar and high altitude research bases
- b) Deep sea research vessels
- c) Monsoon Expedition vessels
- d) Tropical climate expedition

ANS: A

Explanation: India began exploring the Antarctic with its first expedition in 1981 and since then has launched 37 expeditions.

- The country’s **first Antarctic base ‘Dakshin Gangotri’** was established in 1983-84 in the ice shelf of East Antarctica.
- At present, **India has two permanent research bases - ‘Maitri’ and ‘Bharati’.**
- In addition, **India has a research station called ‘Himadri’ in the Arctic and Himansh in the Himalaya.**
- These **high latitudes and cold desert regions** are considered ideal for astronomical research as well.

Q.8) The “**Sonbhadra gold mines**” is recently in news is located in which of the following state?

- a) Tamil Nadu
- b) Karnataka
- c) Uttarakhand
- d) Uttar Pradesh

ANS: D

Explanation: Geographical Survey of India (GSI) provided estimates for the amount of gold that can be extracted from a site **in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh.**

The gold resource is located near a village called Mahuli, around 70 km from Sonbhadra district, the land is mainly forest area and inhabited mostly by tribal and members of backward classes.

Q.9) Which of the following pair (s) is/are correctly matched?

Peak	hills/Range
1. Anai Mudi	: Cardamom Hills
2. Doda Beta	: Nilgiri Hills
3. Guru Shikhar	: Aravalis

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Anamudi is a mountain located in the Indian state of Kerala.

- It is the highest peak in the Western Ghats and South India, at an elevation of 2,695 metres.
- Its parental hills are **Anaimalai hills.**
- **Doda beta is the highest peak of nilgiri hills** while Guru Shikhar is the highest peak of Aravali Range located in Rajasthan.

Q.10) “Ratooning” is the method used for the production of which of the following crop?

- a) Rice
- b) Wheat
- c) Cotton
- d) Sugar cane

ANS: D

Explanation: Ratoon cropping is an old system that has been practiced for many years, especially in the Tropics.

- Although the origin of ratooning is probably not known for any particular crop, it may have begun when man first noticed **the regrowth of new shoots following the cutting of certain crops at harvest, thus, producing a new crop without replanting.**
- Because ratooning is practiced widely and is important in many crops, a review of the practice may be valuable, especially because increased food and fiber production is imperative in tropical areas.
- **This practice is widely used in the cultivation of crops such as rice, sugarcane, banana and pineapple.**

Environment

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding the **State of Global Air 2019**:

1. It is published by Health Effects Institute with the support of United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).
2. According to the report air pollution is the third-highest cause of death among all health risks in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: The **State of Global Air 2019 annual report and accompanying interactive website are designed and implemented by the Health Effects Institute in cooperation with the Institute of Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Texas, Austin.**

- According to the report exposure to outdoor and indoor air pollution contributed to over 1.2 million deaths in India in 2017.
- The report added that worldwide, air pollution was responsible for more deaths than many better-known risk factors such as malnutrition, alcohol abuse and physical inactivity.
- **In India, air pollution is the third-highest cause of death among all health risks, ranking just above smoking;**
- Each year, more people globally die from air pollution related disease than from road traffic injuries or malaria.
- Meanwhile, for the first time, this year's report and website include worldwide estimates of the effect of air pollution on life expectancy.
- **Worldwide, air pollution reduced life expectancy by an average of 20 months in 2017, a global impact rivaling that of smoking; this means a child born today will die 20 months sooner, on average, than would be expected without air pollution.**
- The report also highlighted that **nearly half of the world's population — a total of 3.6 billion people — were exposed to household air pollution in 2017.** Globally, there has been progress: the proportion of people cooking with solid fuels has declined as economies develop.

Q.2) The term "**Farmcil**" is recently in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Eco-friendly plantable seed pencils
- b) Herbicide
- c) Fish medicine
- d) Solar energy from farm

ANS: A

Explanation: Farmcil, an eco-friendly plantable seed pencils.

- Farmcil pencils come with a seed capsule containing seeds of ten different varieties of plants, including vegetables such as tomato, ladies finger and brinjal and flowering plants such as sunflower, zinnia and balsam.

- The capsule part can be buried into the soil after the pencil has shortened with use.

Q.3) Which of the following **product (s)** is/are come (s) under the purview of e-waste management rules 2016?

1. Personal Computers
2. Refrigerators
3. Solar e-waste

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: E-waste (Management) Rules, 2016, enacted since October 1, 2017.

- Over **21 products (Schedule-I) were included under the purview of the rule.**
- The rule also extended its purview to components or consumables or parts or spares of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE), along with their products.
- **Currently, India's e-waste rules have no laws mandating solar cell manufacturers to recycle or dispose waste from this sector.**

NOTE: Some of the 21 products of Schedule 1 are Centralized data processing: Mainframes, Minicomputers, Personal Computers (Central Processing Unit with input and output devices), Cellular telephones, Television sets (including sets based on (Liquid Crystal Display and Light Emitting Diode technology), Refrigerator, Washing Machine and Air-conditioners excluding centralized air conditioning plants.

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding the **Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES):**

1. It is an independent intergovernmental body.
2. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides secretariat services to IPBES.
3. According to the recent IPBES report that around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an independent intergovernmental body established by States to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

- It was established in Panama City, on 21 April 2012 by 94 Governments. **It is not a United Nations body.**
- However, at the request of the IPBES Plenary and with the authorization of the UNEP Governing Council in 2013, **the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides secretariat services to IPBES.**
- A landmark new report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the summary of which was approved

at the 7th session of the IPBES Plenary, meeting last week (29 April – 4 May) in Paris.

- The Report finds that around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, many within decades, more than ever before in human history.
- To increase the policy-relevance of the Report, the assessment's authors have ranked, for the first time at this scale and based on a thorough analysis of the available evidence, the five direct drivers of change in nature with the largest relative global impacts so far. **These culprits are, in descending order: (1) changes in land and sea use; (2) direct exploitation of organisms; (3) climate change; (4) pollution and (5) invasive alien species.**

Q.5) The “*Sand and Sustainability: Finding new solutions for environmental governance of global sand resources*” report is recently in news is released by which of the following?

- a) United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)
- b) Inter-governmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC)
- c) Conservation International
- d) World Economic Forum

ANS: A

Explanation: The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) released (May 2019) a report, Sand and Sustainability: Finding new solutions for environmental governance of global sand resources, that highlights a problem that has largely stayed under the radar: sand consumption globally has been increasing and we are extracting it at rates exceeding natural replenishment rates.

- Sand and gravel, the report says, are the second largest natural resources extracted and traded by volume after water, but among the least regulated.
- The report notes that China and India head the list of critical hotspots for sand extraction impacts in rivers, lakes and on coastlines.
- The report suggests better spatial planning and reducing unnecessary construction — including speculative projects or those being done mainly for prestige — thereby making more efficient use of aggregates, investing in infrastructure maintenance and retrofitting rather than the demolish and rebuild cycle, embracing alternative design and construction methods, even avoiding use of cement and concrete where possible, and using green infrastructure.

Q.6) The “*Balukhand Wildlife Sanctuary and Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary*” is sometimes seen in news is located in which of the following state?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Severe Cyclone Fani rendered not only several thousand people homeless as it tore along India's east coast last week, but also dealt a body blow to wildlife and forest resources in the region.

- The scenic stretch along the tree-lined Marine Drive that bisects the **Balukhand Wildlife Sanctuary** adjacent to the Bay of Bengal between Puri and Konark, is now a wasteland with hardly any tree left untouched.
- “As many as 20% of the trees were uprooted, while the rest were found snapped and broken. The devastation has left around 400 spotted deer homeless”.

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- Apart from deer, the sanctuary, spread over an area of 87 sq km, was home to wild boar, jackals, striped hyenas, wolves and mongooses.
- In Bhubaneswar, the cyclone had uprooted decades-old trees inside the **Nandankanan Zoological Park**.
- Several animal enclosures too have been affected forcing authorities to shut down the zoo for an indefinite period.
- The **Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary**, which is close by, has also been impacted with thousands of trees uprooted. Authorities are attempting to assess the extent of damage.
- As a result, hundreds of displaced monkeys have now entered residential colonies in the periphery of Bhubaneswar. Residents have reported cases of the simians attacking people after loss of habitat and food sources.

Q.7) Recently a team of herpetologists have described (found) a **new species of reddish-brown pit viper** in which of the following state?

- a) Andhra Pradesh
- b) Himachal Pradesh
- c) Assam
- d) Arunachal Pradesh

ANS: D

Explanation: India now has a fifth brown pit viper but with reddish tinge.

- **A team of herpetologists have described a new species of reddish-brown pit viper — a venomous snake with a unique heat-sensing system — from a forest in West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh.**
- The new species also makes Arunachal Pradesh the only Indian state to have a pit viper named after it.
- The other four — Malabar, horseshoe, hump-nosed and Himalayan — were discovered 70 years ago.

Q.8) The “**Porites solida, Montipora digitate and Acropora hyacinthus Species**” often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Coral Reefs
- b) Endemic frog species
- c) Wild Grass
- d) Snake eels

ANS: A

Explanation: The National Centre for Coastal Research, an institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, in India, has a field research station in the Gulf of Mannar region, and researchers have found an alarming pattern of bleaching in the reefs in Mandapam, Keezhakkarai and Palk Bay.

- **About 12% of coral species observed at depths between 0m and 2m such as Porites solida, Poritis lutea, Montipora digitate, Acropora hyacinthus were completely bleached.**
- About 5% of species observed at depths between 2m and 4m such as Acropora formosa, Acropora hyacinthus, Montipora digitata, Montipora foliosa, Pocillopora damicornis, Goniastrea retiformis, Platygyra sinensis, Dipsastrea favus, Dipsastrea speciosa were partially bleached.
- Porites species observed in Palk Bay region were completely bleached at depths from zero to 4 metres. Corals at depths over 5m did not face bleaching.

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- In some sites the massive corals such as Porites species were completely bleached but branching corals such as Montipora digitata and Acropora species were not bleached.
- Coral reefs are important hotspots of biodiversity in the ocean. Corals are animals in the same class (Cnidaria) as jellyfish and anemones.
- They consist of individual polyps that get together and build reefs. Coral reefs support a wide range of species and maintain the quality of the coastal biosphere.
- Corals control the level of carbon dioxide in the water by converting it into a limestone shell.
- If this process does not take place, the amount of carbon dioxide in the ocean water would increase significantly and affect ecological niches.

Q.9) Consider the following statements regarding the **Whale Shark**:

1. It is majorly found in the Indian Ocean.
2. It is an endangered species under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The Indian Ocean is home to 75% of the world's population of the whale shark, a slow-moving, filter-feeding carpet shark and the largest fish species on earth.

- **The whale shark — an endangered species under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.**
- The Whale Shark also receives international protection due to its inclusion in Appendix II of the Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Q.10) The “**Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary**” is recently in news is located at?

- a) Leh
- b) Tawang
- c) Pithorgarh
- d) Chamba

ANS: A

Explanation: Changthang sanctuary is home to a diversity of flora and fauna and is spread over an area of 1,600 sq km.

- **It is located in the Ladakhi Changthang Plateau in the Leh district of Ladakh Union Territory.**
- It boasts of the highest lake on earth, Tso Moriri. Not just that it is also believed to include the world's highest village, Korzok Village that draws tourists for the Korzok Monastery.
- From sighting the rare snow leopard, one can also spot a kiang or a wild ass, along with the dark-necked crane.
- Other interesting species one can find are the Tibetan wolf, wild yak, bharal, brown bear and the marmot that seems to be present everywhere.
- It also has a wide variety of avifauna and around 44 types of water birds and seasonal species of migratory birds are also found here.