

ForumIAS

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Prelims Marathon

1st to 11th October,
2020

*HISTORY
ECONOMICS
POLITY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT*

History

Q.1) “A Nation in Making” book is written by which of the following personality?

- a) Dadabhai Naoroji
- b) Pherozshah Mehta
- c) Surendranath Banerjee
- d) Gopal Krishna Gokhale

ANS: C

Explanation: Sir Surendranath Banerjee (1848–1925) was one of the founders of modern India and a proponent of autonomy within the British Commonwealth.

- He served as an **Indian Civil Service officer** till 1874, before becoming a teacher.
- He founded Ripon College, later renamed after him, in Calcutta and worked on the idea of nationalism.
- He purchased **The Bengalee**, a newspaper he edited for 40 years to propagate his nationalist viewpoint.
- He **was twice appointed the president of Indian National Congress**, appealed to the British to modify the 1905 Partition of Bengal, and in 1921 he was knighted and accepted office **as minister of Local Self-government in Bengal**.
- **He retired to write his autobiography, A Nation in Making in 1925.**

Source: NCERT

Q.2) Which of the following Governor General of India introduced the ‘Non-Regulation System’?

- a) Lord William Bentinck
- b) Lord Mayo
- c) Lord Dalhousie
- d) Lord Ellenborough

ANS: C

Explanation: Dalhousie’s chief aim was the consolidation of British rule in India. So he adopted the principle of centralization.

For the **newly acquired territories he devised the ‘Non-Regulation System’ under which commissioners were appointed to deal with the administrative problems.**

They were made responsible to the Governor-General in the Council.

He handed over all other powers relating to justice, police, and land revenue to the District Magistrates.

Source: Spectrum

Q.3) The term ‘mirasdars’ is related to which of the following?

- a) Blacksmith
- b) Security Guards
- c) Village volunteers
- d) Hereditary peasant Proprietors

ANS: D

Explanation: The word **mirasdars of Arabic origin**. As mentioned in the Marathi documents, it refers to hereditary or transferable right or patrimony (bop roti) obtained by descent, purchas, or gift, etc.

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The **mirasdars were the holders of land under the mirasi tenure**. They owned the village land and could exact rent in money or service from persons who lived on their land.

Source: Grover & Grover

Q.4) With reference to the changes made with Indian army after 1857 revolt, which of the following statement is **NOT** correct?

- The East India Company's European forces were merged with the Crown troops.
- The proportion of Europeans to Indians in the army was raised and fixed at one to two in the Bengal Army, Madras and Bombay armies.
- European troops were kept in key geographical and military positions.
- The older policy of excluding Indians from the officer corps was strictly maintained.

ANS: B

Explanation: The Indian army was carefully reorganized after 1858. Some changes were made necessary by the transfer of power to the Crown. The **East India Company's European forces were merged with the Crown troops**. But the army was reorganized most of all to prevent the recurrence of another revolt. The rulers had seen that their bayonets were the only secure foundation of their rule. Several following steps were taken to minimize, if not completely eliminate, the capacity of Indian soldiers to revolt –

- The domination of the army by its European branch was carefully guaranteed.
- The **proportion of Europeans to Indians in the army was raised and fixed at one to two in the Bengal Army and two to five in the Madras and Bombay armies**.
- The **European troops were kept in key geographical and military positions**. The crucial branches of the army like artillery and, later in the 20th century, tanks, and armored corps were put exclusively in European hands.
- The **older policy of excluding Indians from the officer corps was strictly maintained**. Till 1914, no Indian could rise higher than the rank of a subedar.
- The organization of the Indian section of the army was based on the policy of “balance and counterpoise” or “divide and rule” so as to prevent its chances of uniting again in an anti-British uprising.
- Discrimination** on the basis of caste, region, and religion was practiced, in recruitment to the army.

Source: NCERT

Q.5) “**Indian Home Rule Society**” was founded by which of the following?

- Annie Besant
- Bala Gangadhar Tilak
- Birendranath Samsal
- Shyamji Krishna Varma

ANS: D

Explanation: **Shyamji Krishna varma** was an Indian revolutionary fighter, lawyer and journalist. He **founded the Indian Home Rule Society**, India House and The Indian Sociologist in London.

Source: Spectrum

Q.6) The term “**Home Charges**” is related to which of the following?

- Economic Drain
- Tribal policy
- Princely States
- Individual Satyagrahas

ANS: A

Explanation: Home Charges represented the single biggest source of the direct drain of wealth, the expenses in Britain borne by the Indian treasury.

These Home Charges were a huge burden on the finances and contributed to a sustained and continuous deficit in the budget throughout the nineteenth century. Home charges included pensions to British Indian officials, army officers, military and other stores purchased in England.

Source: Spectrum

Q.7) "Deepavali declaration" is related to which of the following Viceroy/Governor General of India?

- a) Lord Willingdon
- b) Lord Linlithgow
- c) Lord Reading
- d) Lord Irwin

ANS: D

Explanation: "Deepavali declaration" passed during the tenure of Lord Irwin in 1929(just after Simon commission 1928).

It was just a show leaf to Indians for dominion status that was to be not granted anywhere in the near future.

Source: Spectrum

Q.8) With reference to the "Swadeshi Movement", which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Bande Mataram became the boycott and Swadeshi movement theme song.
2. The Shivaji and Ganapati festivals in Western India (Maharashtra) were organized by Lokmanya Tilak to spread the swadeshi message and boycott movements among the masses.

Select the correct answer from the codes given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: A Boycott Resolution was passed in Calcutta City Hall on August 7, 1905, where it was decided to boycott the use of Manchester cloth and salt from Liverpool.

- **Bande Mataram became the boycott and Swadeshi movement theme song.**
- **Boycott and public burning of foreign clothes, picketing of shops selling foreign goods**, all became common in remote corners of Bengal as well as in many major cities and towns across the country.
- Another form of **mass mobilization** widely used by the Swadeshi movement was the corps of volunteers (samitis). Ashwini Kumar Dutt, a school teacher, set up the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti in Barisal was the best - known volunteer organization of all of them.
- The **Shivaji and Ganapati festivals in Western India (Maharashtra)** were organized by Lokmanya Tilak to spread the swadeshi message and boycott movements among the masses.

Source: Spectrum

Q.9) Which of the following statements is/are correct about the “**General Committee of Public Instruction**”?

1. It had the responsibility to grant one lakh of rupees for education.
2. All the members of the committee were Europeans.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: In 1823, the Governor-General-in Council appointed a “General Committee of Public Instruction”, which **had the responsibility to grant one lakh of rupees for education.**

The **committee consisted of 10(ten) European members**, of which Lord Macaulay was the president.

The committee decided to spend major portions from the grant for the improvement of oriental literature.

Source: NIOS

Q.10) Which of the following statements is/are correct about “**Indigo Riots**”?

1. Riots were started in Bengal and spread throughout the country.
2. “Neel Darpan” play vividly portrays the oppression by planters upon indigo farmers.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Indigo was a commercial crop forced upon the peasantry by the Zamindars and British planters in the Zamindari areas of eastern India.

- At one point indigo cultivation was considered to be a symbol of India’s slavery. Finally, in 1860 the terribly oppressed indigo peasants launched “Non-Cultivation of indigo” movements.
- Beginning with the ryots of Govindpur village in Nadia district of Bengal, the indigo strikes rapidly spread to other areas.
- By the spring of 1860, **it totally covered all the indigo districts of Bengal.**
- The indigo peasants got tremendous support from the intelligentsia and the press, as well as from the missionaries of Bengal.
- Outstanding in this respect was the role of Harish Chandra Mukherjee editor of Hindu Patriot.
- **Dina Bandhu Mitra’s play ‘Neel Darpan’ was to gain great fame for vividly portraying the oppression by planters upon indigo farmers.**

Source: Spectrum

Economy

Q.1) In economics, “**Fisher effect**” is the relationship between which of the following variables?

- a) Income & Inequality
- b) Growth & Inflation
- c) Trade & Development
- d) Inflation & Interest rate

ANS: D

Explanation: A concept developed by Irving Fisher (1867–1947) which shows relationship between inflation and the interest rate, expressed by an equation popular as the Fisher equation, i.e., the nominal interest rate on a loan is the sum of the real interest rate and the rate of inflation expected over the duration of the loan: $R = r + F$; where R = nominal interest rate, r = real interest rate and F = rate of annual inflation.

Source: Ramesh Singh

Q.2) Which of the following sectors is/are part of **Index of eight core industries** in India?

- 1. Steel
- 2. Cement
- 3. Coal
- 4. Petrol
- 5. Natural gas

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The **eight core industries, including coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilizers, steel, cement and electricity**, comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

Source: The Hindu

Q.3) Which of the following statements is/are correct about “**Quantitative Easing**”?

- 1. It is a conventional monetary policy of a Central Bank.
- 2. It led to increase in the interest rates.

Choose the correct code from below given options:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Quantitative easing (QE) is a form of **unconventional monetary policy** of a central bank.

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- In Quantitative Easing central bank purchases longer-term securities from the open market in order to increase the money supply and encourage lending and investment.
- Buying these securities adds new money to the economy, and also **serves to lower interest rates** by bidding up fixed-income securities.

Source: The Hindu

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding the “**Financial Stability Development Council (FSDC)**”:

1. FSDC is an apex level forum set up by Government of India in 2010.
2. Niti Aayog chairman is also the member of FSDC.
3. Council monitors macro prudential supervision of the economy, including functioning of large financial conglomerates.

Which of the following codes below given 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 Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) were set up by the Government as the apex level forum in December 2010.

- The Chairman of the Council is the **Finance Minister** and its members include **Minister of State, in charge of Department** of Economic Affairs (DEA), the **heads of all Financial Sector Regulators** [Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)], Finance Secretary and/or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), **Secretary**, Department of Revenue (DoR), Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS), Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and **Chief Economic Adviser**. Adviser, Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs, in-charge-of Financial Stability & Development Council, is the Secretary of the Council.
- Without prejudice to the autonomy of Regulators, the Council monitors macro prudential supervision of the economy, including functioning of large financial conglomerates, and addresses inter-regulatory coordination and financial sector development issues.
- It also focuses on financial literacy and financial inclusion.

Source: Department of Economic Affairs

Q.5) With reference to the “**Indian Depository Receipts (IDR)**”, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. IDR is a mechanism that allows investors in India to invest in listed foreign companies.
2. IDRs are denominated in Indian Rupees and issued by a Domestic Depository in India.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: An **IDR is a mechanism that allows investors in India to invest in listed foreign companies, including multinational companies, in Indian rupees.**

- IDRs give the holder the opportunity to hold an interest in equity shares in an overseas company.
- **IDRs are denominated in Indian Rupees and issued by a Domestic Depository in India.**
- They can be listed on any Indian stock exchange. Anybody who can invest in an IPO (Initial Public Offer) is/are eligible to invest in IDRs.

Source: The Hindu

Q.6) “External Sector Report” is released by which of the following?

- a) World Trade Organization
- b) World Bank
- c) World Economic Forum
- d) International Monetary Fund

ANS: D

Explanation: The **External Sector Report, produced annually since 2012, is a key part of the IMF’s surveillance.**

External assessments are arrived at by integrating multilateral and country-specific perspectives, while ensuring individual economy assessments add up to a coherent, multilaterally consistent view.

Source: IMF

Q.7) With reference to the “**effects of inflation**”, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Inflation redistributes wealth from creditors to debtors.
2. Rising inflation indicates rising aggregate demand.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: There are **multi-dimensional effects of inflation on an economy both at the micro and macro levels.**

- **It redistributes income, distorts relative prices, destabilizes employment, tax, saving and investment policies, and finally it may bring in recession and depression** in an economy.
- **Inflation redistributes wealth from creditors to debtors**, i.e., lenders suffer and borrowers benefit out of inflation.
- **Rising inflation indicates rising aggregate demand and indicates comparatively lower supply and higher purchasing capacity** among the consumers.

Source: Ramesh Singh

Q.8) Which of the following statements is/are correct about “**small finance banks**”?

1. Small finance banks are universal banks.
2. Small Finance Banks was recommended by the Nachiket Mor committee on financial inclusion.

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Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Small finance banks.

Differentiated Banks (niche banks) are banks that serve the needs of a certain demographic segment of the population.

- **Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks are examples of differentiated banks in India.**
- Small Finance Banks was **recommended by the Nachiket Mor committee** on financial inclusion.

Source: Live Mint

Q.9) “Internal Debt” of India consists of which of the following?

- 1. Dated securities
- 2. Treasury bills
- 3. Securities issued to International Financial Institutions
- 4. Securities against small savings

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: A

Explanation: Internal debt of India consists of:

- Dated government securities or G-secs.
- Treasury Bills or T-bills
- External Assistance
- Short term borrowings
- Public Debt definition by Union Government

Source: Economic Survey

Q.10) The term “Autarky” is related to which of the following?

- a) International trade
- b) Agriculture sector
- c) Banking sector
- d) Insurance sector

ANS: A

Explanation: The idea of self-sufficiency and ‘no’ international trade by a country.

None of the countries of the world has been able to produce all the goods and services required by its population at competitive prices, however, some tried to live it up at the cost of inefficiency and comparative poverty.

Source: Ramesh Singh

Polity

Q.1) Which of the following statements is/are **NOT** correct about the **'Regulating Act of 1773'**?

1. It laid the foundations of central administration in India.
2. It provided for the establishment of a Supreme Court at Calcutta and Madras.
3. It permitted the servants of the Company to participate in private trade.

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: C

Explanation: Features of the Regulating act of 1773:

- It designated the **Governor of Bengal as the 'Governor-General of Bengal'** and created an Executive Council of four members to assist him. The **first such Governor-General was Lord Warren Hastings.**
- It made the **governors of Bombay and Madras presidencies subordinate to the governor-general of Bengal (Centralization)**, unlike earlier, when the three presidencies were independent of one another.
- It provided for the **establishment of a Supreme Court at Calcutta (1774)** comprising one chief justice and three other judges.
- It **prohibited** the servants of the Company from engaging in any private trade or accepting presents or bribes from the 'natives'.
- It **strengthened the control of the British Government** over the Company by requiring the Court of Directors (governing body of the Company) to report on its revenue, civil, and military affairs in India.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.2) With reference to the **'Constituent Assembly'**, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It was constituted according to the principles of Cripps mission.
2. The representatives of princely states were elected by the people on limited franchise.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The Constituent Assembly was constituted in November 1946 under the scheme formulated by the **Cabinet Mission Plan.**

The representatives of princely states were to be **nominated** by the heads of the princely states.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.3) Which of the following is/are '**unitary features**' of Indian union?

1. Single Constitution
2. Integrated Judiciary
3. Flexibility of Constitution

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 Indian Constitution also contains a large number of **unitary or non-federal features, viz., a strong Centre, single Constitution, single citizenship, flexibility of Constitution, integrated judiciary, appointment of state governor** by the Centre, all-India services, emergency provisions, and so on.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.4) With reference to the '**Indian Constitution**', which of the following **feature (s)** is/are borrowed from Australian Constitution?

1. Freedom of trade.
2. Joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament
3. The language used in the Preamble

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 features borrowed from Australian Constitution are:

- Concurrent List
- Freedom of trade
- Commerce and intercourse
- Joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament
- The language used in the Preamble

Source: Laxmikanth & Indian Express

Q.5) With reference to the 'Preamble', which of the following words is/are found in the **Original Preamble**?

1. Justice
2. Liberty
3. Fraternity
4. Socialist

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

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ANS: C

Explanation: The Preamble is called the introduction letter of the Indian Constitution. The **preamble was amended by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act in 1976, in which three new words Socialist, Secular, and Integrity** were added.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.6) 'Article 3' of Indian constitution is related to which of the following?

- a) Citizenship
- b) Name and territory of the union
- c) Formation of new states
- d) Definition of state

ANS: C

Explanation: Article 3 authorizes the Parliament to:

- form a new state by separation of territory from any state or by uniting two or more states or parts of states or by uniting any territory to a part of any state,
- increase the area of any state,
- diminish the area of any state,
- alter the boundaries of any state, and
- alter the name of any state.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.7) Which of the following Amendment Act of Indian Constitution is also known as "**Mini-Constitution**" of India?

- a) 23rd Amendment Act, 1969
- b) 35th Amendment Act, 1974
- c) 42nd Amendment Act, 1976
- d) 44th Amendment Act, 1978

ANS: C

Explanation: 42nd Amendment Act, 1976 is one of the most important amendments to the Indian Constitution.

- It was enacted by Indian National Congress headed by Indira Gandhi then.
- Due to the large number of amendments this act has brought to the Indian Constitution, it is also known as 'Mini-Constitution.'

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.8) Which of the following statements is/are correct about "**State Public Service Commission (SPSC)**"?

1. The chairman of a SPSC is appointed and removed by the President of India.
2. The chairmen of a SPSC hold the office for a term of six years or until they attain the age of 65 years.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Although **the chairman and members of a SPSC are appointed by the governor, they can be removed only by the president** (and not by the governor).

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The **chairman and members of the Commission hold office for a term of six years or until they attain the age of 62 years**, whichever is earlier (in the case of UPSC, the age limit is 65 years).

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.9) Which of the following is/are comes under the **definition of state** (Article 12)?

1. Government of India and Government of states.
2. Statutory authorities.
3. Non statutory authorities.

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 term State has been used in different provisions concerning the fundamental rights. Hence, Article 12 has defined the term for the purposes of Part III. According to it, the State includes the following:

- **Government and Parliament of India**, that is, executive and legislative organs of the Union government.
- **Government and legislature of states**, that is, executive and legislative organs of state government.
- **All local authorities**, which is, municipalities, panchayats, district boards, improvement trusts, etc.
- All other authorities, that is, **statutory or non-statutory authorities** like LIC, ONGC, SAIL, etc.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.10) Which of the following right (s) is/are covered under **Article 21 of the Indian Constitution?**

1. Right to travel abroad.
2. Right to move freely throughout the territory of India.
3. Right to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India.

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: A

Explanation: The Right to move freely throughout the territory of India and Right to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India comes under Protection of six rights regarding freedom (Article 19). **Right to travel abroad is comes under Protection of life and personal liberty (Article 21).**

Source: Laxmikanth

Science and technology

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding “**Agni 5 Missile**”:

1. It is a nuclear-capable ballistic missile developed by DRDO.
2. Range of Agni 5 Missile is 7000km.

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: India’s defence scientists have successfully launched Agni 5, the nuclear-capable ballistic missile, with over 5,000 km range.

- It is a three stage missile, 17 metres tall, and two metres wide and capable of carrying upto 1.5 tonne of payload, especially nuclear warheads.
- It is developed by labs (DRDO) under the Missile Complex in Hyderabad and several industries across the country were first flight tested in 2012.

Source: The Hindu

Q.2) Consider the following statements regarding “**Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)**”:

1. It is a central drug authority to implement the directions and orders under Drugs and Cosmetics Act.
2. Major function of CDSCO is regulatory control over approval of new drugs and clinical trials.

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 Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) is the Central Drug Authority for discharging functions assigned to the Central Government under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. CDSCO has six zonal offices, four sub-zonal offices, 13 port offices and seven laboratories under its control. Major functions of CDSCO:

- Regulatory control over the import of drugs,
- Approval of new drugs and clinical trials,
- Meetings of Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC) and Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB),
- Approval of certain licenses as Central License Approving Authority is exercised by the CDSCO headquarters.

Source: The CDSCO website

Q.3) “**GLONASS**” or Global Navigation Satellite System is developed by which of the following country?

- a) USA

- b) China
- c) European Union
- d) Russia

ANS: D

Explanation: GLONASS is an acronym, which stands for Globalnaya Navigazionnaya Sputnikovaya Sistema, or Global Navigation Satellite System.

- GLONASS is Russia's version of GPS (Global Positioning System).
- Soviet Union started the development of GLONASS in 1976.
- GLONASS is the most expensive program of the Russian Federal Space Agency, consuming a third of its budget in 2010.

Source: The Hindu

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding "Lithium":

1. It has the lowest density of all metals.
2. It is used in rechargeable batteries for mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras and electric vehicles.
3. Lithium is abundantly available in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Lithium is an alkali metal. It has the lowest density of all metals.

- The most important use of lithium is in rechargeable batteries for mobile phones, laptops, digital cameras and electric vehicles.
- But as well as the lithium-ion batteries for which it has grown in popularity, the highly reactive and flammable alkali mineral – sometimes referred to as "white gold" – is also used in ceramics and glass, lubricating greases, polymer production, and air treatment.
- According to the latest figures from the US Geological Survey (USGS), global lithium production in 2018 reached around 85,000 tonnes – up from 69,000 in the previous year.
- Continued exploration efforts have seen global lithium resource estimates reach 62 million tonnes – a significant proportion of which are located in **South America's "lithium triangle" – an area encompassing Chile, Argentina and Bolivia.**
- India currently imports all its lithium needs.
- It imported lithium batteries worth \$1.2 billion in fiscal 2019, up from \$384 million in FY17.
- Recently researchers at the Atomic Minerals Directorate, a unit of India's Atomic Energy Commission, have estimated lithium reserves of 14,100 tonnes in a patch of land surveyed in Mandya, 100 km from Bengaluru.

Source: The Hindu

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding "**Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO)**":

1. It is an agency of Government of India charged with military's research and development.
2. It is headquartered in Kolkata.
3. It is under administrative control of Ministry of Science and technology.

4. It also works in the field of life science engineering.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) is an agency of the Government of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India.

- It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defense Science Organization.
- It is under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defense, Government of India.

Source: DRDO website

Q.6) Innovate in India (i3) initiative is launched by Government of India related to which of the following sector?

- a) Automobile Sector
- b) Defense Sector
- c) Pharmaceutical Sector
- d) Food processing Sector

ANS: C

Explanation: The first ever Industry-Academia mission to accelerate biopharmaceutical development in India will be formally launched by the Cabinet Minister for Science and Technology, Earth Sciences, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan in New Delhi on 30th June 2017.

- The program named Innovate in India (i3) will witness an investment of USD 250 million with USD 125 million as a loan from World Bank and is anticipated to be a game changer for the Indian Biopharmaceutical industry.
- It aspires to create an enabling ecosystem to promote entrepreneurship and indigenous manufacturing in the sector.

Source: PIB

Q.7) Consider the following statements regarding “**National Biotechnology Development Strategy (NBDS) 2015-2020**”:

1. It was launched in 2015 with an aim to establish India as a world class bio manufacturing hub.
2. It aims to make India ready to meet the challenge of achieving US\$100bn by 2025.

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: DBT had earlier announced the First National Biotechnology Development strategy in 2007 which provided an insight into the enormous opportunities.

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After this, NBDS was launched in 2015 with an aim to establish India as a world class bio manufacturing hub.

It aims to achieve:

- Making India ready to meet the challenge of achieving US\$100bn by 2025
- Launching Four Major Missions – Healthcare, Food and Nutrition, Clean Energy and Education backed with significant investments for the creation of new biotech products
- Create a strong infrastructure for R&D and commercialization and empower India's human by creating a Life Sciences and Biotechnology Education Council
- Creating a Technology Development and Translation network across the country with global partnership
- To revitalize the knowledge environment at par with the growing bio-economy, focus of biotechnology tools for inclusive development etc.

Source: PIB

Q.8) Consider the following statements regarding “**Hyper Spectral Imaging Satellite (HYSIS)**”:

1. It combines the power of digital imaging and spectroscopy to attain both spatial and spectral information from an object.
2. Hyper spectral images provide much more detailed information about the scene than normal camera.

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: ISRO's PSLV C43 launched India's first Hyperspectral Imaging Satellite (HysIS) along with 30 foreign satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.

- HysIS is an earth observation satellite built around ISRO's Mini Satellite-2 (IMS-2) bus.
- It combines the power of digital imaging and spectroscopy to attain both spatial and spectral information from an object.
- This result can be then used to identify measure and locate different materials and their chemical and physical properties.
- Every pixel in the image contains a continuous spectrum (in radiance or reflectance) and can be used to characterize the objects in the scene with great precision and detail.

Source: ISRO

Q.9) Which among the following space agency tested a device called as “**Lunar Evacuation System Assembly (LESA)**”, which is designed to assist in astronaut rescue missions on the surface of the Moon?

- a) European Space Agency
- b) NASA
- c) ISRO
- d) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)

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ANS: A

Explanation: The European Space Agency (ESA) recently tested a device which is designed to assist in astronaut rescue missions on the surface of the Moon.

- The test was among preparations for NASA's 2024 Artemis Mission.
- The device is called the Lunar Evacuation System Assembly (LESA).
- LESA is a pyramid-like structure. It can be operated by a single astronaut to help rescue an injured astronaut on the surface of the moon.
- It will enable an astronaut to lift their crewmate onto a mobile stretcher in less than 10 minutes, before carrying them to the safety of a nearby pressurized lander.
- ARTEMIS stands for Acceleration, Reconnection, Turbulence and Electrodynamics of the Moon's Interaction with the Sun. It will be a manned moon mission.
- The Artemis mission includes establishing of lunar outpost, investigating the Moon's resources and how they might be exploited and using it a base to explore Mars and further into deep space.

Source: European Space Agency

Q.10) Consider the following statements regarding “**Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)**”:

1. It is a functional organization of Ministry of Science & Technology.
2. It provides Incident Prevention and Response services as well as Security Quality Management Services.
3. It draws its functions under Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008.

Which of the following below given codes are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: CERT-In is a functional organization of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, with the objective of securing Indian cyber space.

CERT-In provides Incident Prevention and Response services as well as Security Quality Management Services.

The Information Technology (Amendment) Act 2008 designated CERTIn to serve as the national agency to perform the following functions in the area of cyber security:

- Collection, analysis and dissemination of information on cyber incidents.
- Forecast and alerts of cyber security incidents.
- Emergency measures for handling cyber security incidents.
- Coordination of cyber incident response activities.
- Issue guidelines, advisories, vulnerability notes and whitepapers relating to information security practices, procedures, prevention, response and reporting of cyber incidents.
- Such other functions relating to cyber security as may be prescribed.

Source: PIB

Q.11) Which of the following statements is/are **NOT** correct about “**Nuclear Fuel Complex (NFC)**”?

1. It is the only organization in India which caters to the fuel requirements of nuclear power reactors.

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2. It is the only organization in the world today to have a comprehensive manufacturing cycle from ore to core.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Nuclear Fuel Complex, Hyderabad is an industrial unit of the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of India.

- NFC is the **only organization in India** which caters to the fuel requirements of nuclear power reactors.
- Nuclear Fuel Complex, Hyderabad was conceived in late 60's as a pivotal **industrial arm of the Department of Atomic Energy** with the mandate to fuel the nuclear power program of Govt. of India.
- An ISO certified organization, **NFC is the only organization in the world today to have a comprehensive manufacturing cycle from ore to core**, involving processing of both Uranium & Zirconium streams under the same roof.

Source: Nuclear Fuel Complex

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding “**Vitrification technology**”:

1. It can be used to contain High Level Waste (HLW) of Nuclear Spent Fuel.
2. At present India imports this technology from Russia.

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: The immobilisation of HLW requires the formation of an insoluble, solid waste form that will remain stable for many thousands of years.

- In general borosilicate glass has been chosen as the medium for dealing with separated HLW.
- The stability of ancient glass for thousands of years highlights the suitability of borosilicate glass as a matrix material. This type of process, referred to as **vitrification**.
- Most HLW, other than spent fuel itself, arises in a liquid form from the reprocessing of spent fuel.
- This **HLW comprises highly-radioactive fission products and some transuranic elements with long-lived radioactivity**.
- India is one of the few countries to have mastered the technology of vitrification. Over the years **BARC has developed the technology for vitrification of HLW**.
- India has a unique distinction of having operating **vitrification plant at Tarapur and Trombay**.
- In our existing plant at Trombay vitrification process is essentially batch operation consisting of heating and fusing of pre-concentrated waste and glass forming additives and is carried out in melters based on induction heating.

Source: The Hindu & IAEA

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Q.13) “CODIS” is related to which of the following?

- a) Food Preservation Index
- b) DNA index system
- c) Carbon Dioxide measurement Index
- d) Biomass Index

ANS: B

Explanation: CODIS is the acronym for the **Combined DNA Index System** and is the generic term used to describe the **FBI’s program of support for criminal justice DNA databases as well as the software used to run these databases.**

The National DNA Index System or NDIS is considered one part of CODIS, the national level, containing the DNA profiles contributed by federal, state, and local participating forensic laboratories.

Source: The Hindu

Q.14) “JUICE Mission” is going to launch by which of the following Space Agency?

- a) NASA
- b) ROSCOSMOS
- c) French Space Agency
- d) European Space Agency

ANS: D

Explanation: JUICE, also known as the **JU**pter **I**cy **m**oons **E**xplorer, is a **European Space Agency mission intended to explore Jupiter and three of its icy moons: Europa, Callisto and Ganymede.**

- A single orbital spacecraft, with no lander, will be the first to orbit Ganymede, and one of a handful of spacecraft to visit the Jupiter system since the 1970s. JUICE is targeted to launch in June 2022 aboard an Ariane 5 spacecraft.
- It will take more than 7.5 years to get to Jupiter, using gravity assists from Venus and Earth to speed the spacecraft up and get it into the outer solar system.
- The spacecraft is expected to be inserted in Jupiter's orbit in January 2030, starting a 2.5-year observation session of Jupiter's moons, as well as the planet's atmosphere and magnetosphere.

Source: The Hindu & NASA

Q.15) Consider the following statements regarding “Prithvi Missile”:

1. It is an indigenously developed ballistic missile developed under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).
2. It is a surface-to-surface short range ballistic missile.

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 Prithvi was India's first indigenously developed ballistic missile produced by the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP).

Prithvi is a road-mobile, surface to surface short range ballistic missile (SRBM) powered by a single-stage, two engines, and liquid-fuel. Development of the Prithvi began in 1983, and it was first tested fired on February 25, 1988.

Source: The Hindu

Q.16) Consider the following statements regarding “**Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS)**”:

1. It is a satellite to satellite communication and transfer of data.
2. It will also be useful in monitoring launches and benefitting crew members of the Gaganyaan mission.
3. At present only USA and Russia have DRS system.

Which of the following above statements is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: India plans for its own space-to-space tracking and communication of its space assets this year by putting up a new satellite series called Indian Data Relay Satellite System (IDRSS).

- A set of 2 IDRSS satellites will be placed in geostationary orbit, enabling satellite to satellite communication and transfer of data.
- It will track, send and receive real-time information from other Indian satellites, in particular those in low-earth orbits (LEO) which have limited coverage of earth.
- It will also be useful in monitoring launches and benefitting crew members of the Gaganyaan mission ensuring mission control throughout their travel.
- First satellite will be launched by 2020 end and second one by 2021. India will join US, China, Japan and Europe who already have such DRS systems.

Source: The Hindu

Q.17) Consider the following statements regarding “**Cartosat-3**”:

1. It is an earth observation satellite and helps to detect changes in natural geographical or man-made features.
2. The mission life of the Cartosat-3 is 10 years.

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: Cartosat satellites are earth observation satellites, used mainly for large-scale mapping of the Earth through high-resolution cameras.

- They help to detect changes in natural geographical or man-made features.
- Cartosat-3 satellite is a third-generation agile advanced satellite having high resolution imaging capability.
- The mission life of the Cartosat-3 is 5 years. It will be followed by additional satellites of the same design, namely Cartosat-3A and 3B, next year.

Source: The Hindu & ISRO

Q.18) Which of the following missile is an “**Anti-Tank Missile**”?

- a) Agni Missile
- b) Nag Missile

- c) Trishul Missile
- d) Prithvi Missile

ANS: B

Explanation: Nag is a third-generation; fire-and-forget, anti-tank guided missile developed by India's state-owned Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to support both mechanised infantry and airborne forces of the Indian Army.

Source: The Hindu

Q.19) Consider the following statements regarding “**Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)**” technology:

1. It is an electronic tag that can exchange data with an RFID reader through radio waves.
2. It is faster connection and its operational range is about 10m.

Which of the statements given above is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: RFID technology is an electronic tag that can exchange data with an RFID reader through radio waves.

RFID is faster connection and its operational range is about 100m.

Source: Indian Express

Q.20) Which of the following is/are provisions of the **DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019**?

1. DNA testing is allowed to individual identity and civil matters.
2. No consent is required from arrested person for collecting DNA.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: A

Explanation: In a landmark decision, the Lok Sabha passed “The DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill - 2019”.

- The purpose of this Bill is to expand the application of DNA-based forensic technologies to support and strengthen the justice delivery system of the country.
- The utility of DNA based technologies for solving crimes, and to identify missing persons, is well recognized across the world.
- By providing for the mandatory accreditation and regulation of DNA laboratories, the Bill seeks to ensure that with the proposed expanded use of this technology in this country, there is also the assurance that the DNA test results are reliable, and furthermore that the data remain protected from misuse or abuse in terms of the privacy rights of our citizens.
- The key components of this Bill include: establishment of a DNA Regulatory Board; accreditation of DNA laboratories undertaking DNA testing, analysing, etc.; establishment of the National and Regional DNA Data Banks, as envisaged in the Bill, will assist in forensic investigations.

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- This will aid in scientific up-gradation and streamlining of the DNA testing activities in the country with appropriate inputs from the DNA Regulatory Board which would be set up for the purpose.
- The Bill will add value in empowering the criminal justice delivery system by enabling the application of DNA evidence, which is considered the gold standard in crime investigations.

Source: PRS India

ForumIAS

Geography

Q.1) Which of the following is/are the characteristics of “**Tropical Evergreen Forests**”?

1. Tropical Evergreen Forests are located at more than 200cm rainfall.
2. It has no dry season.
3. Vegetation of all kinds found in these forests.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Tropical Evergreen forests are restricted to heavy rainfall areas of the Western Ghats and the island groups of Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar, upper parts of Assam and Tamil Nadu coast.

- They are at their best in areas having more than 200 cm of rainfall with a short dry season.
- The trees reach great heights up to 60 metres or even above. Since the region is warm and wet throughout the year, it has a luxuriant vegetation of all kinds — trees, shrubs and creepers giving it a multilayered structure.
- There is no definite time for trees to shed their leaves. As such, these forests appear green all the year round.

Source: NCERT

Q.2) “**Bailadila Iron ore mine**” is located in which of the following state?

- a) Jharkhand
- b) Karnataka
- c) Chhattisgarh
- d) Odisha

ANS: C

Explanation: Durg-Bastar-Chandrapur belt lies in Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra.

- Very high grade hematites are found in the famous Bailadila range of hills in the Bastar district of Chattisgarh.
- The range of hills comprises of 14 deposits of super high grade hematite iron ore.
- It has the best physical properties needed for steel making.
- Iron ore from these mines is exported to Japan and South Korea via Vishakhapatnam port.

Source: NCERT

Q.3) Which of the following is/are factors of **soil formation**?

1. Parent rock
2. Time
3. Relief
4. Flora, Fauna and Micro-organism

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The major factors of soil formation are the nature of the parent rock and climatic factors. Other factors are the topography, role of organic material and time taken for the composition of soil formation. All these differ from place to place.

Source: NCERT

Q.4) Which of the following statement is/are correct about “**konkan coast**”?

- 1. It extends from Mumbai to South Karnataka.
- 2. Annual range of temperature is high.
- 3. It receives rainfall by the Arabian Sea branch of Southwest monsoon.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: India’s climate is controlled by a number of factors which can be broadly divided into two groups — factors related to location and relief, and factors related to air pressure and winds.

- With a long coastline, large coastal areas have an equable climate.
- Areas in the interior of India are far away from the moderating influence of the sea. Such areas have extremes of climate.
- That is why the people of Mumbai and the Konkan coast have hardly any idea of extremes of temperature and the seasonal rhythm of weather.
- On the other hand, the seasonal contrasts in weather at places in the interior of the country such as Delhi, Kanpur and Amritsar affect the entire sphere of life.

Source: NCERT

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding “**black soils**”:

- 1. Black soils also called as regur soils.
- 2. It covers the areas of Punjab, Rajasthan and Maharashtra.
- 3. They are made up of extremely coarse material.

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: A

Explanation: Black soils are black in colour and are also known as regur soils.

- Black soil is ideal for growing cotton and is also known as black cotton soil.
- It is believed that climatic conditions along with the parent rock material are the important factors for the formation of black soil.
- This type of soil is typical of the Deccan trap (Basalt) region spread over northwest Deccan plateau and is made up of lava flows.

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- They cover the plateaus of Maharashtra, Saurashtra, Malwa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and extend in the south east direction along the Godavari and the Krishna valleys.
- The black soils are made up of extremely fine i.e. clayey material. They are well-known for their capacity to hold moisture.
- In addition, they are rich in soil nutrients, such as calcium carbonate, magnesium, potash and lime. These soils are generally poor in phosphoric contents.
- They develop deep cracks during hot weather, which helps in the proper aeration of the soil.
- These soils are sticky when wet and difficult to work on unless tilled immediately after the first shower or during the pre-monsoon period.

Source: NCERT

Q.6) The primitive form of cultivation is called 'Bewar' or 'Dahiya' is practiced in which of the following state?

- a) Assam
- b) Kerala
- c) Haryana
- d) Madhya Pradesh

ANS: D

Explanation: The 'slash and burn' agriculture is known as 'Milpa' in Mexico and Central America, 'Conuco' in Venezuela, 'Roca' in Brazil, 'Masole' in Central Africa, 'Ladang' in Indonesia, 'Ray' in Vietnam.

In India, this primitive form of cultivation is called 'Bewar' or 'Dahiya' in Madhya Pradesh, 'Podu' or 'Penda' in Andhra Pradesh, 'Pama Dabi' or 'Koman' or 'Bringa' in Odisha, 'Kumari' in Western Ghats, 'Valre' or 'Waltre' in South-eastern Rajasthan, 'Khil' in the Himalayan belt, 'Kuruwa' in Jharkhand, and 'Jhumming' in the North-eastern region.

Source: Britannica

Q.7) "Parkland Landscape" is related to which type of forests in India?

- a) Evergreen Forest
- b) Tropical Thon Forest
- c) Dry Deciduous Forest
- d) Montane Forest

ANS: C

Explanation: Dry deciduous forest covers vast areas of the country, where rainfall ranges between 70 -100 cm.

- On the wetter margins, it has a transition to the moist deciduous, while on the drier margins to thorn forests.
- These forests are found in rainier areas of the Peninsula and the plains of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
- In the higher rainfall regions of the Peninsular plateau and the northern Indian plain, these forests have a parkland landscape with open stretches in which teak and other trees interspersed with patches of grass are common.
- As the dry season begins, the trees shed their leaves completely and the forest appears like vast grassland with naked trees all around.
- Tendu, palas, amaltas, bel, khair, axlewood, etc. are the common trees of these forests.

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- In the western and southern part of Rajasthan, vegetation cover is very scanty due to low rainfall and overgrazing.

Source: NCERT

Q.8) Consider the following statements regarding “**Peninsular Plateau**”:

1. It is a tableland composed of the old crystalline, igneous and metamorphic rocks.
2. The Deccan Plateau is higher in the west and slopes gently eastwards.

Which of the Statements given above is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The Peninsular plateau is a tableland composed of the old crystalline, igneous and metamorphic rocks.

- It was formed due to the breaking and drifting of the Gondwana land and thus, making it a part of the oldest landmass.
- The Deccan Plateau is a triangular landmass that lies to the south of the river Narmada.
- The Satpura range flanks its broad base in the north while the Mahadev, the Kaimur hills and the Maikal range from its eastern extensions.
- Locate these hills and ranges in the physical map of India. The Deccan Plateau is higher in the west and slopes gently eastwards.
- An extension of the Plateau is also visible in the northeast– locally known as the Meghalaya, Karbi-Anglong Plateau and North Cachar Hills.
- It is separated by a fault from the Chotanagpur Plateau.
- Three Prominent hill ranges from the west to east are the Garo, the Khasi and the Jaintia Hills.

Source: NCERT

Q.9) Consider the following statements regarding “**Indian Desert**”:

1. It lies towards the western margins of the Aravali Hills.
2. In Indian desert Streams appear in winter season.
3. Luni is the only large river in Indian Desert region.

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 Indian desest lies towards the western margins of the Aravali Hills.

- It is an undulating sandy plain covered with sand dunes.
- This region receives very low rainfall below 150 mm per year.
- It has arid climate with low vegetation cover.
- Streams appear during the rainy season.
- Soon after they disappear into the sand as they do not have enough water to reach the sea.
- Luni is the only large river in this region.

Source: NCERT

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Q.10) Which of the following pair (s) is/are **NOT** correctly matched?

- | Peak | Range |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Anai Mudi | : Cardamom Hills |
| 2. Doda Beta | : Nilgiri Hills |
| 3. Guru Shikhar | : Western Himalayas |

Select the correct code from given below options:

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

ANS: C

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.11) Consider the following statements regarding “**forest area**” in the country:

1. In India more than 35 percent of the geographical land covers with forest area.
2. According to National Forest Policy 1952, 33% of the geographical area should be forest area.

Which of the statements given above is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: A

Explanation: Forest area in the country is far lower than the desired 33 per cent of geographical area, as it was outlined in the National Forest Policy (1952).

It was considered essential for maintenance of the ecological balance.

Source: NCERT

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding “**black soils**”:

1. Black soils also called as regur soils.
2. It covers the areas of Punjab, Rajasthan and Maharashtra
3. The black soils are made up of extremely coarse material

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: A

Explanation: Black soils are black in colour and are also known as regur soils.

- Black soil is ideal for growing cotton and is also known as black cotton soil.
- It is believed that climatic conditions along with the parent rock material are the important factors for the formation of black soil.
- This type of soil is typical of the Deccan trap (Basalt) region spread over northwest Deccan plateau and is made up of lava flows. They cover the plateaus of Maharashtra, Saurashtra, Malwa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and extend in the south east direction along the Godavari and the Krishna valleys.
- The black soils are made up of extremely fine i.e. clayey material. They are well-known for their capacity to hold moisture.
- In addition, they are rich in soil nutrients, such as calcium carbonate, magnesium, potash and lime. These soils are generally poor in phosphoric contents.
- They develop deep cracks during hot weather, which helps in the proper aeration of the soil.
- These soils are sticky when wet and difficult to work on unless tilled immediately after the first shower or during the pre-monsoon period.

Source: NCERT

Q.13) Consider the following statements regarding “**Himalayan Yew**”:

1. Chemical compound called ‘taxol’ is extracted from this tree, and it has been successfully used to treat some cancer
2. It is abundantly found in North east Himalayas and Western Ghats.

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: The Himalayan Yew (*Taxus wallachiana*) is a medicinal plant found in various parts of Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh.

- A chemical compound called 'taxol' is extracted from the bark, needles, twigs and roots of this tree, and it has been successfully used to treat some cancers – the drug is now the biggest selling anti-cancer drug in the world.
- The species is under great threat due to over-exploitation. In the last one decade, thousands of yew trees have dried up in various parts of Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh.

Source: NCERT

Q.14) Consider the following statements regarding “**wheat crop**”:

1. It is a kharif crop.
2. It requires 50 to 75 cm rainfall.
3. It is the main food crop, in north and north-western part of the country.

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: C

Explanation: Wheat is the second most important cereal crop. It is the main food crop, in north and north-western part of the country.

- This rabi crop requires a cool growing season and a bright sunshine at the time of ripening.
- It requires 50 to 75 cm of annual rainfall evenly distributed over the growing season.
- There are two important wheat-growing zones in the country – the Ganga-Satluj plains in the northwest and black soil region of the Deccan.
- The major wheat-producing states are Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and parts of Madhya Pradesh.

Source: ICSE

Q.15) Consider the following statements regarding “**laterite Soils**”:

1. They develop in areas with high temperature and low rainfall.
2. They respond well to Fertilizers and manures.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Laterite has been derived from the Latin word 'later' which means brick.

- The laterite soil develops in areas with high temperature and heavy rainfall. This is the result of intense leaching due to heavy rain.

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- Humus content of the soil is low because most of the micro-organisms, particularly the decomposers, like bacteria, get destroyed due to high temperature.
- Laterite soils are suitable for cultivation with adequate doses of manures and fertilizers.
- These soils are mainly found in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, and the hilly areas of Orissa and Assam.
- After adopting appropriate soil conservation techniques particularly in the hilly areas of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, this soil is very useful for growing tea and coffee.
- Red laterite soils in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala are more suitable for crops like cashew nut.

Source: NCERT

Q.16) “The rainfall mostly experienced in winters. It is also known as Subtropical Winter Rain Zone. The vegetation is mostly deciduous type. In summer, short stature, moisture retentive trees especially citrus fruits grow here.” Which region is defined in the above lines?

- a) Mediterranean region
- b) Tropical monsoon type
- c) Tropical grasslands
- d) Temperate grasslands

ANS: A

Explanation: The climate is known for warm to hot, dry summers and mild to cool, wet winters. Winter temperatures are usually between 30 and 65 degrees.

- Summer months all average above 50 degrees. The warmest month averages about 72 degrees.
- The cause of this climate is directly related to large bodies of water such as the Mediterranean Sea and ocean currents.
- During the summer, cold currents keep the climate mild and dry. Ocean currents shift as the seasons change.
- During the winter the water that was warmed up all summer moves in and keeps the land warm and often brings rain.
- Plants in Mediterranean climate must be able to survive long dry summers. Evergreens such as Pine and Cypress trees are mixed with deciduous trees such as some Oaks.
- Fruit trees and vines such as grapes, figs, olives, and citrus fruits grow well here. Other plants include what are called "scrub", which include small shrubs, grasses, and herbs.

Source: National Geographic Channel

Q.17) Consider the following statements regarding “**Tropical Thorn Forest**”:

1. These occur in areas with rainfall less than 50 cm.
2. Important species found here are oak, teak and sal.
3. The forests are given an expression of scrub vegetation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2
- b) 1 and 3
- c) 2 and 3
- d) All of the above

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ANS: B

Explanation: Tropical thorn forests occur in the areas which receive rainfall less than 50 cm.

- These consist of a variety of grasses and shrubs. It includes semi-arid areas of south west Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- In these forests, plants remain leafless for most part of the year and give an expression of scrub vegetation.
- Important species found are babool, ber, and wild date palm, khair, neem, khejri, palas, etc. Tussocky grass grows upto a height of 2 m as the under growth.

Source: ICSE

Q.18) "Parkland Landscape" is related to which type of forests in India?

- Evergreen Forest
- Tropical Thon Forest
- Dry Deciduous Forest
- Montane Forest

ANS: C

Explanation: Dry deciduous forest covers vast areas of the country, where rainfall ranges between 70 -100 cm.

- On the wetter margins, it has a transition to the moist deciduous, while on the drier margins to thorn forests.
- These forests are found in rainier areas of the Peninsula and the plains of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
- In the higher rainfall regions of the Peninsular plateau and the northern Indian plain, these forests have a **parkland landscape** with open stretches in which teak and other trees interspersed with patches of grass are common.
- As the dry season begins, the trees shed their leaves completely and the forest appears like vast grassland with naked trees all around.
- Tendu, palas, amaltas, bel, khair, axlewood, etc. are the common trees of these forests.
- In the western and southern part of Rajasthan, vegetation cover is very scanty due to low rainfall and overgrazing.

Source: NCERT

Q.19) Consider the following statements regarding "Indian Desert":

1. The Indian desest lies towards the western margins of the Aravali Hills.
2. In Indian desert Streams appear in winter season.
3. Luni is the only large river in Indian Desert region.

Which of the statements given above is/are **NOT** correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 3 only

ANS: B

Explanation: The Indian desest lies towards the western margins of the Aravali Hills.

- It is an undulating sandy plain covered with sand dunes.
- This region receives very low rainfall below 150 mm per year. It has arid climate with low vegetation cover.
- Streams appear during the rainy season.

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- Soon after they disappear into the sand as they do not have enough water to reach the sea.
- Luni is the only large river in this region.

Source: NCERT

Q.20) Consider the following statements regarding “**Earthquakes**”:

1. The L (surface or long) waves travel along the surface and are recorded before Primary and Secondary waves.
2. Shadow zone of Primary waves is wider than Secondary waves.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Earthquakes produce three types of seismic waves: primary waves, secondary waves, and surface waves.

Each type moves through materials differently. In addition, the waves can reflect, or bounce, off boundaries between different layers.

The waves can also bend as they pass from one layer into another. Scientists learn about Earth's layers by studying the paths and speeds of seismic waves traveling through Earth.

- **Primary Waves:** The fastest seismic waves are called primary waves, or P waves. These waves are the first to reach any particular location after an earthquake occurs.
- **Secondary Waves:** Secondary waves are the second seismic waves to arrive at any particular location after an earthquake, though they start at the same time as primary waves. Secondary waves travel through Earth's interior at about half the speed of primary waves. Secondary waves are also called S waves. As they pass through a material, the material's particles are shaken up and down or from side to side. Secondary waves rock small buildings back and forth as they pass.
- **Surface Waves:** Surface waves are seismic waves that move along Earth's surface, not through its interior. They make the ground roll up and down or shake from side to side. Surface waves cause the largest ground movements and the most damage. Surface waves travel more slowly than the other types of seismic waves.

Source: NCERT

Environment

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding “**Young Champions of the Earth**” award:

1. Individuals under 15 years of age are eligible to contest.
2. Award is given by UNDP.

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: Young Champions of the Earth aims to celebrate and support individuals aged between 18 and 30 who have outstanding potential to create a positive environmental impact.

- In 2020, seven young people – selected from every global region – will be named Young Champions of the Earth.
- These winners receive seed funding, intensive training and tailored mentoring to bring their big environmental ideas to life.
- We’re looking for artists, scientists, economists, communicators and entrepreneurs from all walks of life who have big, bold ideas – for the environment, for humanity, for a greener future.
- Shortlisted finalists from every region will be selected following an open call for applications.
- A Global Jury will then choose seven winners. Each winner is expected to implement their big idea and keep UNEP updated on their progress by producing videos and blogs that we will share on our website.
- Winners will also be given funding to support their communication efforts throughout the year, so that they can produce high-quality materials to share with our audiences.

Source: UNEP

Q.2) Which of the following is/are categories (performance indicators) of **climate change performance index**?

1. GHG emissions
2. Renewable energy
3. Energy use
4. Sustainable development

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: A

Explanation: Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) is published by Germanwatch, Climate Action Network International and the NewClimate Institute, annually.

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It aims to enhance transparency in international climate politics and enables comparison of climate protection efforts and progress made by individual countries.

The ranking results are defined by a country's aggregated performance in 14 indicators within the four categories:

- GHG Emission- 40%
- Renewable Energy – 20%
- Energy Use- 20%
- Climate Policy- 20%

Source: The Hindu

Q.3) Consider the following statements regarding **Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPLC)**:

1. CPLC is an initiative of World Bank that catalyzes action towards the successful implementation of carbon pricing around the world.
2. From India, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and Indian Railways are the government level partners.

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 Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition (CPLC) is a voluntary initiative that catalyzes action towards the successful implementation of carbon pricing around the world.

- The CPLC brings together leaders from government, business, civil society and academia to support carbon pricing, share experiences and enhance the global, regional, national and sub-national understanding of carbon pricing implementation.
- The CPLC Secretariat is administered by The World Bank Group. From India, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation and Indian Railways are the government level partners.

Source: The Hindu

Q.4) Which of the following national parks is/are located in the Kerala?

1. Eravikulam National Park
2. Silent Valley National Park
3. Pampadum Shola National Park
4. Bandipur National Park

Choose the correct code from below given options:

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

ANS: A

Explanation: National park is an area which is strictly reserved for the betterment of wildlife & biodiversity.

- Activities like developmental, forestry, poaching, hunting and grazing on cultivation are not permitted.
- Even private ownership rights are not allowed in these parks. Their boundaries are well marked and restricted.

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There are 6 national parks in Kerala and are as follows:

- Anamudi Shola National Park which is located in Idukki.
- Eravikulam National Park in Munnar
- Mathikettan Shola National Park at Udumbanchola taluk in Idukki.
- Pampadum Shola National Park at Marayoor Village in Idukki.
- Periyar National Park in Thekkady.
- Silent Valley National Park in Palakkad

Source: The Envis

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding “**Tiger Reserves**” in India:

1. At present in India 50 tiger reserves spread out in 18 tiger range states.
2. The tiger reserves are constituted on core/buffer areas which don't have any legal status.
3. The buffer areas consist of forest land only.

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: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct: The Government of India has launched the 'Project Tiger' in 1973. From 9 tiger reserves since its formative years, the Project Tiger coverage has increased to 50 at present, spread out in 18 of our tiger range states.

Statement 2 is incorrect: The tiger reserves are constituted on a core/buffer strategy. The core areas have the legal status of a national park or a sanctuary.

Statement 3 is incorrect: The buffer or peripheral areas are a mix of forest and non-forest land, managed as a multiple use area. The Project Tiger aims to foster an exclusive tiger agenda in the core areas of tiger reserves, with an inclusive people oriented agenda in the buffer.

Source: THE MOEFCC

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding “**Keystone Species**”:

1. Keystone species is an organism that helps hold the system together.
2. Predators, ecosystem engineers and mutualists are three types of keystone Species.

Which of the statements given above is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Keystone Species.

Statement 1 is correct: In any arrangement or community, the “keystone” is considered one of the most vital parts. In a marine ecosystem, or any type of ecosystem, a keystone species is an organism that helps hold the system together.

Statement 2 is correct: There are three types of keystone species cited by many scientists: predators, ecosystem engineers, and mutualists.

- Predators help control the populations of prey species, which in turn affects the quantity of plants and animals further along the food web.
- An ecosystem engineer is an organism that creates, changes, or destroys a habitat.

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- When two or more species in an ecosystem interact for each other's benefit, they are called mutualists.

Source: National Geographic Channel

Q.7) “Lawalong Wildlife Sanctuary” is located in which of the following state?

- a) Kerala
- b) Arunachal Pradesh
- c) Jharkhand
- d) Chhattisgarh

ANS: C

Explanation: Lawalong Wildlife Sanctuary was set up in 1978 to the southwest of Hazaribagh in the Chhotanagpur plateau area.

- It covers an area of about 211 sq. kms.
- The terrain is undulating and dissected by rivers and streams.
- Located in the south-west part of Chatra district, Lawalong sanctuary has a rich wildlife, including tiger and bison.
- Different species of birds and serpents are also found here.
- A variety of wildlife including Tiger, Panther, Hyena, Spotted Deer, Wild Boar, Nilgai are available in this sanctuary.

Source: The HINDU

Q.8) Which of the following is/are characteristics of “**Persistent organic pollutants (POPs)**”?

1. Highly toxic to humans and wildlife.
2. Last for many years in the environment.
3. Long-range transport.

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: Persistent organic pollutants (POPs) are a group of chemicals possessing the following characteristics:

- They are highly toxic to humans and wildlife (harmfulness);
- They can last for many years in the environment before degrading into less dangerous forms (persistence);
- They bio-accumulate in the food chain (bio-accumulation);
- They are transported over large distances through air and water and can be found worldwide (long-range transport).

Source: Rotterdam Convention

Q.9) “Nitrogen fixation” on earth is/are accomplished by which of the following ways?

1. Organic matter decomposition.
2. Thunder and lightning.
3. The Haber-Bosch process.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

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

ANS: A

Explanation: Nitrogen is a critical limiting element for plant growth and production.

- It is a major component of chlorophyll, the most important pigment needed for photosynthesis, as well as amino acids, the key building blocks of proteins.
- It is also found in other important bio-molecules, such as ATP and nucleic acids.
- Even though it is one of the most abundant elements (predominately in the form of nitrogen gas (N₂) in the Earth's atmosphere), plants can only utilize reduced forms of this element.

Plants acquire these forms of "combined" nitrogen by:

- the addition of ammonia and/or nitrate fertilizer (from the Haber-Bosch process) or manure to soil,
- the release of these compounds during organic matter decomposition,
- the conversion of atmospheric nitrogen into the compounds by natural processes, such as lightning, and
- Biological nitrogen fixation.

Source: National Geographic Channel

Q.10) "Askot Wildlife Sanctuary" is located in which of the following state?

- a) Himachal Pradesh
- b) Gujarat
- c) Chhattisgarh
- d) Uttarakhand

ANS: D

Explanation: Himalayan tailless bush blue, *Arhopala ganesa ganesa*, is a butterfly that is usually present in the elevation between 1200 meters and 2400 meters in the states of Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand.

- It later recorded an altitude 3577 meters in Askot Wildlife Sanctuary in Uttarakhand.
- Researchers believe that these butterflies have migrated in search of a suitable climate where the climates in several Himalayan mountain ranges have already noticed significant changes.

Source: The Hindu

Q.11) "Hadgarh Wildlife Sanctuary" is recently in news is located in which of the following State?

- a) Jharkhand
- b) West Bengal
- c) Assam
- d) Odisha

ANS: D

Explanation: Hadgarh Wildlife Sanctuary lies in the district of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj.

- It is near the Hadgarh reservoir of Salandi Dam.
- This region is rich in mixed deciduous forest and play home to variety of wildlife.
- The wide range of fauna that can be seen at Hadgarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Odisha, India includes leopard, tiger, fishing cat, jungle cat, langur, pangolin and hyena.
- Hadgarh Wildlife Sanctuary is also abode of several species of birds and reptiles.

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- The conservation area of Hadgarh Wildlife Sanctuary is very popular with the tourists who wish to relish the wild and un-spoilt natural environment.

Source: The Hindu

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding “**Montreal Protocol**”:

1. It is on substances that deplete the Ozone Layer is the landmark multilateral environmental agreement that regulates the production and consumption.
2. It was adopted on Earth Summit 1992.

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: The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer is the landmark multilateral environmental agreement that regulates the production and consumption of nearly 100 man-made chemicals referred to as ozone depleting substances (ODS).

- When released to the atmosphere, those chemicals damage the stratospheric ozone layer, Earth’s protective shield that protects humans and the environment from harmful levels of ultraviolet radiation from the sun.
- Adopted on 15 September 1987, the Protocol is to date the only UN treaty ever that has been ratified every country on Earth - all 197 UN Member States.

Source: UNEP

Q.13) “**Pampas Grass**” is found in which of the following Continent?

- a) South America
- b) North America
- c) Australia
- d) Africa

ANS: A

Explanation: Pampas grass, (*Cortaderia selloana*), tall reedlike grass of the family Poaceae, native to southern South America.

- Pampas grass is named for the Pampas plains, where it is endemic.
- It is cultivated as an ornamental in warm parts of the world and is considered an invasive species in some areas outside its native range, including New Zealand, South Africa, and the southwestern United States.

Source: NCERT

Q.14) The “**Environmental Performance Index**” report is published by which of the following institution?

- a) Yale University and WEF
- b) WHO
- c) World Bank
- d) UNEP

ANS: A

Explanation: Careful measurement of environmental trends and progress provides a foundation for effective policymaking.

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- The 2018 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) ranks 180 countries on 24 performance indicators across ten issue categories covering environmental health and ecosystem vitality.
- These metrics provide a gauge at a national scale of how close countries are to established environmental policy goals.
- The EPI thus offers a scorecard that highlights leaders and laggards in environmental performance, gives insight on best practices, and provides guidance for countries that aspire to be leaders in sustainability.
- The EPI is produced jointly by Yale University and Columbia University in collaboration with the World Economic Forum.

Source: The Hindu

Q.15) Consider the following statements with regarding “**Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**”:

1. In 2016 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) was introduced into the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.
2. The E-Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011 introduced the concept of EPR for the first time 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: C

Explanation: The E-Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011 introduced the concept of EPR for the first time in India which made all the producers of electronic goods responsible for the waste production management.

- The amendment to the e-waste policy, with the new E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016, set stringent targets for the producers to collect and recycle end-of-life products of their goods.
- The EPR policy also finds place in Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 as well as the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016.

Source: The HINDU

Q.16) The “**Green Climate Fund**” is a financial mechanism to which of the following Convention?

- a) UNCCD
- b) Rotterdam Convention
- c) UNFCCC
- d) Basel Convention

ANS: C

Explanation: The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was set up in 2010 as a financial mechanism under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

- The GCF mechanism allows funding from developed countries to developing countries to allow them to mitigate climate change and also adapt to disruptions arising from a changing climate.
- The GCF is based in Incheon, South Korea.
- It is governed by a Board of 24 members and supported by a Secretariat.

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- The Fund also targets societies that are vulnerable to the effects of climate change, in particular Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and African States.

Source: UNFCCC

Q.17) Which of the following conditions is/are essential for “**wheat cultivation**”?

1. Optimum temperature during growing period is around 30°C.
2. A frost-free period of about 100 days.
3. Light clay or heavy loam soil.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The temperature required for wheat during growing season is around 15.5°C.

- The weather should be warm and moist during the early stage of growth and sunny and dry in the later stages.
- The average temperature of the hottest month should not exceed 20°C.
- A frost-free period of 100 days is usually required but some fast-ripening varieties may mature only in 90 days.
- The soil suitable for wheat is either light clay or heavy loam.
- The world’s best wheat comes from the chernozem soils in the ‘Black Earth’ region of the Ukrainian Steppes, the dark brown soil of North America and also the grey brown podzolic soils of the deciduous forest region.

Source: NCERT

Q.18) “**Gwadar port**” is often seen in news is located in which of the following country?

- a) Pakistan
- b) Iran
- c) India
- d) Sri Lanka

ANS: A

Explanation: Gwadar is Pakistan's largest infrastructural project since independence.

- After the completion of the first phase of Gwadar port, billions of dollars have been invested in Gwadar and in the next one or two years the investment can cross the figure of trillions.
- China is a major investor in Gwadar, and has spent \$248 million in the first phase of Gwadar port.

Source: The Hindu

Q.19) The “**driest place**” on earth is located in which of the following deserts?

- a) Atacama
- b) Sahara
- c) Kalahari
- d) Gobi

ANS: A

Explanation: The driest place on Earth is in Antarctica in an area called the Dry Valleys, which have seen no rain for nearly 2 million years.

- There is absolutely no precipitation in this region and it makes up a 4800 square kilometer region of almost no water, ice or snow.
- While some areas of the Atacama along the coast have succulent plants like cacti, the more arid parts of the desert have no vegetation.
- These parched regions do not even have cyanobacteria – green photosynthetic microorganisms that live in rocks or under stones in most other deserts.

Source: National Geographic Channel

Q.20) Consider the following statements regarding “**Barail Range**”:

1. It is the highest hill range in Assam.
2. It is the watershed between the Brahmaputra and Barak rivers.

Which of the following above statements is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The Barail is the highest hill range in Assam.

- It includes the North Cachar Hill Reserve Forest (RF) of Cachar district, Barail RF of Cachar and North Cachar Hills districts and the unclassified forests stretching from the Simleng river valley in the west to Laike in the east (in North Cachar Hills district).
- The Barail Range is the watershed between the Brahmaputra and Barak rivers.
- The terrain ranges from flat and undulating in the river valleys, to mountainous with steep slopes.

Source: Savinder Singh

Q.21) Consider the following statements:

1. Lotic habitats are those existing in relatively fast running streams like springs, rivers and brooks.
2. Lentic habitats are represented by the lakes, ponds, and swamps.

Which of the statements given above is/are **NOT** correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Fresh community consists of an array of organisms depending on the physico-chemical and biological characteristics of the freshwater environment. Freshwater habitats are divided into two major categories:

- Lotic (lotus=washed, or running water): Lotic habitats are those existing in relatively fast running streams, springs, rivers and brooks.
- Lentic (lenis=calm, or standing water): Lentic habitats are represented by the lakes, ponds and swamps.

Source: NCERT

Q.22) Consider the following statements regarding “Carbon Credit”:

1. It is a tradable permit.
2. The holder of the credit has the right to emit ten ton of carbon dioxide or an equivalent of another greenhouse gas.
3. The main goal for the creation of carbon credits is the reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

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: B

Explanation: A carbon credit is a tradable permit or certificate that provides the holder of the credit the right to emit one ton of carbon dioxide or an equivalent of another greenhouse gas.

- The main goal for the creation of carbon credits is the reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from industrial activities to reduce the effects of global warming.
- Carbon credits are market mechanisms of the minimization of greenhouse gases emission.
- The introduction of carbon credit was ratified in the Kyoto Protocol.
- The Paris Agreement validates the application of carbon credits to reduce emissions of the greenhouse gases and sets the provisions for the further facilitation of the carbon credits markets.

Types of Carbon Credits

There are two types of the carbon credits:

- **Voluntary emissions reduction (VER):** A carbon offset that is exchanged in the over-the-counter or voluntary market for credits.
- **Certified emissions reduction (CER):** Emission units (or Carbon credits) created through a regulatory framework with the purpose of offsetting a project’s emission. The main difference between the two is that there is a third party certifying body that regulates the CER as opposed to the VER.

Source: The Hindu

Q.23) Which of the following protected area is a Marine National Park?

- a) Malvan marine sanctuaries
- b) Gulf of Kachchh
- c) Wan door mahatma Gandhi marine protected areas
- d) Both B and C

ANS: D

Explanation: In India, 605 protected areas covering 5.2% of the total geographical area.

- Under this 96 national parks, 509 wildlife sanctuaries, 3 conservation reserve.
- These are established under the wildlife (protection) Act.

In India, there are 4 important marine national parks

- Gulf of Kachchh National marine park (established in 1980; Okha to Jodia, Gujarat coast covering 42 islands; area 400 km²).

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- Gulf of Mannar National marine park (established in 1986; Rameswarwm to Tuticorin, Tamilnadu; area 623ha)
- Wan door mahatma Gandhi marine park (established in 1983; area 281.50 km², South Andaman)
- Rani Jhansi marine national park (established in 1996, area256.41 km², Andaman)

Marine Sanctuaries:

- Bhitarkanika Gahiramatha sanctuaries (established in 1997; area 1,453 km², Odisha.
- Malvan marine sanctuaries (established in 1987; area 29.12km², Maharashtra)
- Gulf of Kachchh (established in 1980, area 295.03 km², Gujarat.

Source: ENVIS

Q.24) Which of the following fauna of India is an ape?

- a) Golden Langur
- b) Lion-tailed Macaque
- c) Hoolak Gibbon
- d) Slow loris

ANS: C

Explanation: Apes Family of India: Unlike Africa in India we have only one species of Apes which even though is an ape yet is not one to be classified as one of the Great Apes (Chimpanzees & Gorillas).

It does has distinctive build of an ape-arms are longer than the legs and the body is tailless.

Hoolock Gibbon (Hylobates hoolock):

- It is the only ape to be found in India and is generally to seen in the forests of the North- East India and neighboring Bangladesh and Burma.
- The males have a black coat and the females can be distinguished by their lighter coat having grayish color.
- Hoolocks prefer to live in small groups in the hilly forests and feed on tender leaves, fruits, and insects including spiders.
- Their main source of water is from the dew which forms on the leaves.
- The young ones are normally born in the winter months between December and March.
- The average height of a Gibbon is 3 feet and the arms are normally double the length of its legs.

Source: The Hindu

Q.25) Consider the following statements regarding “**Indian State of Forest Report**”:

1. The India State of Forest Report 2019 has been prepared by Forest Survey of India (FSI).
2. Tree and Forest cover was increased compared to last assessment.

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 India State of Forest Report 2019 has been prepared by Forest Survey of India (FSI).

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- The report is a biennial exercise.
- It assesses the forest and tree cover, bamboo resources, carbon stock and forest fires.
- The forest cover in the country has increased by 3,976 square kilometer in the last two years.
- The tree and forest cover together made up 25.56% of India's area.
- In the last assessment it was 24.39%.

Source: The Hindu

Q.26) “Living Planet Report” is published by which of the following organization?

- a) Global Environment Facility
- b) IUCN
- c) World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- d) World Economic Forum

ANS: C

Explanation: The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is an international non-governmental organization founded in 1961, working in the field of wilderness preservation, and the reduction of human impact on the environment.

- It was formerly named the World Wildlife Fund, which remains its official name in Canada and the United States.
- WWF aims to "stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature."
- The Living Planet Report is published every two years by WWF since 1998; it is based on a Living Planet Index and ecological footprint calculation.
- In addition, WWF has launched several notable worldwide campaigns including Earth Hour and Debt-for-Nature Swap, and its current work is organized around these six areas: food, climate, freshwater, wildlife, forests, and oceans.

Source: The Hindu

Q.27) Which of the following conventions were outcome of the **Earth summit** of 1992?

1. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
2. Agenda 21
3. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

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: D

Explanation: In June 1992 representatives from 172 nations convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), commonly called the Earth Summit.

- Earth Summit 1992 produced the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Statement of Forest Principles, and Agenda 21.
- The Earth Summit also led to the establishment of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The Convention on Biological Diversity is a binding treaty requiring nations to take inventories of their plants and wild animals and protect their endangered species.

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- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), or Global Warming Convention, is a binding treaty that requires nations to reduce their emission of carbon dioxide, methane, and other “greenhouse” gases thought to be responsible for global warming.

Source: The UNFCCC

Q.28) “Global Environment Outlook” is published by which of the following Institution?

- a) WEF
- b) UNEP
- c) Global Environment Facility
- d) UNDP

ANS: B

Explanation: The Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is often referred to as UN Environment’s flagship environmental assessment.

- The first publication was in 1997 and was originally requested by Member States.
- It is a flagship report because it fulfills the core functions of the organization, which date back to the UN General Assembly resolution that established the UN Environment Programme in 1972.
- The Global Environment Outlook (GEO) is a consultative and participatory process to prepare an independent assessment of the state of the environment, the effectiveness of the policy response to address these environmental challenges and the possible pathways to be achieve various internationally agreed environmental goals.

Source: UNEP

Q.29) Consider the following statements regarding “**Global Tiger Forum (GTF)**”:

1. It is the only inter- governmental international body to protect the tiger.
2. It has a General Assembly meeting of every 3 years.

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 Global Tiger Forum (GTF) is the only inter- governmental international body established with members from willing countries to embark on a global campaign to protect the Tiger.

- The GTF was formed in 1993 on recommendations from an international symposium on Tiger Conservation at New Delhi, India.
- The first meeting of the Tiger Range countries to setup the forum was held in 1994, in which India was elected to the Chair and was asked to form an interim secretariat.
- In 1997, the GTF became an independent organization.
- The GTF has a General Assembly meeting every 3 years and Standing committee meetings at least once a year.
- A Chairperson, usually a Minister from one of the Tiger Range countries heads GTF for a fixed tenure of 3 Years. The Secretariat of GTF is headed by a Secretary General and is located in New Delhi, India.

Source: The Hindu

Q.30) “Montreal Protocol” and “London Conference” is related to which of the following?

- a) Solid Waste Management
- b) Persistent Organic Pollutants
- c) CFCs
- d) Methane control

ANS: C

Explanation: Ozone constitutes only less than 0.002 percent of the volume of the atmosphere. However, its role is very critical as far as lives on the earth is concerned.

- It strongly absorbs ultraviolet radiation from the sun. Ultraviolet radiation is biologically destructive in many ways.
- It causes skin cancer and cataracts, suppresses the human immune system, diminishes the yield of many crops, disrupts the aquatic food chain by killing micro-organisms on the ocean surface and many other negative effects which is still undiscovered.
- This is happening due to certain recent human activities which have injected certain chemicals in the stratosphere which consume ozone and reduce its concentration.
- Depletion is mainly caused by chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons, methyl chloroform and carbon tetrachlorides.
- These chemical substances are mainly either chlorine or bromine which can reach the stratosphere and catalytically break down ozone into oxygen. CFCs are odourless, non-flammable, non-corrosive and nontoxic.
- For this reason, scientist originally believed CFCs could not possibly have any effect on the environment.
- That is why it is widely used in refrigeration and air conditioning, in foam and plastic manufacturing and in aerosol sprays.
- It needs certain actions both at individual as well as governmental level. Since the last two decades, certain actions have been initiated at global level.
- Among these **Montreal Protocol of 1987** and **London Conference of 1992** are important.
- In both these conferences it was decided that the developed countries would totally ban CFC production by 2000 and the developing countries by 2010AD.

Source: The Hindu

Reports, Indices, Organisations and Committees

Q.1) “Sargent plan” during British period in India is related to which of the following?

- a) Education
- b) Finance
- c) Partition
- d) Railways

ANS: A

Explanation: The goal of the Sargent plan was the reorganization of the entire education system of India.

The commission under the chairmanship of the John Sargent submitted its report to the Central Advisory Board of Education C.A.B.E in (1944).

This scheme of post war educational development was mainly focused on the quality enhancement of higher education (ie. university system).

Recommendations-

- Pre-primary basic school for 3-6 years age group.
- Compulsory and free education for 6-14 year age group.
- High school education of two types – Academic & Technical and Vocational.
- Refresher courses for teachers and better salary for them.
- Abolition of intermediate courses.
- Standard of the universities must be raised.
- Admission should be restricted so only the capable students can go for the higher education.

Source: Spectrum

Q.2) Consider the following statements regarding the **NOT financial stability report (FSR)**:

1. It is released biannually by Reserve Bank of India.
2. It is approved by sub-committee of Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) before it is published.

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 **Financial Stability Reports (FSR)**, published by Reserve Bank of India, after approved by FSDC Sub-Committee since its inception, taking inputs from financial sector regulators i.e. RBI, SEBI, PFRDA, IRDAI including Ministry of Finance, are periodic exercise for reviewing the nature, magnitude and implications of risks that may have a bearing on the macroeconomic environment, financial institutions, markets and infrastructure.

- These reports will also assess the resilience of the financial sector through stress tests.
- FSR is a biannual publication.

Source: RBI

Q.3) Consider the following statements regarding the **Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth (CCIG)**:

1. It was created in 2014 to promote capital investment and growth of the economy.
2. It is headed by finance minister.

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: In June 2019, the Union government formed two cabinet committees — one on Investment, the other on Employment and Skill Development.

The Prime Minister constitutes Standing Committees of the Cabinet and sets out the specific functions assigned to them. He can add or reduce the number of committees.

Investment: The Cabinet Committee on Investment will “identify key projects required to be implemented on a time-bound basis”, involving investments of Rs 1,000 crore or more, or any other critical projects, as may be specified by it, with regard to infrastructure and manufacturing.

- It will prescribe time limits for giving requisite approvals and clearances by the ministries concerned in identified sectors.
- It will also monitor the progress of such projects.

Employment: The Cabinet Committee on Employment and Skill Development is supposed to provide “direction to all policies, programmes, schemes and initiatives for skill development aimed at increasing the employability of the workforce for effectively meeting the emerging requirements of the rapidly growing economy and mapping the benefits of demographic dividend”.

- It is required to enhance workforce participation, foster employment growth and identification, and work towards removal of gaps between requirement and availability of skills in various sectors.
- The panel will set targets for expeditious implementation of all skill development initiatives by the ministries and to periodically review the progress in this regard.

The addition of the two committees is indicative of the new focus areas for the government. The goal of both is new jobs.

Source: Indian Express

Q.4) Which of the following committee is related to **anti-defection law**?

- a) Halim Committee
- b) Santhanam Committee
- c) Bhagwan Sahay Committee
- d) None

ANS: A

Explanation: The Dinesh Goswami Committee on Electoral Reforms, the Law Commission of India and the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution has recommended a review of the anti-defection law.

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- The issues arising out of the decisions given by different Presiding Officers and the interpretation of the law by various courts were discussed at the Conferences of Presiding Officers of Legislative Bodies in India as well.
- In view of the near unanimity among the Presiding Officers for a review of the law, the then Speaker of Lok Sabha and Chairman of the Conference, Shri G.M.C. Balayogi constituted in October 1998 a **Committee of Presiding Officers headed by the Speaker of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly, Shri Hashim Abdul Halim**, to go into different aspects of the matter.
- The Committee presented its Report in February 2003 recommending inter alia that the provisions relating to splits and mergers be deleted from the Tenth Schedule; the terms 'voluntarily giving up membership' and 'political party' are defined; and that a time frame is laid down for decisions on the anti-defection cases.

Source: Shodhganga

Q.5) “Public Interest Foundation & Others vs Union of India 2018” case is related to which of the following?

- a) Criminalisation of Politics
- b) Gender Inequality
- c) Right to Privacy
- d) Right to Education

ANS: A

Explanation: The Supreme Court’s constitution bench, in its judgment in Public Interest Foundation & Others v Union of India, 2018 explains its limitations in preventing those **charged with heinous offences from becoming legislators and finds that Parliament** alone is competent to do so.

It satisfies itself by appealing to Parliament to make a law for this purpose on priority and issues a few directions to the Election Commission and the political parties to make the disclosure of the criminal antecedents of candidates contesting elections sufficient and clear to the voters, so that the latter could be warned not to vote the candidates, charged with serious offences.

Source: The Hindu

Q.6) Which of the following is/are major “**sub-group of Chief Ministers**” constituted by NITI aayog?

1. Sub-group on Rationalization of Centrally Sponsored Schemes
2. Sub-group on Skill Development
3. Sub-group on Renewable energy

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: The first meeting of the Governing Council of the NITI Aayog was held on 8th February, 2015 where the Hon’ble Prime Minister urged all Chief Ministers to work with the Centre to forge a model of cooperative federalism, whereby the Centre and the States – Team India – can come together to resolve differences, and chart a common course to progress and prosperity. In the spirit of cooperative federalism, therefore, the **Governing**

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Council had decided that the NITI Aayog would constitute three major Sub-Groups of Chief Ministers:

- RATIONALISATION OF CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES
- SKILL DEVELOPMENT
- SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN

In addition, it was also decided that the States will set up two Task Forces under the leadership of the NITI Aayog:

- Agriculture Development
- Poverty Elimination

Source: The Hindu

Q.7) The “**Tarkunde Committee**” is related to which of the following?

- a) Agriculture
- b) Primary Health
- c) Financial Inclusion
- d) Electoral reforms

ANS: D

Explanation: Jayprakash Narayan on behalf of the Citizens For Democracy had appointed a committee to study and report on scheme for **electoral reforms** in 1974. The members of the committee were V.M. Tarkunde, M.R. Masai, etc. and it is known as J.P. Committee or Tarkunde committee. The important recommendations of the **Tarkunde Committee** are as follows:

- The **election commission should be a three member body.**
- The **minimum age of voting should be 18 years.**
- The **TV and radio should be placed under the control of autonomous statutory corporation.**
- A **voter’s council should be formed in as many constituencies** as possible which can help in free and fair election.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.8) The “**World Wildlife Crime Report**” is published by which of the following?

- a) United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)
- b) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- c) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- d) Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

ANS: B

Explanation: The trafficking of wildlife is increasingly recognized as both a specialized area of organized crime and a significant threat to many plant and animal species.

- **The World Wildlife Crime Report (UNODC) takes stock of the present wildlife crime situation** with a focus on illicit trafficking of specific protected species of wild fauna and flora, and provides a broad assessment of the nature and extent of the problem at the global level.
- It includes a quantitative market assessment and a series of in-depth illicit trade case studies.

Source: The Hindu

Q.9) Which of the following is **NOT** a fundamental duty?

- a) To uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.

- b) To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood.
- c) To promote the welfare of the people by securing a social order.
- d) To safeguard public property and to abjure violence.

ANS: C

Explanation: According to Article 51 A, it shall be the duty of every citizen of India:

- to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- to cherish and follow the noble ideals that inspired the national struggle for freedom;
- to **uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;**
- to **promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood** amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities and to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- to value and preserve the rich heritage of the country's composite culture;
- to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures;
- to develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- to **safeguard public property and to abjure violence;**

To **promote the welfare of the people by securing a social order** permeated by justice—social, economic and political—and to minimize inequalities in income, status, facilities and opportunities is a **Directive Principles of State Policy**.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.10) Which of the following Act/Acts has/have been “**passed by Parliament on the request of the states**”?

1. The Prize Competition Act, 1955.
2. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
3. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: When the legislatures of two or more states pass resolutions requesting the Parliament to enact laws on a matter in the State List, then the Parliament can make laws for regulating that matter.

- A law so enacted applies only to those states which have passed the resolutions.
- However, any other state may adopt it afterwards by passing a resolution to that effect in its legislature.
- Such a law can be amended or repealed only by the Parliament and not by the legislatures of the concerned states.
- **Some examples of laws passed under the above provision are Prize Competition Act, 1955; Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972; Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974; Urban Land (Ceiling and Regulation) Act, 1976; and Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994.**

Source: Laxmikanth