

## *10 PM Current Affairs Quiz Compilation*

26th October to 1st November, 2020

*THIS IS A MONTHLY DOCUMENT CONTAINING ALL MCQS ASKED IN 10 PM  
CURRENT AFFAIRS QUIZ BY FORUMIAS.*

## 10 PM Compilation for the Week - 26<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2020

**Q.1)** What are **Safe water releaser (SWAS)** and **Safe minimal aluminium (SAFAL)** that have been in news recently?

- Greywater treatment modules
- Less Polluting Firecrackers
- Habitable outer space environment modules
- Artificial Intelligence based irrigation system

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** CSIR scientists had developed **Less Polluting Firecrackers** which are not only environment friendly but 15-20 % cheaper than the conventional ones. These crackers have been named as **safe water releaser (SWAS)**, **safe minimal aluminium (SAFAL)** and **safe thermite cracker (STAR)**.

SWAS crackers eliminates usage of (KNO<sub>3</sub>) Potassium nitrate and Sulphur with consequent reduction in particulate matter (30-35%) SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>. It has matching sound intensity with commercial crackers in the range of 105-110 dBA.

STAR eliminates usage of KNO<sub>3</sub> and S with consequent reduction in particulate matter (35-40%), SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>. It has matching sound intensity with commercial crackers in the range of 105-110 dBA.

SAFAL has minimal usage of aluminium (only in flash powder for initiation) with consequent significant reduction in particulate matter (35-40 %) compared to commercial crackers.

**Q.2)** Consider the following statements:

- Brown bears are endemic to Himalayan range.
- Himalayan brown bear is listed in the Schedule I of the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **Brown bears** are not endemic to Himalaya, rather various subspecies of the Brown bear are found in Europe, Russia, Himalaya and Alaska.

Statement 2 is correct. **Himalayan Brown bear** (*Ursus Arctos*) is listed in the Schedule I of the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972. The Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*) is listed as Least Concern in the IUCN Red List.

# *A recent study by Zoological Survey of India on the Himalayan brown bear (Ursus arctos isabellinus) has predicted a significant reduction in suitable habitat and biological corridors of the species in the climate change scenario.*

**Q.3)** Consider the following statements regarding the **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)**:

- It is a statutory body constituted under Environment Protection Act 1984.
- The Prime Minister is the chairperson of the board.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

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**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **National Board for Wildlife (NBWL)** is a statutory body constituted under **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**. The functions of the board are also enumerated under the act.

The WLPA mandates that without the approval/recommendation of the NBWL, construction of tourist lodges, alteration of the boundaries of PAs, destruction or diversion of wildlife habitat and de-notification of Tiger Reserves, cannot be done.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Prime minister** is the chairperson of the board while Minister of Environment, Forests & Climate Change is the Vice-Chairperson.

# *Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020-2025 has been approved by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) recently.*

**Q.4)** Consider the following statements regarding the **'yellow dust' blowing from China** recently:

1. It is the sand from Thar Desert that blows into North and South Korea through China.
2. World Health Organisation has issued advisory warning the spread of SARS-CoV-2 through this dust.

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

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **Yellow dust** refers to sand from **Mongolian and Chinese deserts** that blow into North and South Korea at certain times of the year. It is intermingled with toxic dust that for years has raised health concerns in both countries.

Statement 2 is incorrect. WHO has not issued any such advisory.

**North Korea** has though warned its citizens to stay indoors over fears that "yellow dust" which blows in from China could bring coronavirus with it.

# *The US Centres for Disease Control has said coronavirus can remain suspended in the air "for hours". However, it also says it is extremely rare for someone to be infected this way - especially outdoors. The main way people get infected is from standing in close proximity to someone who is infected who then coughs, sneezes or talks, spreading the virus through droplets.*

**Q.5)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Kisan Suryodaya Yojana**:

1. It is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Renewable Energy.
2. The scheme aims at providing solar power to farmers for irrigation during daytime.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. It is a scheme of the **Gujarat** government.

Prime Minister inaugurated three projects, including **Kisan Suryodaya Yojana** for the farmers in Gujarat recently.

Statement 2 is correct. Under the scheme, farmers will be able to avail **power supply from 5am to 9pm for irrigation purposes**. The state government has allocated a budget of Rs 3,500 crores for installing transmission infrastructure under this scheme by 2023.

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Dahod, Patan, Mahisagar, Panchmahal, Chhota Udepur, Kheda, Tapi, Valsad, Anand and Gir-Somnath districts have been covered under the scheme for 2020-21. The rest will be included in a phased manner by 2022-23.

**Q.6)** Which of the following vulture species is/are listed as **Critically Endangered under IUCN Red List**?

1. White-rumped Vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*)
2. Slender-billed vulture (*Gyps tenuirostris*)
3. Long-billed vulture (*Gyps indicus*)

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) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Nine species of vultures are found in India. The species worst hit are White-rumped, Indian (Long billed), and Slender-billed Vultures. These are also listed as **Critically Endangered in the IUCN RED List**.

The white-rumped vulture had previously numbered in the millions, and was possibly the most abundant large bird of prey in the world. The long-billed vulture had also been very common in India, while the slender-billed vulture had historically been less common.

Others are affected too, but not as badly, due to a number of factors, including their migratory nature (such as Cinereous Vulture and Eurasian Griffon) or their habitats being more remote and forested (such as Himalayan Griffon).

**Q.7)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Carbon Neutrality**:

1. It means to have a balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere.
2. India's Nationally Determined Contribution to Paris Agreement includes becoming Climate Neutral by 2050.

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **Carbon neutrality** means having a balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere in carbon sinks. Sometimes entities fund the equivalent amount of carbon savings elsewhere in the world to achieve neutrality.

Statement 2 is incorrect. India's **Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)** are:

- To reduce the emissions intensity of GDP by 33%–35% by 2030 below 2005 levels;
- To increase the share of non-fossil-based energy resources to 40% of installed electric power capacity by 2030, with help of transfer of technology and low-cost international finance including from Green Climate Fund (GCF);
- To create an additional (cumulative) carbon sink of 2.5–3 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.

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**Q.8)** What is **Khadi Oaxaca**?

- a) A farm-to-garment collective in Mexico
- b) A global Khadi brand of Khadi India
- c) A traditional khadi weave method of Gujarat
- d) A bacteria resistant variety approved by Khadi and Village Industries Commission

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** **Khadi Oaxaca** is a farm-to-garment collective which comprises around 400 families, which live and work on traditional farms and homesteads in the Oaxaca region of southern **Mexico**.

# It was mentioned by the Prime Minister in Mann ki Baat address on Sunday (October 25).

**Q.9)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS)**:

- 1. The Scheme is a specific response to the unprecedented situation of COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2. The National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC) provides hundred percent guarantee for loans under the scheme.

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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

The **Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS)** has been formulated as a specific response to the unprecedented situation caused by COVID-19 and the consequent lockdown, which has severely impacted manufacturing and other activities in the MSME sector.

The Scheme aims at mitigating the economic distress being faced by MSMEs by providing them additional funding of up to Rs. 3 lakh crores in the form of a fully guaranteed emergency credit line.

Under the Scheme, 100% guarantee coverage is provided by **National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC)** for additional funding of up to Rs. three lakh crores to eligible MSMEs and interested MUDRA borrowers, in the form of a Guaranteed Emergency Credit Line (GECL) facility.

The GECL is a loan for which 100% guarantee would be provided by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC) to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs).

**Q.10)** Consider the following statements regarding the **COVAX Facility**:

- 1. COVAX is the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator.
- 2. It is led by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **COVAX** is the vaccines pillar of the Access to **COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator**.

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The ACT Accelerator is a ground-breaking global collaboration to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines.

Statement 2 is incorrect. COVAX is co-led by **Gavi**, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (**CEPI**) and **WHO**. Its aim is to accelerate the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines, and to guarantee fair and equitable access for every country in the world.

# *World Health Organization Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has said that 184 countries have now joined the COVAX facility.*

**Q.11)** Which of the following country(s) is/are currently listed as '**Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring**' by FATF?

1. Iceland
2. Pakistan
3. Myanmar

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) All of the above

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** The statement "**Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring**" (Grey List) identifies countries that are actively working with the FATF to address strategic deficiencies in their regimes to counter money laundering, terrorist financing, and proliferation financing.

**Iceland and Mongolia were recently taken off the Grey List.**

Jurisdictions with strategic deficiencies: Albania, The Bahamas, Barbados, Botswana, Cambodia, Ghana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Syria, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

**Q.12)** The **Galwan River** is a tributary of which of the following river?

- a) Shyok River
- b) Zaskar River
- c) Hunza River
- d) Nubra River

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The **Galwan valley** is the land that sits between steep mountains that buffet the Galwan River. The river has its source in Aksai Chin, on China's side of the LAC, and it flows from the east to Ladakh, where it meets the **Shyok River** on India's side of the LAC.

### **Contested valley**

For the first time since 1962, the Galwan Valley has emerged as a site of dispute



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**Q.13)** Consider the following statements regarding the **e-Sanjeevani Platform**:

1. It is a web-based telemedicine solution.
2. It has been developed by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).

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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

**eSanjeevani** is Government of India's flagship telemedicine technology developed by Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (Mohali).

'eSanjeevani', is a web-based comprehensive telemedicine solution. It extends the reach of specialized healthcare services to masses in both rural areas and isolated communities.

*As per PIB [August release] eSanjeevani has been implemented so far by 23 States and other States are in the process of rolling it out.*

*The top five States which have been utilizing the e-health services being offered through this platform are Tamil Nadu (56,346 consultations), Uttar Pradesh (33,325), Andhra Pradesh (29,400), Himachal Pradesh (26,535) and Kerala (21,433).*

**Q.14)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**:

1. It bans the use, possession, development, testing, deployment and transfer of nuclear weapons under international law.
2. India is a signatory to this treaty.

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. The **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)** includes a comprehensive set of prohibitions on participating in any nuclear weapon activities. These include undertakings not to develop, test, produce, acquire, possess, stockpile, use or threaten to use nuclear weapons.

The Treaty also prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons on national territory and the provision of assistance to any State in the conduct of prohibited activities. States parties will be obliged to prevent and suppress any activity prohibited under the TPNW undertaken by persons or on territory under its jurisdiction or control.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The treaty was approved by the 193-member **UN General Assembly** in 2017 by a vote of 122 in favour. Among countries voting in favor was Iran. The five nuclear powers and four other countries known or believed to possess nuclear weapons — **India**, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel — **boycotted negotiations** and the vote on the treaty, along with many of their allies.

India [2017] said that it supports the commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention in the Conference on Disarmament, which is the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum working on the basis of consensus.

*# The United Nations recently announced that 50 countries have ratified a UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons triggering its entry into force in 90 days.*

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**Q.15)** Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct regarding the **Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)**?

1. Evidence shows that people wore cotton garments in IVC.
2. Wheat and barley constituted the staple food.

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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

The **Archaeological Department of India** carried out excavations in the Indus valley post 1920s wherein the ruins of the two old cities; Mohenjodaro and Harappa were unearthed.

The ruins of buildings and other things like household articles, weapons of war, gold and silver ornaments, seals, toys, pottery wares, etc., show that some four to five thousand years ago a highly developed Civilization flourished in this region.

The Indus valley civilization was basically an **urban** civilization and the people lived in well-planned and well-built towns, which were also the centers for trade. They had wide roads and a well-developed drainage system. The houses were made of baked bricks and had two or more storeys.

The highly civilized Harappans knew the art of **growing cereals, and wheat and barley** constituted their staple food. Evidences also show that they wore **cotton** as well as woollen garments.

By 1500 BC, the Harappan culture came to an end. Among various causes ascribed to the decay of Indus Valley Civilization are the recurrent floods and other natural causes like earthquake, etc.

*# The year 2020 marks 100 years of discovery of Indus Valley Civilisation, and a new study has shown that dairy products were being produced by the Harappans as far back as 2500 BCE.*

**Q.16)** Consider the following statements:

1. Snow Leopard is listed as a Vulnerable species under the IUCN Red List.
2. India is party to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) Programme.
3. Himal Sanrakshak is a community volunteer programme for protection of Snow Leopards.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **Snow leopards** are officially recognized as **Vulnerable** on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Their general population trend is thought to be decreasing. Localized extinctions are believed to have occurred in some areas of the former Soviet Union, including Kyrgyzstan.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Program (GSLEP)** seeks to address high-mountain development issues using the conservation of the



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charismatic and endangered snow leopard as a flagship. **India** is also party to the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) Programme since 2013.

Statement 3 is correct. In India, their **geographical range** encompasses a large part of the western Himalayas including the states and UTs of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

Recently, during a virtual meet, community volunteer programme “**Himal Sanrakshak**” was launched by Minister of Environment for snow leopard conservation.

**Q.17)** What was the mandate of the **K.S. Radhakrishnan Committee**?

- a) National Education Policy
- b) Conservation of Eco-Sensitive Zones
- c) Road Safety in India
- d) Personal data protection policy

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation: Supreme Court's Road Safety Committee headed the Justice KS Radhakrishnan** was formed by the apex court on the basis of a PIL to measure and monitor the implementation of road safety laws in the country.

In its report [2015], the panel has recommended for ban on sale of alcohol on highways, both National and State highways, to curb the menace of road accident.

A total of 151,113 people were killed in 480,652 road accidents across India in 2019, an average of 414 a day or 17 an hour, according to a report by the transport research wing of the ministry of road transport and highways.

According to the report, speeding was the leading cause of deaths, while, in terms of vehicles, two-wheelers were involved in most road fatalities.

**India continued to have the most road fatalities in the world, followed by China.**

**Q.18)** Consider the following statements regarding the **India–Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)**:

- 1. It is being organised by Atal Innovation Mission in collaboration with Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation.
- 2. It will focus on identification and development of innovative technology solutions by students, startups and MSMEs of both nations.

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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

**AIM (Atal Innovation Mission)**, in association with CSIRO, is organizing a two-day hackathon on circular economy, 'India–Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)' in collaboration with Australia's **Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation** (CSIRO).

I-ACE will focus on identification and development of innovative technology solutions by bright-minded students, startups and MSMEs of both nations. Shortlisted students and startups/MSMEs will be called for the hackathon, where two winners (one student and one startup/MSME) per theme from each country will be awarded.

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**Q.19)** Which of the following statements most appropriately defines an ‘**Integrity Pact**’?

- A pact to prevent any corrupt practice in any aspect of a contract at any stage
- An intergovernmental agreement to not deal with countries adverse to each other
- Agreement prohibiting any environmental damage while infrastructural development
- A pact among political parties to not field tainted candidates in elections

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** “**Integrity Pact**” is a vigilance tool that envisages an agreement between the prospective vendors/bidders and the buyer, committing both (contracting) the parties not to exercise any corrupt influence on any aspect of the contract. The pact is also to ensure transparency, equity and competitiveness in public procurement.

**Q.20)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Blood Plasma**:

1. The Convalescent plasma therapy uses blood from people who've recovered from an infection.

2. Plasma makes up more than half of the Blood content.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **Convalescent plasma**, extracted from the blood of patients recovering from an infection, is a source of antibodies against the infection. The therapy involves using their plasma to help others recover.

Statement 2 is correct. Blood is a specialized body fluid. It has four main components: plasma, red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets.

Plasma is the largest part of your blood. It, makes up **more than half (about 55%)** of its overall content. When separated from the rest of the blood, plasma is a light-yellow liquid. Plasma carries water, salts and enzymes.

The main role of plasma is to take nutrients, hormones, and proteins to the parts of the body that need it. Cells also put their waste products into the plasma. The plasma then helps remove this waste from the body. Blood plasma also carries all parts of the blood through your circulatory system.

**Q.21)** Consider the following statements regarding geography of **South America**:

1. Chile’s north-south expansion is more than that of Brazil.

2. Patagonia region of South America is shared by Argentina and Chile.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **Chile** is the **longest north-south trending** country in the world, extending across 39 degrees of latitudes, around 2653 miles (4,270 km). Brazil is the second-longest country as it extends across 38 degrees of latitudes.

Statement 2 is correct. **Patagonia** is a region encompassing the vast southernmost tip of South America, shared by **Argentina** and **Chile**, with the Andes Mountains as its dividing

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line. The Argentine side features arid steppes, grasslands and deserts, while the Chilean has glacial fjords and temperate rainforest.

**Q.22)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Goods and Services Tax** in India:

1. It for the first time in India introduced taxation on services.
2. It is a destination-based tax.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. The provisions relating to **Service Tax** were brought into force with effect from **July 1, 1994** by chapter V of the Finance Act, 1994.

Goods and Services Tax was launched all over India with effect from 1 July 2017.

Statement 2 is correct. **Destination based tax** or consumption tax are levied where goods and services are consumed. GST is a destination-based tax, i.e., the goods/services will be taxed at the place where they are consumed and not at the origin.

**Q.23)** Which of the following agreement(s) have been signed between **India and United States of America**?

1. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)
2. Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)
3. Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Option 1 is incorrect. **India has not signed Status of Forces Agreement with USA.** A status of forces agreement (SOFA) is an agreement between a host country and a foreign nation stationing military forces in that country.

Option 2 is correct. Logistics agreements are administrative arrangements which help to facilitate the replenishment of fuel, rations, spares, and berthing and maintenance for the other nations' warships, military aircraft and troops during routine port calls, joint exercises and training carried out in each other's countries as well as during humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR).

**India signed LEMOA with USA in 2016.**

Option 3 is correct. **India recently signed the BECA with USA at 2+2 meeting.** It is essentially a communication agreement proposed between the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency of the US Department of Defence and the Ministry of Defence of the Government of India.

It will allow India and the US to share military information including advanced satellite and topographic data such as maps, nautical and aeronautical charts and geodetic, geophysical, geomagnetic and gravity data.

*# India and the US have already signed three key foundational agreements — General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) in 2002, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016 and Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018.*

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**Q.24)** Which of the following organization has released the report **The World's Women 2020**?

- a) UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
- b) World Health Organization (WHO)
- c) UN Women
- d) Amnesty International

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The **World's Women reports** are prepared by the Statistics Division of the **UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)** at five-year intervals, starting in 1990.

The **World's Women 2020: Trends and Statistics** compiles 100 data stories that provide a snapshot of the state of gender equality worldwide.

The report analyses gender equality in six critical areas: population and families; health; education; economic empowerment and asset ownership; power and decision-making; and violence against women and the girl child as well as the impact of COVID-19.

Less than 50% of working-age women are in the labour market, a figure that has barely changed over the last quarter of a century. Unpaid domestic and care work falls disproportionately on women, restraining their economic potential as the COVID-19 pandemic additionally affects women's jobs and livelihoods, the report warns.

**Q.25)** Consider the following statements regarding the NASA's **SOFIA Mission**:

1. It a lander-rover project on the surface of Moon.
2. It has confirmed the presence of water on the surface of the Moon.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **SOFIA, the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy**, is a Boeing 747SP aircraft modified to carry a 2.7-meter (106-inch) reflecting telescope (with an effective diameter of 2.5 meters or 100 inches).

Flying into the stratosphere at 38,000-45,000 feet puts SOFIA above 99 percent of Earth's infrared-blocking atmosphere, allowing astronomers to study the solar system and beyond in ways that are not possible with ground-based telescopes.

**SOFIA is designed to observe the infrared universe.** Many objects in space emit almost all their energy at infrared wavelengths and are often invisible when observed with visible light.

Statement 2 is correct. NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) has confirmed, for the **first time, water on the sunlit surface of the Moon.** This discovery indicates that water may be distributed across the lunar surface, and not limited to cold, shadowed places.

SOFIA has detected water molecules (H<sub>2</sub>O) in Clavius Crater, one of the largest craters visible from Earth, located in the Moon's southern hemisphere.

**Q.26)** Which of the following State(s) of India share border with **Myanmar**?

1. Nagaland
2. Manipur
3. Arunachal Pradesh

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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) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Four Northeast Indian states share the border with Myanmar: **Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur.**



**Q.27)** The **National Conference on Vigilance and Anti-Corruption** is being organized by which of the following institution?

- a) Central Bureau of Investigation
- b) Central Vigilance Commission
- c) NITI Aayog
- d) Bureau of Police Research and Development

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The Prime Minister recently inaugurated the **National Conference on Vigilance and Anti-Corruption** on the theme 'Vigilant India, Prosperous India'.

The **Central Bureau of Investigation** organizes this National Conference coinciding with 'Vigilance Awareness Week', which is observed in India every year from 27th October to 2nd November.

Activities in this conference would be focused on Vigilance issues aimed at raising awareness and reaffirming India's commitment to promotion of integrity and probity in public life through citizen participation.

**Q.28)** The **Bani Thani painting** is associated with which of the following place?

- a) Bundi
- b) Kishangarh
- c) Garhwal
- d) Kullu

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** **Bani Thani paintings** are group of Indian miniature paintings of around 1750 attributed to Nihal Chand from the Marwar school of Kishangarh show Krishna and Radha.

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It is a totally different style with highly exaggerated features like long necks, large, almond shaped eyes, and long fingers. This style of painting essentially depicts Radha and Krishna as divine lovers, and beautifully portrays their mystical love.

**Kishangarh miniature painting** reached a peak in the eighteenth century, during the rule of Raja Sawant Singh, who fell in love with a slave girl, Bani Thani and commanded his artists to portray himself and her as Krishna and Radha.

**Q.29)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Central Vigilance Commission**:

1. It was established on recommendation of the K. Santhanam Committee.
2. It is a statutory body monitoring vigilance activity under the Central Government.

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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

The **Central Vigilance Commission** was set up by the Government in February, 1964 on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by Shri K. Santhanam, to advise and guide Central Government agencies in the field of vigilance.

CVC are conceived to be the apex vigilance institution, free of control from any executive authority, monitoring all vigilance activity under the Central Government and advising various authorities in Central Government organizations in planning, executing, reviewing and reforming their vigilant work.

It is a statutory authority under the **Central Vigilance Commission Act 2003**. It consists of a Central Vigilance Commissioner – Chairperson and not more than two Vigilance Commissioners – Members.

**Q.30)** Which of the following is/are correctly matched?

1. Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant - Iran
2. Barakah nuclear power plant - United Arab Emirates

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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** **Natanz** is **Iran's** primary nuclear enrichment facility and houses both the commercial Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) and the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant (PFEP).

The **Barakah** nuclear power plant is the **United Arab Emirates's** first nuclear power station, the first nuclear power station in the Arabian Peninsula.

**Q.31)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** signed between India and USA:

1. It allows the militaries of the US and India to replenish from each other's bases, and access supplies.
2. It will enable sharing of advanced satellite and topographic data such as maps, nautical and aeronautical charts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) signed in August 2016** allows the militaries of the US and India to replenish from each other's bases, and access supplies, spare parts and services from each other's land facilities, air bases, and ports, which can then be reimbursed.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** for geo-spatial cooperation is essentially a communication agreement proposed between the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency of the US Department of Defence and the Ministry of Defence of the Government of India.

It will allow India and the US to share military information including advanced satellite and topographic data such as maps, nautical and aeronautical charts and geodetic, geophysical, geomagnetic and gravity data.

**Q.32)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**:

1. The Legislative Assembly of UT of Jammu and Kashmir can make laws on any subject in State list except land and public order.
2. Parliament has the power to make laws in relation to any matter for the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** The Act provides for a **Legislative Assembly** for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Statement 1 is incorrect. The Legislative Assembly may make laws for any part of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir related to: (i) any matters specified in the State List of the Constitution, except "**Police**" and "**Public Order**", and (ii) any matter in the Concurrent List applicable to Union Territories.

Further, **Parliament** will have the power to make laws in relation to any matter for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Statement 2 is correct.

**Q.33)** Which of the following institution has released the '**Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities**' report?

- a) International Energy Agency
- b) Solar Energy Corporation of India
- c) Central Electricity Authority
- d) None of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** **NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation, and Smart Power India** launched the '**Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities**' report recently.

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Based on a primary survey conducted across 10 states—representing about 65% of the total rural population of India and with a sample size of more than 25,000, including households, commercial enterprises and institutions—the report assesses 25 distribution utilities.

**Key findings** of the report:

- As much as 92% of customers reported the overall availability of electricity infrastructure within 50 metres of their premises; however, not all have connections, the primary reason being the distance of households from the nearest pole.
- Overall, 87% of the surveyed customers have access to grid-based electricity. The remaining 13% either use non-grid sources or don't use any electricity at all.
- The hours of supply have improved significantly across the customer categories to nearly 17 hours per day.
- Nearly 85% of customers reported to have a metered electricity connection.
- Access to electricity is observed in 83% of household customers.
- A satisfaction index was created to assess the overall satisfaction level of customers with utility services. The study suggested that a total of 66% of those surveyed were satisfied—74% of customers in urban areas and 60% in rural areas.

**Q.34)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Amur Falcons**:

1. These migratory birds travel from Siberia to India before heading towards Africa in winter.
  2. It listed as a Vulnerable species in the IUCN Red List.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. Every October, flocks of **Amur falcons** from Siberia start landing in north east India (fame for Pangti village of Nagaland). Thousands of these small raptors (*Falco amurensis*) frolic in the village for about two months before they head for warmer climes in Kenya and South Africa in a non-stop flight over the Arabian Sea. Statement 2 is incorrect. *Falco amurensis* is listed as **Least Concern** under IUCN Red List. # *Chuilon and Irang, the radio-tagged Amur Falcons, arrived in Manipur after completing one migratory journey that covered 29,000 km in 361 days recently.*

**Q.35)** The **Annual State of Education Report (ASER)** survey is conducted by which of the following organisation?

- a) National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)
- b) NITI Aayog
- c) Non-Government Organisation 'Pratham'
- d) Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** **ASER** is a nationwide survey of rural education and learning outcomes in terms of reading and arithmetic skills that has been conducted by the **NGO Pratham** for the last 15 years. This year, the survey was conducted via phone calls, reaching 52,227 rural households with school age children in 30 States and Union Territories.



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### Learning hit

Some highlights from the Annual Status of Education Report's September survey:

- 5.3% of rural children aged 6-10 years are not enrolled in school this year, in comparison to just 1.8% in 2018
- Around 20% of rural children did not have textbooks at home by September
- About 70% of rural children did some learning activity. Of these, only 11% had live online classes
- Less than 36% of rural children received some learning materials or activities from the school. Almost 75% of such school interaction was via Whatsapp

**Q.36)** Consider the following statements:

1. India has not signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).
2. QUAD is an informal group of countries located around the Indian Ocean.

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 correct. The **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** is a proposed free trade agreement between the ten member states of ASEAN (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) and five of their FTA partners—Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea.

**India opted out of RCEP** in November 2019 in ASEAN+3 summit, citing the adverse impact the deal would have on its citizens.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) is an informal strategic forum between the **United States, Japan, Australia and India.**

# USA and Japan are not in Indian Ocean.

**Q.37)** Which of the following Central Asian country does *not* border the **Aral Sea**?

1. Kazakhstan
2. Tajikistan
3. Uzbekistan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: B**

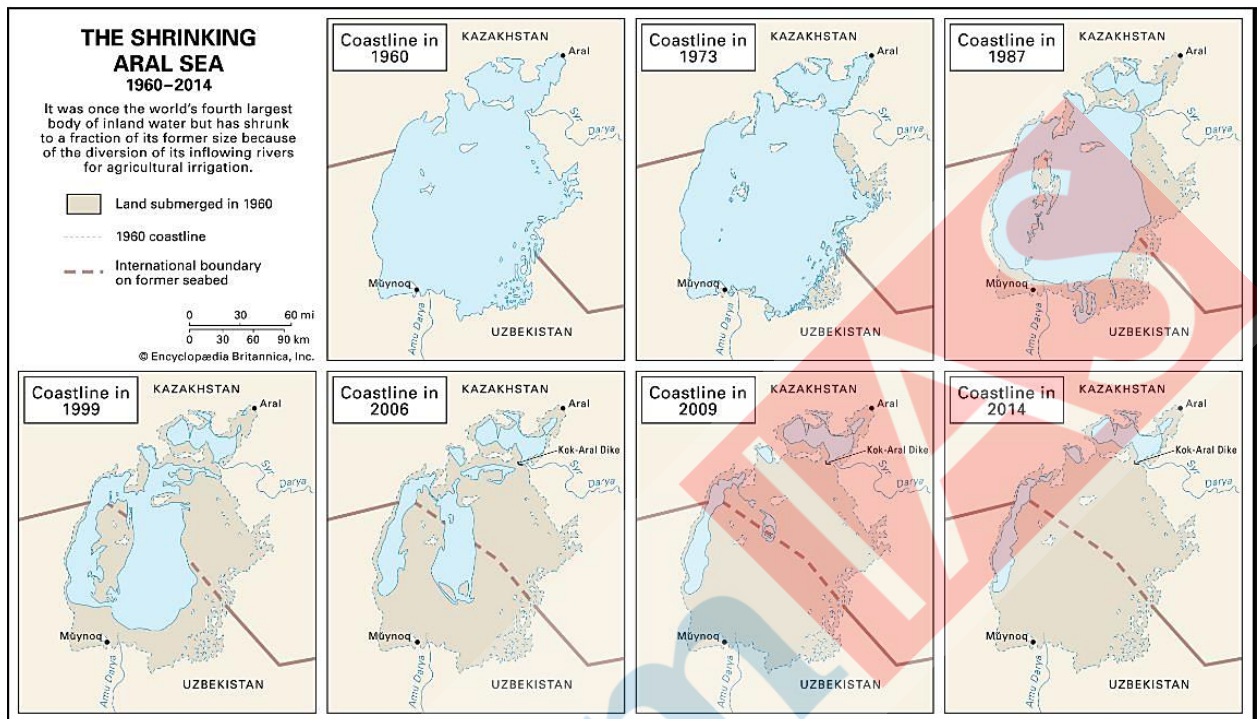
**Explanation:** The **Aral Sea** was an endorheic lake lying between **Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan** which began shrinking in the 1960s and had largely dried up by the 2010s.

In the 1960s, the Soviet Union undertook a major water diversion project on the arid plains of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.

The region's two major rivers, fed by snowmelt and precipitation in faraway mountains, were used to transform the desert into farms for cotton and other crops. Before the project,

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the **Syr Darya and the Amu Darya** rivers flowed down from the mountains, cut northwest through the Kyzylkum Desert, and finally pooled together in the lowest part of the basin. The lake they made, the Aral Sea, was once the fourth largest in the world. Although irrigation made the desert bloom, it devastated the Aral Sea.



**Q.38)** Consider the following statements regarding **International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)**:

1. An IFSC caters to customers outside the jurisdiction of the domestic economy.
2. India's first IFSC's is being set up in GIFT City in Gujarat.

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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

An IFSC caters to customers **outside the jurisdiction** of the domestic economy. Such centres deal with flows of finance, financial products and services across borders. London, New York and Singapore can be counted as global financial centres.

An expert panel headed by former World Bank economist Percy Mistry submitted a report on making Mumbai an international financial centre in 2007. However, the global financial crisis that unfolded in 2008 made countries including India cautious about rapidly opening up their financial sectors.

Finance Minister announced in the Union Budget 2015 that India's first IFSC's would be set up in GIFT City in Gujarat.

# *The United Kingdom has entered into a strategic partnership to develop India's fledgling international financial services centre GIFT City, and agreed to set up a new Fund of Funds to be managed by the State Bank of India group in order to route U.K.'s future capital investments into India.*

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**Q.39)** Which of the following is/are **Earth Observation Satellites** of ISRO?

1. HySIS
2. RISAT-2BR1
3. CARTOSAT-3

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) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** All of the above are **Earth Observation Satellites**.

Starting with IRS-1A in 1988, ISRO has launched many operational remote sensing satellites. Today, India has one of the largest constellations of remote sensing satellites in operation.

The data from these satellites are used for several applications covering agriculture, water resources, urban planning, rural development, mineral prospecting, environment, forestry, ocean resources and disaster management.

**HySIS** is an Earth observation satellite which will provide hyperspectral imaging services to India for a range of applications in agriculture, forestry and in the assessment of geography such as coastal zones and inland waterways.

**RISAT-2BR1** is a radar imaging earth observation satellite. The satellite will provide services in the field of Agriculture, Forestry and Disaster Management.

**Cartosat-3** satellite is a third-generation agile advanced satellite having high resolution imaging capability. It addresses the increased user's demands for large scale urban planning, rural resource and infrastructure development, coastal land use and land cover etc.

# ISRO will launch its latest earth observation satellite EOS-01 and nine international customer spacecraft onboard its PSLV-C49 rocket from the spaceport of Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh on November 7.

**Q.40)** Which of the following is/are listed as **Directive Principle of State Policy** under the Constitution?

1. Early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years
2. State to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living and to improve public health.
3. State to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India.

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) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** The Constitution lays down certain Directive Principles of State Policy, which though not justiciable, are 'fundamental in governance of the country', and it is the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws.

Option 1 is correct. The State shall endeavour to provide early **childhood care** and education for all children until they complete the age of six years. [Article 45]

Option 2 is correct. The State shall regard the raising of the level of **nutrition and the standard of living** of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary

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duties and, in particular, the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health. [Article 47]

Option 3 is correct. The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a **uniform civil code** throughout the territory of India. [Article 44]

**Q.41)** India is a member of which of the following regime(s)?

1. Australia Group
2. Missile Technology Control Regime
3. Wassenaar Arrangement

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) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Option 1 is correct. The **Australia Group (AG)** is an informal association that works on the basis of consensus. It aims to allow exporters or transshipment countries to minimize the risk of further proliferation of chemical and biological weapons (CBW).

India became the 43rd member of the Australia Group in 2018.

Option 2 is correct. The **Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)** is an informal non-treaty association of governments sharing common interests in the nonproliferation of missiles, unmanned air vehicles, and related technologies. The regime consists of the Guidelines and an Equipment and Technology Annex.

In 2016, India became a full member of the MTCR. This marked the first entry into any multilateral export control regime for India.

Option 3 is correct. **Wassenaar Arrangement** membership is universal and nondiscriminatory for countries meeting the established criteria:

- Produce/export arms or associated dual-use goods and technologies
- Implement national policies that do not permit the sale of arms or sensitive dual-use items to countries whose behavior is a cause for concern
- Adhere to international nonproliferation norms and guidelines
- Implement fully effective export controls

India became Arrangement's 42nd State in 2017.

**Q.42)** Which of the following statements correctly defines the Strategic Trade Authorisation (STA)?

- a) License exception with regards to exports from the USA
- b) European Union dual-use material export control regime
- c) World Trade Organisation's regulations regarding defence technology transfer
- d) India's defence technology transfer arrangement

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation: Strategic Trade Authorisation (STA)** allows for license exception with regards to exports from the US. This type of **US government authorisation** allows a certain item to be exported under defined conditions without a transaction-specific license.

India became the third Asian country after Japan and South Korea to get the Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 (STA-1) status in 2018 mostly for the purposes of increasing the speed of sale of high-tech defence and non-defence products that are otherwise subjected to strict controls and licensing.

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**Q.43)** Arrange the following events in chronological order:

1. India sent Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) to disarm the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
2. Goa officially becoming part of India
3. India Gandhi was assassinated

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Portugal continued to challenge India's claim on its coastal enclave of Goa post 1947. Following an incident of firing by Portuguese troops at Indian steamers and fishing boats, India sent in the army to liberate the territory by force. On **December 19, 1961, Goa officially became part of India** and two years later, held its first general election.

The then Prime Minister of India **Indira Gandhi was assassinated on 31 October 1984** at her residence in Safdarjung Road, New Delhi. She was killed by her Sikh bodyguards Satwant Singh and Beant Singh in the aftermath of Operation Blue Star.

**Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF)** was the Indian military contingent performing a peacekeeping operation in Sri Lanka between **1987 and 1990**. It was formed under the mandate of the 1987 Indo-Sri Lankan Accord that aimed to end the Sri Lankan Civil War between Sri Lankan Tamil nationalists such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Sri Lankan military.

**Q.44)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP)**:

1. The scheme aims at strengthening dam safety in the Himalayan region of India only.
2. The project is supported by the financial assistance from the World Bank.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. The project originally [2011] envisaged the rehabilitation and improvement of 223 dam projects in four states namely, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu. Later Karnataka, Uttarakhand (UJVNL) and Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) joined the DRIP.

DRIP Phase II & Phase III envisages comprehensive rehabilitation of 736 existing dams located across the country.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP)** started with financial assistance from World Bank in 2011.

Recently, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the DRIP Phase II & Phase III with the financial assistance of the **World Bank (WB), and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** to improve the safety and operational performance of selected dams across the whole country, along with institutional strengthening with system wide management approach.

DRIP Phase II & Phase III envisages the following objectives:

-- To improve the safety and performance of selected existing dams and associated appurtenances in a sustainable manner.

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- To strengthen the dam safety institutional setup in participating states as well as at central level, and
- To explore the alternative incidental means at few of selected dams to generate the incidental revenue for sustainable operation and maintenance of dams

**Q.45)** Consider the following statements regarding the “**Meri Saheli**” initiative of Indian Railways:

1. This initiative provides a fifty percent reservation for female passengers on selected routes.
2. The initiative is based on feedback from female passengers and corrective actions thereon.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. Indian Railways has launched “**Meri Saheli**” initiative for focused action on security of women across all zones with an objective to provide **safety and security to lady passengers** travelling by trains for their entire journey from starting station to destination station.

Statement 2 is correct. An initiative of RPF, the Strategy entails interaction with lady passengers especially those travelling alone by a team of young lady RPF personnel at the originating station.

RPF teams at the destination **collect the feedback from the identified lady passengers**. The feedback is then analysed and corrective action, if any, is taken. If some distress call comes from a train covered under “**Meri Saheli**” initiative, the disposal of the call is monitored at the level of senior officers.

**Q.46)** Arrange the following zones in **North to South** direction:

1. Indus-Tsangpo suture zone (ITSZ)
2. Main Boundary Thrust (MBT)
3. Main Central Thrust (MCT)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: C**

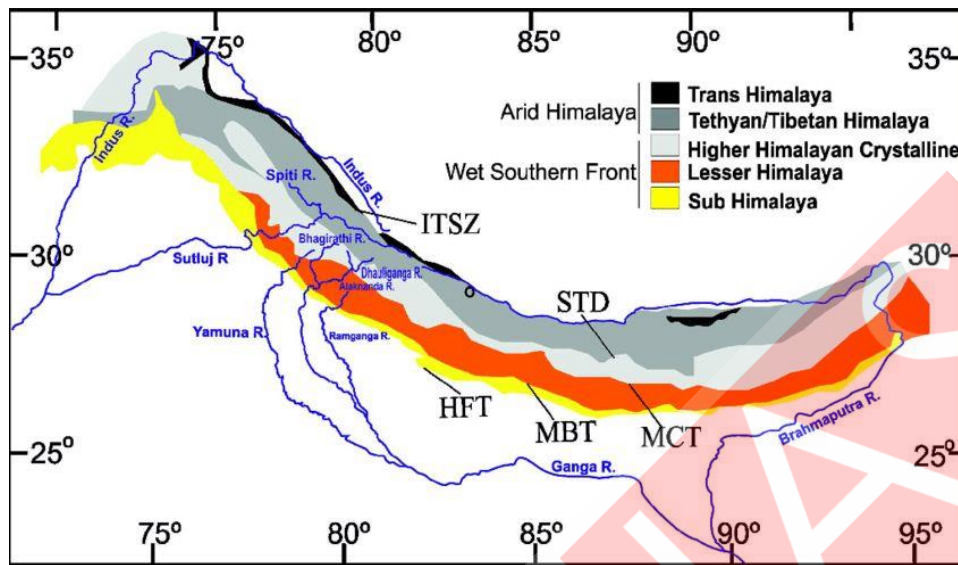
**Explanation:** **Indus Tsangpo suture** is a tectonic suture in southern Tibet and across the north margin of the Himalayas which resulted from the collision between the Indian plate and the Eurasian plate.

**Himalayas** are known to be made up of north dipping thrusts like the **Main Central Thrust (MCT), the Main Boundary Thrust (MBT), and the Main Frontal Thrust (MFT)**. As per the established models, all of these thrusts except MFT are locked, and overall deformation in Himalaya is being accommodated only along with the MFT.

Recently, a group of Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), Dehradun have observed that suture zone of the Himalayas or the **Indus Suture Zone (ISZ)**

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in the Ladakh region where Indian and Asian Plates are joined has been found to be **tectonically active**, as against current understanding that it is a locked zone.



**Q.47)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas**:

1. The Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the ex-officio chairperson of the commission.
2. The adjoining areas for the commission include State of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana.

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

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Both statements are incorrect.

Dissolving the 22-year-old Environmental Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) that has so far addressed air pollution in Delhi, the Central Government promulgated an **ordinance** to constitute “permanent” body — the **Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas**.

The adjoining areas for the body include Delhi NCR, Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

The proposed commission shall consist of a full-time chairperson who is or has been a Secretary to Union Government or Chief Secretary to Government of State.

**Q.48)** Which of the following is/are proposals under the **draft Coastal Shipping Bill, 2020**?

1. It is proposed to do away with the requirement of trading licence for Indian flag vessels for coastal trade.
2. Integration of coastal maritime transport with inland waterways.
3. National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan to be implemented.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

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- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Ministry of Shipping has issued the **draft of Coastal Shipping Bill, 2020** for suggestions from the stakeholders and general public

As the shipping sector grows and evolves in the country, a need was felt to have a separate legislation on coastal shipping, which considers it an integral part of the transport chain and recognizes the policy priorities of the sector to meet the demands of the Indian shipping industry. While drafting this Bill, the global best practices have also been considered.

--The definition of coastal shipping and coastal waters has been expanded.

--It is proposed to do away with the requirement of trading licence for Indian flag vessels for coastal trade.

--The Bill seeks to create a competitive environment and reduce transportation costs, while encouraging Indian vessels to increase their share in coastal shipping.

--The Bill also proposes integration of coastal maritime transport with inland waterways.

--There is a provision for a National Coastal and Inland Shipping Strategic Plan.

**Q.49)** Consider the following statements regarding the recently launched '**National Program and Project Management Policy Framework**':

1. It has been launched by Quality Council of India (QCI) in collaboration with NITI Aayog.
2. It aims to bring reforms in the way infrastructure projects are executed 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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

India will require an investment of around \$4.5 trillion by 2040 to develop the infrastructure for sustaining its economic growth. However, the challenges in infrastructure development that obstruct the smooth execution of projects can be a deterrent.

**NITI Aayog and Quality Council of India (QCI)** recently launched the '**National Program and Project Management Policy Framework**' (NPMPF), with the aim of bringing radical reforms in the way infrastructure projects are executed in India.

The **Indian Infrastructure Body of Knowledge (InBoK)**, a book on the practice of program and project management in India was also unveiled.

Further, a task force was also constituted to lay down a national program and project management policy framework.

**Q.50)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Pusa Decomposer**:

1. It is a fungi-based liquid solution that can soften the hard stubble.
2. The decomposer is an immediate solution for converting the agricultural waste into compost overnight.

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



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**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **Pusa Decomposer** developed by the Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI) is essentially a **fungi-based liquid** solution that can soften hard stubble to the extent that it can be easily mixed with soil in the field to act as compost.

This would then rule out the need to burn the stubble, and also help in retaining the essential microbes and nutrients in soil that are otherwise damaged when the residue is burned.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The window of time required for the solution to work, which is currently the main concern of farmers, is around **20 to 25 days**, as per the IARI.

*Farmers argue that this window is too long for them, as they ideally wait about a week or 10 days after harvesting the non-basmati variety of rice — which leaves hard stubble — to sow the wheat crop.*

**Q.51)** Consider the following statements regarding **Indian Monsoon**:

1. The long period average (LPA) of monsoon rainfall over India between 1961-2010 is about 88cm.
2. India Meteorological Department (IMD) has revised the monsoon arrival date in Kerala from June 1 to June 5 from this year onwards.

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. LPA of rainfall is the rainfall recorded over a particular region for a given interval (like month or season) average over a long period like 30years, 50-years etc.

**Current LPA** of all India south west monsoon rainfall based on the average rainfall over the period 1961 -2010 is **880.6mm**.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** has revised the normal onset and withdrawal dates based on recent data. The normal dates of onset are revised based on data during 1961-2019 and normal dates of withdrawal are revised based on data during 1971-2019.

**Monsoon onset over Kerala remains the same, i.e., 1 June.** However, new monsoon advance dates over the states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Telegana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and parts of Uttar Pradesh are delayed by 3-7 days compared to existing normal dates. However, over extreme northwest India, the monsoon arrives now little earlier, on 8th July compared to the existing date of 15th July. There are however appreciable changes in the monsoon withdrawal dates, especially over Northwest and Central India. Monsoon withdraws from NW India almost 7-14 days later from the existing dates. **There is no change in the final withdrawal date over south India, i.e., 15th October.**

**Q.52)** Consider the following statements regarding the **15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission**:

1. It recommended 42 percent devolution for share of States in the Centre's taxes for the Financial Year (FY) 2020-21.
2. The commission is mandated to recommend on distribution of tax revenues between the Union and the States uptill FY 2024-25 only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** The **Finance Commission is constituted by the President under article 280** of the Constitution, mainly to give its recommendations on distribution of tax revenues between the Union and the States and amongst the States themselves.

Statement 1 is incorrect. The share of states in the center's taxes was recommended to be decreased from 42% during the 2015-20 period to **41% for 2020-21**. The 1% decrease is to provide for the newly formed union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh from the resources of the central government.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The 15th Finance Commission (Chair: Mr N. K. Singh) was required to submit two reports. The first report, consisting of recommendations for the financial year 2020-21, was tabled in Parliament on February 1, 2020. The final report with recommendations for the next five financial years starting from **2021-22 to 2025-26** will be submitted on November 9, 2020.

**Q.53)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC)** provisions under the Constitution:

1. Two-thirds of the members of MPC shall be elected by, and amongst, the elected members of the Municipalities and Chairpersons of the Panchayats.
2. The member of the Legislative Assembly in the metropolitan area shall be ex-officio chairperson of the MPC.

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. Constitution under **article 243ZE** provides that there shall be constituted in every Metropolitan area a Metropolitan Planning Committee to prepare a draft development plan for the Metropolitan area as a whole.

The Legislature of a State may, by law, make provision with respect to-

--the composition of the Metropolitan Planning Committees;

--the manner in which the seats in such Committees shall be filled:

Provided that not less than **two-thirds of the members** of such Committee shall be elected by, and from amongst, the elected members of the Municipalities and Chairpersons of the Panchayats in the Metropolitan area in proportion to the ratio between the population of the Municipalities and of the Panchayats in that area.

Statement 2 is incorrect. No such provision exists. The Legislature of a State may, by law, make provision with respect to the manner in which the Chairpersons of such Committees shall be chosen.

**Q.54)** Which of the following country(s) border the **Aegean Sea**?

1. Turkey
2. Greece
3. Bulgaria

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** **Aegean Sea**, an arm of the Mediterranean Sea, located between the Greek peninsula on the west and Asia Minor on the east.

*A strong earthquake in the Aegean Sea has shaken Turkey and Greece on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020.*



**Q.55)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**:

1. It is an organ of the United Nations.
  2. India and China are both members to the IPU.
- 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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. The **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)** is the global organization of national parliaments and not a UN organ.

It is financed primarily by Members out of public funds. Its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.

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# The main organs of the UN are the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat.

Statement 2 is correct. The IPU has 179 Member Parliaments out of the 193 countries in the world – from huge nations like **China, India** and Indonesia, to the tiny States of Cabo Verde, San Marino and Palau.

All parliaments can join IPU if they are lawfully established national bodies operating in States or aspirational States recognized by the United Nations. On rare occasions, Members are suspended due to the unconstitutional dissolution of parliament.

# Lok Sabha Speaker will lead Indian Parliamentary delegation to 206th session of Governing Council of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to be held from 1 to 4 November 2020.

**Q.56)** What is ‘**Secure Application for Internet**’ (SAI) that has been launched recently?

- a) Simple messaging application developed by Indian Army
- b) A communication channel between Indian and USA defence forces
- c) An antivirus application developed by CSIR
- d) A secure firewall deployed by Reserve Bank of India to block unauthorized access

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** **Indian Army** has developed a simple messaging application named the Secure Application for Internet (SAI). The application supports end to end secure voice, text and video calling services for Android platform over the internet.

SAI scores over on security features with local in-house servers and coding which can be tweaked as per requirements. It will be utilized pan Army to facilitate secure messaging within the service.

**Q.57)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)**:

- 1. It is a Statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
  - 2. The SERB-POWER scheme has been specifically designed to promote Women Scientists.
- 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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. The **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)** is a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament, 2008. The mandate is to supports basic research in emerging areas of Science & Engineering.

Statement 2 is correct. “**SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research)**”, designed exclusively for women scientists was launched recently.

SERB POWER Scheme will have two components namely (i) SERB-POWER **Fellowship** (ii) SERB- POWER **Research Grants**. While a Search-cum-Selection Committee constituted for the purpose will help in identifying the POWER Fellowship, the existing Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) mechanism will be used to select the POWER Research Grants.

It is proposed to institute 25 POWER Fellowships annually. A total of 50 Power Grants each will be sanctioned in Level I & Level II per annum.

**Q.58)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Input Tax Credit (ITC)**:

- 1. It is a mechanism to avoid cascading of taxes.

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2. The Goods and Services Tax mechanism in India does not incorporate the ITC.

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **Input Tax Credit (ITC)** allows a person to avail credit of tax paid on the inward supply of goods or services or both which is used or intended to be used in the course or furtherance of business.

ITC is a mechanism to avoid cascading of taxes, i.e., 'tax on tax'.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Uninterrupted and seamless chain of input tax credit is **one of the key features of Goods and Services Tax**.

One of the most important features of the GST system is that the entire supply chain is subject to GST to be levied by Central and State Government concurrently. As the tax charged by the Central or the State Governments would be part of the same tax regime, credit of tax paid at every stage would be available as set-off for payment of tax at every subsequent stage.

**Q.59)** Consider the following statements regarding **Vallabhbhai Patel**:

- 1. He presided over the Congress session that ratified the Gandhi-Irwin pact.
- 2. He was the first Deputy Prime Minister of 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

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** Both statements are correct.

In March 1931 Vallabhbhai presided over the **46th session of the Indian National Congress at Karachi** which was called upon to ratify the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, which had just then been concluded.

He was the **first deputy prime minister of India**, while being home minister in Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet. He occupied the post for 3 years until his death in 1950. The post was vacant until Morarji Desai became the second deputy prime minister in 1967.

# *Sardar Patel's birth anniversary on 31st October is celebrated as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day).*

**Q.60)** Consider the following statements regarding the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR):

- 1. It was founded by Sardar Patel.
- 2. Its objectives include formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations.

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

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**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**, independent India's first Minister for Education, established many institutions such as the Sahitya Akademi, the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the Lalit Kala Akademi, and the **Indian Council for Cultural Relations**, and also provided a major stimulus for the setting up of the Indian Institutes of Technology.

Statement 2 is correct. The Objects of the Council as defined in the Memorandum of Association are:

--To participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations;

--To foster and strengthen **cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries;**

--To promote cultural exchange with other countries and peoples;

--To establish and develop relations with national and inter-national Organization in the field of culture;

--To take such measures as may be required to further these objectives.

# *The ICCR recently organised a global painting competition named 'United Against CORONA-Express through Art'.*

**Q.61)** Which of the following statements correctly defines **Superconductivity**?

- a) Some materials offering zero resistance at very low temperature
- b) Some materials offering infinite resistance at very low temperature
- c) Semiconductors offering conducting high conductivity due to photoelectric effect
- d) Insulators offering high conductivity at very high temperatures

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation: Superconductivity** is a phenomenon displayed by some materials when they are cooled below a certain temperature, known as the superconducting critical temperature. Below a certain "critical" temperature, materials undergo transition into the superconducting state, characterized by two basic properties: firstly, they offer no resistance to the passage of electrical current.

When resistance falls to zero, a current can circulate inside the material without any dissipation of energy. Secondly, provided they are sufficiently weak, external magnetic fields will not penetrate the superconductor, but remain at its surface. This field expulsion phenomenon is known as the Meissner effect, after the physicist who first observed it in 1933.

# *A group of researchers at University of Rochester, Intel corporation and University of Nevada in the U.S. have created a material that is superconducting at 15 degrees Celsius. But it needs ultrahigh pressure of about 2 million atmospheres to achieve this transition.*

**Q.62)** Consider the following statements regarding **India Energy Forum 2020**:

- 1. It is the inaugural edition being organized by the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- 2. It is an intergovernmental summit having participation of heads of governments from ISA countries.

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

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**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Both statements are incorrect.

The 2020 edition of the **India Energy Forum by CERAWEEK** is its fourth edition. The event is hosted by IHS Markit. The theme of this edition is "**India's Energy Future in a world of Change**".

It is not an intergovernmental summit, rather the event will convene an international group of speakers and a community of over a thousand delegates from India and over 30 countries, including from regional energy companies, energy-related industries, institutions and governments.

**Q.63)** Which of the following event took place first?

- a) K.R. Narayanan became President of India
- b) Pokhran-II tests
- c) Kargil War
- d) Starting of Tenth Five Year Plan

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation: K.R. Narayanan** was elected as Vice President in 1992, he went on to become President in 1997.

The **Pokhran-II** tests were a series of five nuclear bomb test explosions conducted by India at the Indian Army's Pokhran Test Range in May 1998. It was the second instance of nuclear testing conducted by India; the first test, code-named Smiling Buddha, was conducted in May 1974.

The **Kargil war** was fought between India and Pakistan between May and July 1999 in the Kargil district of Kashmir and along the Line of Control (LOC).

The time period for **Tenth FYP was 2002-07**.

**Q.64)** Which of the following pollutants is/are monitored under the **National Air Quality Index**?

1. SO<sub>2</sub>
2. NO<sub>2</sub>
3. NH<sub>3</sub>

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) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation: Air Quality Index** is a tool for effective communication of air quality status to people in terms, which are easy to understand. It transforms complex air quality data of various pollutants into a single number (index value), nomenclature and colour.

There are six AQI categories, namely Good, Satisfactory, Moderately polluted, Poor, Very Poor, and Severe. Each of these categories is decided based on ambient concentration values of air pollutants and their likely health impacts (known as health breakpoints). AQ sub-index and health breakpoints are evolved for eight pollutants (**PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, CO, O<sub>3</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub>, and Pb**).

**Q.65)** Consider the following statements regarding the **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons**:

1. It is an intergovernmental organisation of non-nuclear weapon countries.

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2. It has been awarded Nobel Peace Prize for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of use of nuclear weapons.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. The **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)** is promoting nuclear disarmament. ICAN is a coalition of non-governmental organizations in more than 100 countries and has been a leader in efforts that resulted in 122 United Nations member countries concurring with a draft agreement on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in 2017.

Statement 2 is correct. International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) was awarded with the **Nobel Peace Prize 2017** "for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons."

**Q.66)** Which of the following is/are correctly matched?

- 1. Khartoum - Sudan
- 2. Oaxaca - Mexico
- 2. Baku - Azerbaijan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** **Khartoum** is the capital of **Sudan**. It is located at the confluence of the White Nile, flowing north from Lake Victoria, and the Blue Nile, flowing west from Lake Tana in Ethiopia.

**Oaxaca** is in Mexico; it was in news recently as the **Khadi Oaxaca** collective was mentioned by the Prime Minister in *Mann Ki Baat*.

**Baku**, the capital and commercial hub of **Azerbaijan**, is a low-lying city with coastline along the Caspian Sea.

**Q.67)** What does the 'Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action' (BPfA) relate to?

- a) Women's rights
- b) Climate change
- c) Abolition of nuclear weapons
- d) Sustainable Development Goals

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** **Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995** took place in Beijing that came out with the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**, a progressive blueprint for advancing women's rights.

The document identifies 12 critical areas of concern. In each critical area of concern, the problem is diagnosed and strategic objectives are proposed with concrete actions to be taken by various actors in order to achieve those objectives. In this way, the BPfA becomes



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a comprehensive guide to understanding and combatting the key barriers to gender equality.

**Q.68)** Consider the following statements regarding the **NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)**:

1. The ISRO chairperson is the ex-officio chairman of the NSIL.
2. NSIL will be the nodal agency for carrying out PSLV production through Indian Industry under consortium route.

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** In order to commercially exploit the products and services emanating from Indian Space Programme, the “NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)” was incorporated in March 2019, as a wholly-owned Government of India under the administrative control of Department of Space (DOS).

Statement 1 is incorrect. **NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)** is a Central Public Sector Enterprise of Government of India and commercial arm of ISRO.

ISRO chairperson is not NSIL head, the current NSIL's Chairman and Managing Director, G. Narayanan, was earlier a Deputy Director at ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre at Thiruvananthapuram.

Statement 2 is correct. NSIL will be the nodal agency for carrying out PSLV production through Indian Industry under consortium route. The Industry consortium will be responsible for producing, assembling and integrating the launch vehicle.

NSIL will be responsible for providing launch services to global satellite customers, on-board SSLV, PSLV, GSLV and GSLV-MkIII launchers.

**Q.69)** Which of the following subject(s) is/are *not* under the purview of **Goods and Services Tax** in India?

1. Alcohol for human consumptions
2. Petroleum Products
3. Electricity

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) All of the above

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** **Alcohol** for human consumption has been kept outside the purview of GST in India at present. These goods are subject to existing State levies.

**Petroleum** Products such as petroleum crude, motor spirit (petrol), high speed diesel, natural gas and aviation turbine fuel etc. are also kept outside the purview of GST in India.

At present, **electricity** is not subject to GST and power companies pay multiple taxes on capital goods and other inputs like excise duty, customs duty etc.

**Q.70)** The **Clavius Crater** was in news recently, where is it located?

- a) Moon
- b) Mars

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- c) Bennu asteroid
- d) Europa

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Clavius is one of the largest crater formations on the Moon and the second largest crater on the visible near side.

**NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA)** has confirmed, for the first time, water on the sunlit surface of the Moon. This discovery indicates that water may be distributed across the lunar surface, and not limited to cold, shadowed places. SOFIA has detected water molecules (H<sub>2</sub>O) in Clavius Crater, one of the largest craters visible from Earth, located in the Moon's southern hemisphere.

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