

10 PM Current Affairs Quiz Compilation

7th to 13th December, 2020

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

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GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/INITIATIVES

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding the **Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)**:

1. It is a self-regulatory voluntary organization of the advertising industry in India.
2. The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 mandates television networks to follow the advertising code laid down by ASCI.

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 **Advertising Standards Council of India**, established in 1985, is a Mumbai based self-regulatory voluntary organization of the advertising industry in India. It seeks to ensure that advertisements conform to its Code for Self-Regulation. Under the **Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995** it is mandatory for television networks to follow the advertising code laid down by ASCI.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has issued an advisory asking all private television broadcasters to follow guidelines issued by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) for advertisements relating to online gaming, fantasy sports etc.

Q.2) Which of the following is the authority for **approval of licenses for Vaccine in India?**

- a) Drug Controller General of India (DCGI)
- b) Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)
- c) Serum Institute of India (SII)
- d) National Medical Commission (NMC)

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Under the **Drug and Cosmetics Act**, the regulation of manufacture, sale and distribution of Drugs is primarily the concern of the State authorities while the Central Authorities are responsible for approval of New Drugs, Clinical Trials in the country, laying down the standards for Drugs, control over the quality of imported Drugs, coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organisations and providing expert advice with a view of bring about the uniformity in the enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

Drug Controller General of India is responsible for approval of licenses of specified categories of Drugs such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine and Sera.

Q.3) Which of the following is/are the ground(s) on which central government can regulate the supply of certain food items as per **Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020?**

1. War
2. Extraordinary price rise and
3. Natural calamity of grave nature

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

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Correct answer: D

Explanation: The **Essential Commodities Act, 1955** empowers the central government to designate certain commodities (such as food items, fertilizers, and petroleum products) as essential commodities.

The **Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020** provides that the central government may regulate the supply of certain food items including cereals, pulses, potatoes, onions, edible oilseeds, and oils, only under extraordinary circumstances. These **include war, famine, extraordinary price rise and natural calamity of grave nature**.

Q.4) Consider the following statements:

1. The Gross Value Added (GVA) of fisheries sector forms more than one third share of Agricultural GVA.
 2. The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana is a completely Central Sector 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: D

Explanation: Fisheries and aquaculture are an important source of food, nutrition, employment and income in India. The sector provides livelihood to about 16 million fishers and fish farmers at the primary level and almost twice the number along the value chain.

Statement 1 is incorrect. The **Gross Value Added (GVA)** of fisheries sector in the national economy during 2018-19 stood at Rs 2,12,915 crores (current basic prices) which constituted 1.24% of the total National GVA and **7.28% share of Agricultural GVA**.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The PMMSY is an umbrella scheme with **two separate Components** namely (a) Central Sector Scheme (CS) and (b) Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS). The Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) Component is further segregated into Non-beneficiary oriented and beneficiary orientated sub-components/activities under the following three broad heads:

- Enhancement of Production and Productivity
- Infrastructure and Post-harvest Management
- Fisheries Management and Regulatory Framework

Q.5) Which of the following institution is organizing the **India Mobile Congress 2020**?

- a) Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI)
- b) Telecom regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)
- c) Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)
- d) Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)

Correct answer: A

Explanation: India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2020 is being organised by the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, and the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI). It will be held from 8th to 10th December 2020.

The theme for IMC 2020 is "Inclusive Innovation - Smart, Secure, Sustainable". It also aims to drive foreign and local investments, encourage R&D in the telecom and emerging technology sectors.

IMC 2020 will see the participation from various Ministries, the telecom CEOs, global CEOs, and domain experts in 5G, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Data

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Analytics, Cloud and Edge computing, Blockchain, Cyber-security, Smart Cities and Automation.

Q.6) Which of the following is the utility of the recently launched **Co-WIN platform**?

- Promotion of Cooperative Societies in rural India
- A COVID-19 beneficiary management platform of India
- A global vaccine distribution initiative by WHO and Gavi
- A labour dispute resolution platform launched by Labour Bureau

Correct answer: B

Explanation: A new digital platform for COVID 19 Vaccination Delivery called '**CO-WIN**' is being used as institutional mechanisms at the level of States, Districts and Blocks that will inspect and supervise the entire process of vaccination.

This user friendly mobile app for recording vaccine data is working as a **beneficiary management platform having various modules**. In the process of forming database of Healthcare Workers, which is in an advanced stage across all States/UTs, data is presently being uploaded on the Co-WIN platform.

Q.7) Consider the following statements regarding the **National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID- 19 (NEGVAC)**:

- Its mandate is to aid and provide guidance on vaccine selection and vaccine delivery and tracking mechanism.
 - It is chaired by the Minister of Health & Family Welfare.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The **National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID- 19 (NEGVAC)** has also been formed in last August to aid and provide guidance on i) prioritization of population groups, ii) procurement and inventory management, iii) vaccine selection, and iv) vaccine delivery and tracking mechanism.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The **NEGVAC is chaired by Dr. V.K.Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog** and co-chaired by the Health Secretary.

Q.8) Which of the following is/are the objectives of the **National Research Foundation (NRF)** proposed in National Education Policy 2020?

- fund competitive, peer-reviewed grant proposals
- formulation and maintenance of norms and standards of technical education in India
- act as a liaison between researchers and relevant branches of government as well as industry

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- All of the above

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Correct answer: C

Explanation: The research and innovation investment in India is, at the current time, only 0.69% of GDP as compared to 2.8% in the United States of America, 4.3% in Israel and 4.2% in South Korea. The NEP 2020 has proposed setting up of **National Research Foundation (NRF)**.

The primary activities of the NRF will be to:

- fund competitive, peer-reviewed grant proposals of all types and across all disciplines;
- seed, grow, and facilitate research at academic institutions, particularly at universities and colleges where research is currently in a nascent stage, through mentoring of such institutions;
- act as a liaison between researchers and relevant branches of government as well as industry, so that research scholars are constantly made aware of the most urgent national research issues, and so that policymakers are constantly made aware of the latest research breakthroughs; so as to allow breakthroughs to be optimally brought into policy and/or implementation.

AICTE is responsible for formulation and maintenance of norms and standards of technical education.

Q.9) Which of the following institution has released the **Urban Quality of Life (UQoL)** index?

- a) IIT Bombay
- b) NITI Aayog
- c) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- d) National Institute of Urban Affairs

Correct answer: A

Explanation: **IIT-Bombay researchers have compiled and released an Urban Quality of Life Index** comparing the quality of life in various cities in India and ranked them on the basis of various categories such as water, power, electricity, literacy rate, employment rate among others.

--Mumbai has topped the index followed by Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai.

--The index has factored in gender parity; Chennai is the most women-friendly city and Patna the least.

Q.10) Consider the following statements regarding the **PM-WANI**:

1. It aims to provide public Wi-Fi service through Public Data Offices (PDOs) spread across the country.
2. A nominal license fee is to be charged for providing Broadband Internet through these public Wi-Fi networks.

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 Union Cabinet has given its approval for the proposal of DoT for setting up of **Public Wi-Fi Networks by Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs)** to provide public Wi-Fi service through Public Data Offices (PDOs) spread across length and breadth of the country to accelerate proliferation of Broadband Internet services through Public Wi-Fi network in the country.

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This Public Wi-Fi Access Network Interface will be known as PM-WANI. PM-WANI ecosystem will be operated by different players:

--Public Data Office (PDO): It will establish, maintain, and operate only WANI compliant Wi-Fi Access Points and deliver broadband services to subscribers.

--Public Data Office Aggregator (PDOA): It will be an aggregator of PDOs and perform the functions relating to Authorization and Accounting.

--App Provider: It will develop an App to register users and discover WANI compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in the nearby area and display the same within the App for accessing the internet service.

--Central Registry: It will maintain the details of App Providers, PDOAs, and PDOs. To begin with, the Central Registry will be maintained by C-DoT.

Statement 2 is incorrect. There shall be **no license fee** for providing Broadband Internet through these public Wi-Fi networks.

Q.11) Consider the following statements regarding the **Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)**:

1. It has a statutory status under the Indian Telegraph Act.
2. The Submarine Optical Fibre Cable Connectivity between Mainland (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Islands (KLI Project) is to be funded by the USOF.

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: Apart from the higher capital cost of providing telecom services in rural and remote areas, these areas also generate lower revenue due to lower population density, low income and lack of commercial activity. Thus, normal market forces alone would not direct the telecom sector to adequately serve backward and rural areas.

Therefore, most countries of the world have put in place policies to provide Universal Access and Universal Service to ICT.

Statement 1 is correct. The **New Telecom Policy - 1999 (NTP'99)** provided that the resources for meeting the Universal Service Obligation (USO) would be raised through a 'Universal Access Levy (UAL)', which would be a percentage of the revenue earned by the operators under various licenses. The **Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003 giving statutory status to the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)** was passed by Parliament in December 2003.

Statement 2 is correct. The Union Cabinet has given its approval for Provision of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable Connectivity between Mainland (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Islands (**KLI Project**). The Project would be funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund.

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding the **Poshan Abhiyaan**:

1. It aims to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anemia and low birth weight babies.
2. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) is the nodal ministry for implementing POSHAN Abhiyaan.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2

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d) Neither 1 nor 2

Correct answer: C

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. Government is implementing the **POSHAN Abhiyaan** since December, 2017 to address the problem of malnutrition in the country.

There are a number of schemes directly/indirectly affecting the nutritional status of children (0-6 year's age) and pregnant women and lactating mothers. In spite of these, level of malnutrition and related problems in the country is high. POSHAN Abhiyaan through robust convergence mechanism and other components would strive to create the synergy.

The programme through the targets will strive to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight babies. It will create synergy, ensure better monitoring, issue alerts for timely action, and encourage States/UTs to perform, guide and supervise the line Ministries and States/UTs to achieve the targeted goals.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** is nodal ministry for implementing POSHAN Abhiyaan.

Q.13) Consider the following statements regarding the **Consumer Protection Act 2019**:

1. It covers offline as well as online transactions for sale/purchase.
2. The Central Consumer Protection Authority can impose penalties on violations consumer rights, unfair trade practices, and misleading advertisements.

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. A consumer is defined under the **Consumer Protection Act 2019** as a person who buys any good or avails a service for a consideration. It does not include a person who obtains a good for resale or a good or service for commercial purpose. It **covers transactions through all modes including offline, and online** through electronic means, teleshopping, multi-level marketing or direct selling.

Statement 2 is correct. **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)** is to regulate matters related to violation of consumer rights, unfair trade practices, and misleading advertisements.

CCPA will carry out the following functions, including: (i) inquiring into violations of consumer rights, investigating and launching prosecution at the appropriate forum; (ii) passing orders to recall goods or withdraw services that are hazardous, reimbursement of the price paid, and discontinuation of the unfair trade practices, as defined in the Bill; (iii) issuing directions to the concerned trader/ manufacturer/ endorser/ advertiser/ publisher to either discontinue a false or misleading advertisement, or modify it; (iv) imposing penalties, and; (v) issuing safety notices to consumers against unsafe goods and services.

The CCPA has referred the recent complaints of Honey adulteration to FSSAI.

Q.14) Which of the following institution is organizing the **India Water Impact Summit (IWIS) 2020**?

- a) National Mission on Clean Ganga
- b) Central Water Commission
- c) NITI Aayog
- d) Rally for Rivers Association

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Correct answer: A

Explanation: The 5th India Water Impact Summit (IWIS), organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga and Center for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga) began on 10th December with the theme of comprehensive analysis and holistic management of local rivers and water bodies with focus on Arth Ganga - river conservation synchronized development.

The Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga) was established at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IITK) in 2016. The Centre is a Centre of Excellence for data collection, the creation and dissemination of knowledge and information for the sustainable development of Ganga River Basin.

Q.15) Consider the following statements regarding the **PM-WANI initiative**:

1. Public Data Offices (PDO) will establish, maintain, and operate only WANI compliant Wi-Fi Access Points and deliver broadband services to subscribers.
2. App Provider will develop an App to register users and discover WANI compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in the nearby area.

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.

Union Cabinet has recently given its approval for the proposal of DoT for setting up of **Public Wi-Fi Networks** by Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs) to provide public Wi-Fi service through Public Data Offices (PDOs) spread across length and breadth of the country to accelerate proliferation of Broadband Internet services through Public Wi-Fi network in the country. There shall be no license fee for providing Broadband Internet through these public Wi-Fi networks.

Salient Features:

--This Public Wi-Fi Access Network Interface will be known as PM-WANI. PM-WANI ecosystem will be operated by different players as described herein under:

--Public Data Office (PDO): It will establish, maintain, and operate only WANI compliant Wi-Fi Access Points and deliver broadband services to subscribers.

--Public Data Office Aggregator (PDOA): It will be an aggregator of PDOs and perform the functions relating to Authorization and Accounting.

--App Provider: It will develop an App to register users and discover WANI compliant Wi-Fi hotspots in the nearby area and display the same within the App for accessing the internet service.

--Central Registry: It will maintain the details of App Providers, PDOAs, and PDOs. To begin with, the Central Registry will be maintained by C-DoT.

Q.16) What is the objective of **PM- SWANidhi Scheme**?

- a) To provide collateral free loans worth 3 lakh crore rupees to MSMEs across the country
- b) To provide collateral free loans to street vendors
- c) To provide property certificates to landholders in rural India
- d) To provide minimum income guarantee to unorganized sector workers

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Correct answer: B

Explanation: Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs' scheme **PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi)** aims to empower Street Vendors by not only extending loans to them, but also for their holistic development and economic upliftment.

The scheme intends to facilitate collateral free working capital loans of up to INR10,000/- of one-year tenure, to approximately 50 lakh **street vendors**, to help resume their businesses in the urban areas, including surrounding peri-urban/rural areas.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs launched a programme of **Socio-Economic Profiling of PM SVANidhi beneficiaries** and their families recently, as an additional component of PM SVANidhi Scheme. Based on the profiled data, benefits of the various eligible Central Schemes would be extended to them for their holistic socio-economic upliftment.

Q.17) Which of the following is/are functions of the **National Water Development Agency (NWDA)**?

1. To implement the projects under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY)
2. To carry out surveys & investigations work and prepare DPRs of river link proposals

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: The **National Water Development Agency (NWDA)**, a **Registered Society** under the then Ministry of Irrigation [now Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD&GR) under **Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS)**] was set up in the year 1982 to carry out detailed studies, surveys and investigations in respect of Peninsular Component under National Perspective Plan (NPP) for Water Resources Development.

Its functions include:

--To carry out detailed studies about the quantum of water in various Peninsular River systems and Himalayan River systems which can be transferred to other basins/States after meeting the reasonable needs of the basin/States in the foreseeable future.

--To prepare feasibility report of the various components of the scheme relating to Peninsular Rivers development and Himalayan Rivers development.

--To undertake/ construct/repair/renovate/rehabilitate/implement the projects under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY)

--To act as a repository of borrowed funds or money received on deposit or loan given on interest to secure the repayment of any such borrowed funds/money/deposit/loan etc. for the execution of projects.

Q.18) Who is the chairperson of the **COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force** set up the Government of India?

- a) Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India
- b) Member (Health), NITI Aayog
- c) Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare
- d) Both (a) and (b)

Correct answer: D

Explanation: The **Vaccine Task Force**, which was constituted by the Union Government in April, 2020, is **co-chaired** by the **Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of**

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India and Member (Health), NITI Aayog. With technical experts and representatives of relevant ministries as its members, it provides guidance for focused research on Corona vaccines and other related Science and Technology Issues.

The **National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID- 19 (NEGVAC)** has also been formed in last August to aid and provide guidance on i) prioritization of population groups, ii) procurement and inventory management, iii) vaccine selection, and iv) vaccine delivery and tracking mechanism. The NEGVAC is chaired by Dr. V.K.Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog and co-chaired by the Health Secretary.

Q.19) Which of the following organization has released the **Urban Governance Index (UGI)-2020?**

- a) NITI Aayog
- b) National Institute of Urban Affairs
- c) Pratham NGO
- d) Praja Foundation NGO

Correct answer: D

Explanation: The **Urban Governance Index (UGI)-2020** have been released recently by the **Praja Foundation non-profit foundation**. The study for the Urban Governance Index 2020 spanned three years (2017-2020) in 40 cities across 28 states as well as the NCT of Delhi. Odisha has topped the rankings followed by Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh. The index revealed that Kerala had the most empowered city-elected representatives and legislative structure while Tamil Nadu had the most empowered city administration out of all 29 states.

Q.20) Consider the following statements regarding the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY):**

- 1. It aims to boost employment in formal sector.
- 2. Government of India will provide subsidy for two years in respect of new employees engaged between October, 2020 and June, 2021.

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 Union Cabinet has given its approval for **Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)** to boost employment in **formal sector** and incentivize creation of new employment opportunities during the Covid recovery phase under Atmanirbhar Bharat Package 3.0.

--Government of India will provide subsidy for two years in respect of new employees engaged on or after 1st October, 2020 and upto 30th June, 2021

--Government will pay both 12% employees' contribution and 12% employers' contribution towards EPF in respect of new employees in establishments employing upto 1000 employees for two years; and only employees' share of EPF contribution in establishments employing more than 1000 employee for two years.

--An employee drawing monthly wage of less than Rs. 15000/- who was not working in any establishment registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) before 1st October, 2020 and did not have a Universal Account Number or EPF Member account number prior to 1st October 2020 will be eligible for the benefit,

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--Any EPF member possessing Universal Account Number (UAN) drawing monthly wage of less than Rs. 15000/- who made exit from employment during Covid pandemic from 01.03.2020 to 30.09.2020 and did not join employment in any EPF covered establishment up to 30.09.2020 will also be eligible to avail benefit,

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/ORGANISATIONS

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding the **UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**:

1. It has been established at the initiative of European Union.
2. India is part of the Group of Friends, a community of countries and international organizations which promotes the Alliance's objectives and work.

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 **United Nations Alliance of Civilization (UNAOC)** was established in 2005, at the initiative of the **Governments of Spain and Turkey**, under the auspices of the United Nations.

A High-level Group of experts was formed by **former Secretary-General Kofi Annan** to explore the roots of polarization between societies and cultures today, and to recommend a practical programme of action to address this issue. The Report of the High-level Group provided analysis and put forward practical recommendations that form the basis for the implementation plan of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

Statement 2 is correct. The Alliance benefits from a political support of the **Group of Friends**, a community of countries and international organizations which actively promotes the Alliance's objectives and work at the global, regional and local levels, as well as worldwide.

India is a member to the 'Group of Friends'.

India has asked the UNAOC to expand its criticism of hatred and violence against religions beyond the three Abrahamic religions.

Q.2) Which of the following organization has published the State of Global Climate Report, 2020?

- a) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- b) World Meteorological Organization
- c) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- d) United Nations Environment Programme

Correct answer: B

Explanation: The **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** has released the annual State of Global Climate Report, 2020 to keep a track of global warming.

The global mean surface temperature for January-October was 1.2 degree Celsius higher than the pre-industrial baseline (1850-1900).

There was heavy rainfall and flooding in many parts of Asia and Africa leading to loss of human lives, property and livelihoods. The most affected were the Sahel and Greater Horn regions of Africa and China, India, Korea and Japan regions of Asia.

South America on the other hand experienced severe droughts with northern Argentina, Paraguay and western areas of Brazil being some of the worst affected. Brazil alone recorded agricultural losses of \$3 billion.

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Q.3) Consider the following statements regarding the **Partners in Population and Development (PPD)**:

1. It aims to improve South-South collaboration in the fields of family planning and reproductive health, population and development.
2. India and China both are members of PPD.

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. **Partners in Population and Development (PPD)** is an Inter-governmental Alliance of 27 developing countries with a mission to expand and improve South-South collaboration in the fields of family planning and reproductive health, population and development through the governments, NGOs and private sector organizations. It was created at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994.

Statement 2 is correct. There were only 10 developing countries at the time of formation of the Organization in 1994, over the years PPD's membership has increased to 27 developing countries across Asia, Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America covering nearly 60% of total world population.

Bangladesh, **China, India**, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam are the PPD members from Asia.

Q.4) Which of the following is the criterion to be listed under the “**Special Watch List**” (SWL) of U.S. State Department?

- a) Country that engages in or tolerates severe violations of religious freedom
- b) A nation proliferating the nuclear weapons technology
- c) A country violating the FATF Recommendations
- d) A country being potential threat to security of NATO members

Correct answer: A

Explanation: **Pakistan and China** along with Myanmar, Eritrea, Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan were recently placed in the Special Watch List for engaging in or tolerating "systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom".

A “**Special Watch List**” country is one that is deemed not to meet all of the “Country of Particular Concern” criteria but engages in or tolerates severe violations of religious freedom. This country category was established in the International Religious Freedom Act of 2016 which amended the IRFA to provide the U.S. Government new tools, resources, and responsibilities to advance and promote international religious freedom. The Secretary of State, under authority delegated by the President, designates a Special Watch List.

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding the **International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO)**:

1. It brings together the world's banking regulators and is recognized as the global standard setter for the banking sector.
2. India's securities regulator is an ordinary member of the IOSCO.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Correct answer: B

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. The **International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO)** is the international body that brings together the world's **securities regulators** and is recognized as the global standard setter for the securities sector.

IOSCO develops, implements and promotes adherence to internationally recognized standards for securities regulation. It works intensively with the G20 and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) on the global regulatory reform agenda.

Statement 2 is correct. The ordinary members (129) to the IOSCO are the national securities commissions. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is an ordinary member of IOSCO and a member of the IOSCO Board.

Q.6) Which of the following is/are correctly matched?

- 1. Natanz - Iran
- 2. Tigray - Ethiopia
- 3. Fordow Nuclear Plant - UAE

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: A

Explanation: Option 1 is correctly matched. **Natanz** is a city and capital of Natanz County, Isfahan Province, **Iran**. Natanz nuclear facility in Iran is largest uranium enrichment facility.

Option 2 is correctly matched. The **Tigray Region** is the northernmost region of **Ethiopia**. The Tigray make up about 6 percent of Ethiopia's 110 million people, and they were the arbiters of power and money in the country from 1991, when they helped dismantle a military dictatorship, until 2018, when anti-government protests catapulted Mr. Abiy to power.

An armed conflict has started recently in the region between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF); and an alliance of the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF).

Option 3 is incorrectly matched. **Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP) is Iran's** second pilot enrichment plant (the first is the Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant at Natanz). The site was originally a tunnel facility associated with Iran's paramilitary organization, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) and is located buried in a mountain near the city of Qom.

Q.7) Consider the following statements regarding the **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**:

- 1. The deal completely barred any Uranium enrichment by Iran.
- 2. Iran's compliance with the nuclear-related provisions of the JCPOA was to be verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

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. Under the nuclear deal, **Iran is allowed to enrich uranium only up to a 3.67% concentration**; to stockpile no more than 300kg (660lbs) of the material; to operate no more than 5,060 of its oldest and least efficient centrifuges; and to cease enrichment at the underground Fordo facility.

Another part of the deal instructs Iran not to accumulate more than 130 tonnes of heavy water, which contains more hydrogen than ordinary water, and to redesign its heavy-water nuclear reactor at Arak. Spent fuel from a heavy-water reactor contains plutonium, which can be used in a nuclear bomb.

Statement 2 is correct. Iran's compliance with the nuclear-related provisions of the JCPOA was to be verified by the **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** according to certain requirements set forth in the agreement.

Q.8) Which of the following countries are participant to the **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)**?

1. China
2. India
3. Japan

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: **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus** is an annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN Countries and eight partner countries. This year marks the 10th year of inception of ADMM Plus forum.

The ADMM-Plus is a platform for ASEAN and its eight Dialogue Partners **Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States** (collectively referred to as the "Plus Countries"), to strengthen security and defence cooperation for peace, stability, and development in the region.

Q.9) Consider the following statements regarding the **Human Rights Day**:

1. It is observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).
2. The 2020 Human Rights Day theme is 'Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights'.

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.

Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**.

Available in more than 500 languages, it is the most translated document in the world.

The **2020 Human Rights Day theme is 'Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights'**.

This year's Human Rights Day theme relates to the COVID-19 pandemic and focuses on the need to build back better by ensuring Human Rights are central to recovery efforts.

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Q.10) Which of the following organisation has released the **Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2021**?

- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Germanwatch and NewClimate Institute
- Intergovernmental panel on Climate Change
- International Union for Conservation of Nature

Correct answer: B

Explanation: The **Climate Change Performance Index published by Germanwatch, CAN International and the NewClimate Institute** evaluates and compares the climate protection performance of 57 countries and the EU.

Published annually since 2005, the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) tracks countries' efforts to combat climate change.

The latest Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2021 has placed India among the top 10 countries to have adopted substantial measures to mitigate climate change. The report has ranked India at the 10th position with 63.98 scores.

The index follows the directives led by the 2015 Paris Agreement, established with the goal to limit global warming to well below 2°C or even to 1.5°C. Therefore, CCPI assesses the countries on how much they have worked towards achieving this goal and how the countries are faring with respect to their 2030 targets.

Q.11) Which of the following city has been included in the **UNESCO World Heritage cities list**?

- Gwalior
- Orchha
- Mussoorie

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- All of the above

Correct answer: A

Explanation: The **Gwalior and Orchha fort cities of Madhya Pradesh** have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage cities under its urban landscape cities programme.

Gwalior was established in 9th century and ruled by Gurjar-Pratihara rajvansha, Tomars, Baghel and Scindhias. It is known for its palaces and temples including the famous Sas Bahu Ka Mandir.

Orchha was the capital of Bundela kingdom in 16th century and has palaces and temples as major attractions for tourists.

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding the **Chabahar Port**:

- India, Iran and Uzbekistan have decided to hold a Trilateral Working Group Meeting on joint use of Chabahar Port.
- India is participating in the development of the Shahid Behesti Port in Chabahar.

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: C

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The **first Trilateral Working Group Meeting between India, Iran and Uzbekistan** on joint use of Chabahar Port will be held virtually on December 14, 2020.

India has welcomed the interest of Uzbekistan to use the Chabahar port as a transit port. This would open up economic opportunities for the traders and business community of the region. Besides Uzbekistan, other Central Asian countries have also shown interest in using the port.

Statement 2 is correct. India is participating in the development of the first phase of the **Shahid Behesti Port in Chabahar** in cooperation with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

An Indian company, India Ports Global Limited, has taken over port operations of Shahid Behesti Port in Chabahar in December 2018.

Q.13) Consider the following statements regarding **The Better Than Cash Alliance**:

1. It is a partnership of governments, companies and international organizations that accelerates the transition from cash to responsible digital payments.
2. India is a member to the alliance.

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. **Based at the United Nations, the Better Than Cash Alliance** is a partnership of governments, companies and international organizations that accelerates the transition from cash to responsible digital payments to advance the Sustainable Development Goals.

Statement 2 is correct. The Alliance has 75 members, **including India**, which are committed to digitizing payments in order to boost efficiency, transparency, women's economic participation and financial inclusion, helping build economies that are digital and inclusive. Members do not want to abolish physical cash – it is legal tender – but rather want to provide responsible digital payment options that are “better than cash”.

Q.14) The **Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)** relates to which of the following country?

- a) Lebanon
- b) Syria
- c) Israel
- d) United Kingdom

Correct answer: A

Explanation: The **Lebanon Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)** is a response plan to help Lebanon address the urgent needs of the population affected by the 4th of August Port of Beirut explosion that killed over 200 people, injured more than 6,500 and destroyed thousands of homes and properties. It provides a costed and prioritized framework of key actions to support the recovery and reconstruction of Beirut.

It has been launched by the **European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank Group (WBG)**.

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Q.15) Consider the following statements regarding **United Nations Investment Promotion Awards**:

1. The Award recognizes the achievements of the World's best-practice investment promotion agencies.
2. 'Invest India' has won the 2020 UN Investment promotion award.

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.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has declared 'Invest India' as winner of the 2020 United Nations Investment Promotion Award.

The Award recognizes and celebrates the outstanding achievements of the World's best-practice investment promotion agencies. The evaluation was based on UNCTAD's assessment of work undertaken by 180 national Investment Promotion Agencies across the world. IPAs response to the pandemic became the basis for the evaluation of the 2020 United Nations Investment Promotion Award.

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ECONOMY

Q.1) Which of the following is the objective the **Accommodative policy stance** of central bank?

- a) Keep consumer inflation in check
- b) Increase interest rates high to limit the money supply
- c) Expand the money supply to boost the economy
- d) Open the economy to increase the potential for foreign direct investment

Correct answer: C

Explanation: Accommodative monetary policy, also known as loose credit or easy monetary policy, occurs when a central bank attempts to expand the overall money supply to boost the economy when growth is slowing.

It does this by running a succession of decreases in the Interest rates, making the cost of borrowing cheaper. Accommodative money policy is triggered to encourage more spending from consumers and businesses by making money less expensive to borrow through the lowering of short-term interest rates.

Q.2) Consider the following statements:

1. Labour dispute is a subject in the Concurrent List under the Constitution.
2. As per the Code on Wages, 2019 State governments will fix a floor wages, taking into account living standards of workers.

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. Under the Constitution of India, Labour is a subject in the Concurrent List where both the Central & State Governments are competent to enact legislation subject to certain matters being reserved for the Centre.

Entry 22: Trade Unions; industrial and labour disputes.

Entry 23: Social Security and insurance, employment and unemployment.

Statement 2 is incorrect. According to the **Code on Wages 2019**, the central government will fix a floor wage, taking into account living standards of workers. Further, it may set different floor wages for different geographical areas. Before fixing the floor wage, the central government may obtain the advice of the Central Advisory Board and may consult with state governments.

The minimum wages decided by the central or state governments must be higher than the floor wage. In case the existing minimum wages fixed by the central or state governments are higher than the floor wage, they cannot reduce the minimum wages.

Q.3) Which of the following is/are the mandate of the **National Statistical Office (NSO)**?

1. Publishing annual estimates of national product
2. Releasing the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)
3. Conducting the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI)

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

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d) All of the above

Correct answer: D

Explanation: NSO is mandated with the following responsibilities among others:

--prepares **national accounts as well as publishes annual estimates of national product**, government and private consumption expenditure, capital formation, savings, estimates of capital stock and consumption of fixed capital, as also the state level gross capital formation of supra-regional sectors and prepares comparable estimates of State Domestic Product (SDP) at current prices;

--compiles and releases the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** every month in the form of 'quick estimates'; conducts the **Annual Survey of Industries (ASI)**; and provides statistical information to assess and evaluate the changes in the growth, composition and structure of the organized manufacturing sector;

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding **Private final consumption expenditure (PFCE)**:

1. It is the expenditure incurred by the resident households and non-profit institutions serving households on final consumption of goods and services.
2. It forms more than half of the Real Gross Domestic Product 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: Statement 1 is correct. The **Private final consumption expenditure (PFCE)** is defined as the expenditure incurred by the resident households and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) on final consumption of goods and services, whether made within or outside the economic territory.

Statement 2 is correct. The Private Final Consumption Expenditure formed more than 57 percent of the Real Gross Domestic Product (At 2011-12 Prices) of India in 2019-20.

Growth Rates and Composition of Real Gross Domestic Product (At 2011-12 Prices)							
Sector	Growth Rate				Share		
	Average 2013-14 to 2019-20	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Expenditure Side GDP							
1. Private Final Consumption Expenditure	7.0	7.0	7.2	5.3	56.0	56.6	57.2
2. Government Final Consumption Expenditure	7.9	11.8	10.1	11.8	10.2	10.6	11.3
3. Gross Fixed Capital Formation	4.8	7.2	9.8	-2.8	30.8	31.9	29.8
4. Change in Stocks	16.4	76.0	22.5	1.9	1.6	1.9	1.9
5. Valuables	-1.0	27.2	-11.9	13.5	1.5	1.2	1.3
6. Net Exports	-17.1	-257.7	11.8	29.2	-3.6	-3.0	-2.0
a) Exports	3.2	4.6	12.3	-3.6	19.7	20.9	19.3
b) Less Imports	1.5	17.4	8.6	-6.8	23.4	23.9	21.4
7. Discrepancies	-58.4	65.1	-73.9	-25.6	3.5	0.9	0.6
8. GDP	6.8	7.0	6.1	4.2	100.0	100.0	100.0

GEOGRAPHY/ENVIRONMENT

Q.1) What is **Karsog Kulth**?

- a) A legume crop grown in Himachal Pradesh
- b) A variety of rice grown in coastal region of Kerala
- c) An Ayurvedic drug extracted from Trans-Himalayan herbs
- d) A crater on dark side of the moon

Correct answer: A

Explanation: **Kulthi or Kulth (horse gram) is a legume grown as a kharif crop in Himachal Pradesh.** Kulth grown in the Karsog area of Mandi district is believed to be particularly rich in amino acids.

The Himachal Pradesh government is trying to obtain Geographical Indication certification for five products from the state – Karsog Kulth, Thangi of Pangi, Chamba Metal Crafts, Chamba Chukh, and Rajmah of Bharmour.

The GI is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin”.

GIs are covered as an element of intellectual property rights under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property. They are also covered under the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement.

Q.2) Which of the following is/are **tributaries of the Yamuna River**?

- 1. Tons River
- 2. Giri River
- 3. Hindon River

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 **Yamuna River originates from the Yamunotri Glacier near Banderpoonch peaks** in the Mussourie range of the lower Himalayas at an elevation of about 6,387 meters above the mean sea level in district Uttarkashi (Uttarakhand).

The important tributaries of the Yamuna River are the Tons, the Chambal, the Hindon, the Sarda, the Betwa and the Ken. Smaller tributaries of the Yamuna River include Rishiganga, the Uma, the Hanuman Ganga, the Giri, the Karan, the Sagar and the Rind.

The main Yamuna and Tons are fed by glaciers, viz., the Bandar Punch Glacier and its branches and originate from the Great Himalayan range.

CPCB monitors water quality of River Yamuna and drains discharging into the River.

CPCB has issued directions to Delhi Jal Board to submit time bound action plan to ensure compliance to norms by STPs and that no untreated sewage is discharged to these drains.

Q.3) The **Tharu tribals** belong to which of the following State?

- a) Uttar Pradesh
- b) Jharkhand
- c) Rajasthan
- d) Odisha

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Correct answer: A

Explanation: The **Tharus live in both India and Nepal**. In the Indian terai, they live mostly in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.

They speak various dialects of Tharu, a language of the Indo-Aryan subgroup, and variants of Hindi, Urdu, and Awadhi. In central Nepal, they speak a variant of Bhojpuri, while in eastern Nepal, they speak a variant of Maithili.

The state government is working to connect Tharu villages in the districts of Balrampur, Bahraich, Lakhimpur and Pilibhit bordering Nepal, with the home stay scheme of the UP Forest Department.

Q.4) Which of the following is/are correctly matched?

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------|
| 1. Rajgir Zoo Safari | - | Bihar |
| 2. Shaheed Ashfaque Ullah Khan Prani Udyaan | - | Uttar Pradesh |
| 3. Nandankanan Zoological Park | - | Odisha |

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 correctly matched.

At the 37th General Body meeting of **Central Zoo Authority** chaired by Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, two new zoos the **Rajgir Zoo Safari in Nalanda, Bihar and Shaheed Ashfaque Ullah Khan Prani Udyaan in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh** were granted recognition.

Nandankanan Zoological Park is a zoo and botanical garden in Bhubaneswar, **Odisha**. Established in 1960 it became the first zoo in India to join World Association of Zoos and Aquariums in 2009.

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding the height of **Mount Everest**:

- 1. Survey of India has declared a three feet increase in the height of Mount Everest since last assessment.
- 2. China and Nepal in collaboration have estimated a decrease in the height of the mountain.

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.

Recently the **Foreign Ministers of Nepal and China jointly certified the elevation of Mount Everest at 8,848.86 metres above sea level** — 86 cm higher than what was recognised since 1954.

The elevation of 8,848 m was determined by **Survey of India in 1954**. In 1999, a US team put the elevation at 29,035 feet (nearly 8,850 m). This survey was sponsored by the National Geographic Society, US.

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Q.6) Which of the following country(s) border the **Persian Gulf**?

1. Iraq
2. Kuwait
3. Qatar

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 countries that surround the **Persian Gulf** are: Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.



Q.7) Consider the following statements:

1. Black carbon is formed by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biofuels, and biomass.
2. Black carbon and dust have led to increased incidents of high rainfall events in the foothills of the Himalayan Region.

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: C

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. **Black Carbon** is produced both naturally and by human activities as a result of the **incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biofuels, and biomass**. Primary sources include emissions from diesel engines, cook stoves, wood burning and forest fires.

Complete combustion would turn all carbon in the fuel into carbon dioxide (CO₂), but combustion is never complete and CO₂, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, and organic carbon and black carbon particles are all formed in the process. The complex mixture of particulate matter resulting from incomplete combustion is often referred to as soot.

Statement 2 is correct. A team of researchers from National Institute of Technology Rourkela, Leipzig Institute for Meteorology (LIM), University of Leipzig, Germany, Indian Institute of Technology Madras, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur supported by the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India under DST Climate Change program have highlighted the crucial role of the aerosol direct radiative effect on high precipitation events over the Himalayan region.

Scientists have found that **aerosols like black carbon and dust**, which makes the Indo-Gangetic Plain one of the most polluted regions of the world, have led to **increased incidents of high rainfall events** in the foothills of the Himalayan Region. [Source: PIB]

Q.8) Which of the following country(s) border the **Western Sahara**?

1. Morocco
2. Mauritania
3. Algeria

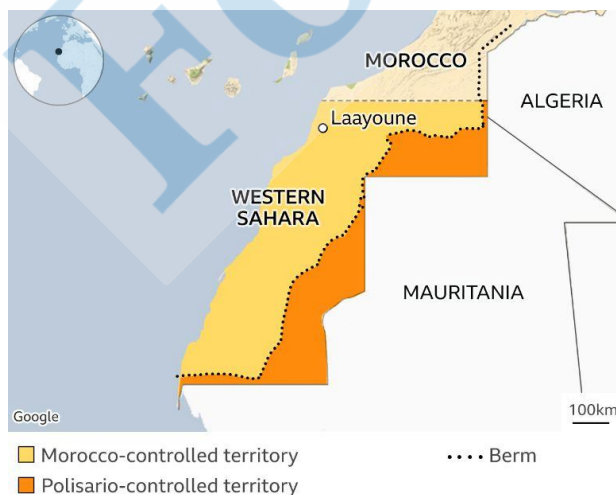
Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct answer: D

Explanation: **Western Sahara** is a sparsely-populated area of mostly desert situated on the northwest coast of Africa.

A former Spanish colony, it was annexed by Morocco in 1975. Since then it has been the subject of a long-running territorial dispute between Morocco and its indigenous Saharawi people, led by the Algeria backed Polisario Front.



BBC

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Morocco has become the latest Arab League country to agree to normalize relations with Israel in a deal brokered with US help. As part of the deal, the US has agreed to recognise Morocco's claim over the disputed Western Sahara region.

Q.9) The **Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS)** is an initiative of which of the following organization?

- a) NITI Aayog
- b) Wildlife Insitute of India
- c) World Wide Fund for Nature-India
- d) Integrated Mountain Initiative

Correct answer: D

Explanation: Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS) is the Integrated Mountain Initiative's flagship annual conclave. Each year 3-5 salient themes engaging the immediate attention of and relevant to the mountains and hills are identified for threadbare discussion and debate. Conclusions and recommendations emerging from this exercise would be pursued by IMI subsequently.

The 9th edition of SMDS, being hosted by Sustainable Development Forum Uttaranchal (SDFU), will focus on the overall objective of building pathways toward a resilient and sustainable mountain economy in the IHR in the context of a post COVID-19 scenario and Climate Change.

Q.10) The **Bhasan Char** Island belongs to which of the following country?

- a) Bangladesh
- b) Sri Lanka
- c) Myanmar
- d) Thailand

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Bhasan Char, also known as Char Piya, is an island in Bay of Bengal under Hatiya Upazila of **Bangladesh**. Recently Bangladesh has sent the first group of more than 1,500 Rohingya refugees to an isolated Bhasan Char island.



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Q.11) Consider the following statements regarding the **Malayan giant squirrel**:

1. It is found in in the north eastern region of India.
2. It is listed as a Critically Endangered 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: Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) has projected that numbers of the **Malayan Giant Squirrel** could decline by 90% in India by 2050 and it could be extinct by then if urgent steps are not taken.

Statement 1 is correct. The black giant squirrel or Malayan giant squirrel is a large tree squirrel in the genus *Ratufa* native to the Indomalayan zootope. It is found in forests from northern Bangladesh, **northeast India**, eastern Nepal, Bhutan, southern China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, and western Indonesia.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Black Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa bicolor*) is listed as '**Near threatened**' species in the IUCN Red List.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Q.1) Which of the following can be the reason for the **foam in rivers**?

1. Fatty acids released from decaying organic material
2. Discharge of detergents to water bodies

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: As with most liquids, water molecules are normally attracted to each other. This attraction creates tension at the surface of the water, often referred to as a thin "skin," which allows some insects to glide across it.

--When leaves, twigs or other organic substances fall into water and begin decaying, they release compounds known as **surfactants**.

This interaction breaks the surface tension, which in turn allows air to more easily mix with water and creates bubbles. These bubbles congregate as natural foam.

--Not all foam is natural. Certain man-made products, including **detergents** can cause foam that is similar in appearance, but may be harmful to fish and other aquatic life.

In addition, human activities that cause an increase in algae or aquatic plant growth such as the introduction of fertilisers can cause plant and algae blooms and an increase in foam production.

Q.2) What does the **Ramachandran Plot** relate to?

- a) Photoelectric current generation under low light conditions
- b) Planet's orbital motion with respect to distance from central star
- c) Relationship between tax revenue and GDP growth
- d) Basic elements of protein structure

Correct answer: D

Explanation: The **Ramachandran plot is a foundational concept used in biochemistry** courses to describe the basic elements of protein structure.

It was developed in 1963 by G. N. Ramachandran, C. Ramakrishnan, and V. Sasisekharan, to visualize energetically allowed regions for backbone dihedral angles ψ against ϕ of amino acid residues in protein structure.

Proteins are made of long-chain polymers called polypeptides. There can be one or multiple polypeptide chains that come together to form a protein. The novel coronavirus's spike protein comprises three identical peptide chains. Each chain consists of repeating units called amino acids.

Q.3) Which of the following is/are **essential amino acids**?

1. Histidine
2. Leucine
3. Valine

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

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Correct answer: D

Explanation: Protein is made from twenty-plus basic building blocks called amino acids. Because we don't store amino acids, our bodies make them in two different ways: either from scratch, or by modifying others.

Nine amino acids—histidine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, and valine—known as the **essential amino acids**, must come from food.

Nonessential means that our bodies produce an amino acid, even if we do not get it from the food we eat. **Nonessential amino acids** include: alanine, arginine, asparagine, aspartic acid, cysteine, glutamic acid, glutamine, glycine, proline, serine, and tyrosine.

Q.4) AlphaFold artificial intelligence program has been in news recently, what is its utility?

- Predictions of protein structure
- Modeling of Solar system
- Simulating a potential pandemic situation after COVID-19
- Genome sequence development

Correct answer: A

Explanation: AlphaFold is an artificial intelligence program developed by Google's DeepMind which performs predictions of protein structure.

It has outperformed around 100 other teams in a biennial protein-structure prediction challenge called **Critical Assessment of Structure Prediction (CASP)**. The results were announced on 30 November, at the start of the conference — held virtually this year — that takes stock of the exercise.

The ability to accurately predict protein structures from their amino-acid sequence would be a huge boon to life sciences and medicine. It would vastly accelerate efforts to understand the building blocks of cells and enable quicker and more advanced drug discovery.

Q.5 Which of the following is/are examples of the **machine learning (ML)**?

- Digital assistants playing music in response to voice commands
- Spam detectors stop unwanted emails from reaching mailboxes
- Self-driving cars

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- All of the above

Correct answer: D

Explanation: Machine learning is a method of data analysis that automates analytical model building. It is a branch of artificial intelligence based on the idea that systems can learn from data, identify patterns and make decisions with minimal human intervention.

Examples of machine learning: Digital assistants search the web and play music in response to our voice commands. Websites recommend products and movies and songs based on what we bought, watched, or listened to before. Spam detectors stop unwanted emails from reaching our inboxes. Medical image analysis systems help doctors spot tumors they might have missed. And the first self-driving cars like Tesla are hitting the road.

Q.6) What is the utility of the **Molnupiravir drug**?

- Potential drug to stop the transmission of SARS-CoV-2

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- b) A new antibiotic to treat Antimicrobial Resistant diseases
- c) A prophylactic drug for potential radioactive exposure
- d) A skin regenerative drug for minor injuries

Correct answer: A

Explanation: A new drug called **Molnupiravir** has been shown to stop the transmission of **SARS-CoV-2** in 24 hours. Results of the research by scientists at the Institute of Biomedical Sciences, Georgia State University, have been published in the journal Nature Microbiology.

Molnupiravir is being developed by the biotechnology firm Ridgeback Biotherapeutics in collaboration with pharmaceutical firm Merck.

Q.7) Which of the following statements correctly defines the term ‘**Quantum Supremacy**’?

- a) A super computer being able to model physical reality to nano-scale
- b) A system performing quantum physics calculations within a second
- c) Quantum computers being able to do things that classical computer can't
- d) A super computer being at least ten times faster than the next fastest one

Correct answer: C

Explanation: The original meaning of the term “**quantum supremacy**,” as proposed by **John Preskill** in 2012, is to describe the point where **quantum computers can do things that classical computers can't**.

Google in 2019 said that its 54-qubit Sycamore processor was able to perform a calculation in 200 seconds that would have taken the world's most powerful supercomputer 10,000 years. That would mean the calculation, which involved generated random numbers, is essentially impossible on a traditional, non-quantum computer.

Recently a **Chinese team**, based primarily at the University of Science and Technology of China in Hefei, reported their quantum computer, named Jiuzhang, is 10 billion times faster than Google's.

Assuming both claims hold up, Jiuzhang would be the second quantum computer to achieve quantum supremacy anywhere in the world.

Where classical computers perform calculations using bits, which can have one of two states (typically represented by a 1 or a 0), quantum bits, or qubits, can exist in many states simultaneously. This allows them to solve problems more quickly than classical computers.

Q.8) Which of the following is/are correctly matched?

- 1. COVAXIN - Inactivated SARS-COV-2
- 2. COVISHIELD - Adenovirus vector
- 3. ZyCoV-D - Plasmid DNA vaccine

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: **Covaxin** is an indigenous **inactivated whole SARS-CoV-2** virus vaccine that has been developed by the Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the NIV/ICMR.

Covishield is based on the chimpanzee **adenovirus vector-based** vaccine developed by Oxford University in partnership with the British-Swedish vaccine manufacturer

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AstraZeneca called ChAdOx1/AZD1222. The Serum Institute of India (SII), Pune, will, under licence from Oxford University and AstraZeneca, produce the vaccine under its brand name Covishield for domestic and regional consumption.

ZyCoV-D is a plasmid DNA vaccine developed by the Indian company Cadila Healthcare Ltd. Plasmids are circular double-stranded DNA molecules usually found in bacteria. But these are external to the bacterial chromosomes and can replicate independently. Plasmids are used as the platform to directly deliver the antigenic determinant (its DNA sequence) into the body.

Q.9) Consider the following statements regarding the **Parkinson's disease**:

1. There is no cure for this disease.
2. No women have ever been diagnosed with the Parkinson's disease.

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: Parkinson's disease (PD) is the second most common neurodegenerative disease after Alzheimer's disease. Early symptoms of PD include tremor, rigidity, and difficulty walking; cognitive decline is common at later stages. The underlying pathology of PD is selective death of dopamine-generating cells in the substantia nigra, a part of the brain involved in movement, reward, and addiction.

Statement 1 is correct. There is **no cure for Parkinson's disease**, medicines, surgical treatment, and other therapies can often relieve some symptoms.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **Both men and women can have Parkinson's disease.** However, the disease affects about 50 percent more men than women.

One clear risk factor for Parkinson's is age. Although most people with Parkinson's first develop the disease at about age 60, about 5 to 10 percent of people with Parkinson's have "early-onset" disease, which begins before the age of 50.

Q.10) Which of the following malnutrition terms is/are correctly matched?

1. Stunted - low weight for age
2. Wasted - low weight for height

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: B

Explanation: Option 1 is incorrectly matched. **Stunting, or low height for age**, is caused by long-term insufficient nutrient intake and frequent infections. Stunting generally occurs before age two, and effects are largely irreversible. These include delayed motor development, impaired cognitive function and poor school performance.

Option 2 is correctly matched. **Wasting, or low weight for height**, is a strong predictor of mortality among children under five. It is usually the result of acute significant food shortage and/or disease.

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Q.11) Consider the following statements regarding the **Narrow Band-Internet of Things (NB-IoT)**:

1. It is a low power wide area network (LPWAN) technology.
2. NB-IoT is compatible with existing cellular network infrastructure.

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.

NarrowBand-Internet of Things (NB-IoT) is a specification developed by 3GPP. It is a standards-based low power wide area (LPWA) technology developed to enable a wide range of new IoT devices and services. NB-IoT significantly improves the power consumption of user devices, system capacity and spectrum efficiency, especially in deep coverage.

NB-IoT is an 'industrial grade' LPWA solution – it runs on licenced spectrum which guarantees quality of service and a future-proofed capability. It's a **cellular technology** related to LTE, supports two-way communications and is designed specifically for LPWA applications

It has low device cost, and **compatibility with existing cellular network** infrastructure, with the same level of security as LTE.

BSNL, in partnership with Skylo, to introduce worlds' first, satellite-based narrowband-IoT network in India.

Q.12) Which of the following statements correctly defines **Uranium enrichment**?

- a) Addition of Thorium to Uranium
- b) Radioactive decay of the Uranium-235
- c) Nuclear fusion of Uranium and Plutonium
- d) Increasing the concentration of the isotope Uranium-235

Correct answer: D

Explanation: **Natural uranium deposits** exist all over the world, but uranium in this form is not suitable for nuclear weapons, and cannot be used in most nuclear reactors for either electricity or plutonium production.

Natural uranium is composed of various isotopes, or different types of uranium. It contains approximately **99.3% of the isotope uranium-238, and has only very small concentrations, about 0.7%, of the fissile isotope uranium-235.** An isotope is considered fissile if it can be split by a slow-moving neutron.

Uranium-235 is the most significant fissile isotope of uranium for reactor fuel and nuclear weapons. To be useful for either of these purposes, the concentration of uranium-235 must be increased by separating it from uranium-238 through a process known as enrichment.

Q.13) What is '**Ischaemum janarthanamii**' that has been in news recently?

- a) A new grass species discovered in Western Ghats
- b) Monoliths being planted secretly all over the world
- c) A Greek term for ancient Ayurvedic treatments
- d) The location on Moon for landing of Artemis Lunar Mission

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Correct answer: A

Explanation: A new species of **Indian Muraingrasses** known for their ecological and economic importance, such as fodder, have been spotted by scientists in Goa in the Western Ghats, one of the four global biodiversity hotspots of India. The species has adapted to survive harsh conditions, low nutrient availability, and blossoms every monsoon.

Globally 85 species are known from *Ischaemum*, of which 61 species are exclusively found in India. The Western Ghats have 40 species with the highest concentration of the genus.

The species was named ***Ischaemum janarthanamiin*** honor of Prof. M. K. Janarthanam, Professor of Botany, Goa University, for his contribution to the Indian grass taxonomy and documentation of the floristic diversity of Goa state.

Q.14) Which of the following is the objective of **Beresheet 2 Mission**?

- a) A manned mission to Mars
- b) A deep sea exploration initiative
- c) A project to study impact of gravitational waves
- d) An unmanned mission to moon

Correct answer: D

Explanation: SpaceIL, the nonprofit Israeli initiative whose spacecraft crashed as it tried to land on the moon last year, announced recently that it is launching another lunar mission with its Israeli government partners. The **Beresheet 2 project will aim to send three spacecraft — an orbiter and two landers — to the moon.**

The first Beresheet, or “Genesis,” spacecraft, built by SpaceIL and state-owned Israel Aerospace Industries had crashed on moon surface in 2019.

Q.15) Which of the following is/are **mRNA vaccine candidates** for COVID-19?

- 1. ChAdOx1 nCoV-19
- 2. COVAXIN
- 3. HGC019

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: D

Explanation: The **mRNA vaccines** do not use the conventional model to produce immune response. Instead, mRNA vaccine carries the molecular instructions to make the protein in the body through a synthetic RNA of the virus. The host body uses this to produce the viral protein that is recognized and thereby making the body mount an immune response against the disease.

Option 1 is incorrect. **ChAdOx1 nCoV-19** is a recombinant adenovirus vaccine candidate against SARS-CoV-2. It has been developed by Oxford University in collaboration with AstraZeneca. It is being produced in India by Serum Institute of India under brand name COVISHIELD.

Option 2 is incorrect. **COVAXIN by Bharat Biotech** is an inactivated vaccine developed from an Indian strain of the novel coronavirus isolated by NIV.

Option 3 is correct. **India’s first indigenous mRNA vaccine candidate** has received approval from Indian Drug regulators to initiate Phase I/II human clinical trial. The novel mRNA vaccine candidate, **HGC019** has been developed by Gennova, Pune and supported

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with seed grant under the Ind-CEPI mission of Department of Biotechnology of Ministry of Science & Technology.

Q.16) Consider the following statements regarding the **Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)**:

1. It works by transmitting polarized light particles over a fiber optic cable.
2. It is a highly secure means of communication because of its ability to detect any intrusion on the QKD transmission.

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. **Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)** works by transmitting millions of polarized light particles (photons) over a fiber optic cable from one entity to another. Each photon has a random quantum state, and collectively all the photons create a bit stream of ones and zeros.

Statement 2 is correct. The security of QKD stems from the **ability to detect any intrusion on the QKD** transmission. Because of the unique and fragile properties of photons, any third party (or eavesdropper) who tries to read or copy the photons in any way will change the photons' state.

The change will be detected by the endpoints, alerting them that the key has been tampered with and must be discarded. A new key is then transmitted.

A milestone of this project was achieved recently when DRDO developed Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology underwent trials in Hyderabad between two DRDO labs, DRDL and RCI, to show secure communication.

Q.17) Which of the following statement is correct regarding the **'Havana Syndrome'**?

- a) Hostages developing affinity toward their captors during an abduction
- b) An illness reported by diplomats posted in Cuba
- c) A sickness reported by astronauts after returning from International Space Station
- d) Illness caused by motion during travel through sea

Correct answer: B

Explanation: In late 2016, **US diplomats** and other employees stationed in Havana reported feeling ill after hearing strange sounds and experiencing odd physical sensations in their hotel rooms or homes. The symptoms included nausea, severe headaches, fatigue, dizziness, sleep problems, and hearing loss, which have since come to be known as **"Havana Syndrome"**.

This mystery illness suffered by US diplomats in Cuba was most likely caused by directed microwave radiation, a US government report by the National Academies of Sciences has found.

Q.18) Consider the following statements regarding the **HL-2M Tokamak reactor**:

1. It is based on nuclear fission tokamak reactor.
2. It is a collaborative project between European Union and USA.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2

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d) Neither 1 nor 2

Correct answer: D

Explanation: Both statements are incorrect.

The **HL-2M Tokamak reactor** is **China's** largest and most advanced nuclear **fusion** experimental research device.

Located in southwestern Sichuan province and completed late last year, the reactor is often called an "artificial sun" on account of the enormous heat and power it produces.

Fusion is considered the source of energy and is what powers our sun. It merges atomic nuclei to create massive amounts of energy—the opposite of the fission process used in atomic weapons and nuclear power plants, which splits them into fragments.

Unlike fission, fusion does not create radioactive waste, and carries less risk of accidents or the theft of atomic material.

International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) is an international nuclear fusion research and engineering megaproject, which will be the world's largest magnetic confinement plasma physics experiment. ITER Members: China, the European Union, India, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States.

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HISTORY/ART/CULTURE

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding **B.R. Ambedkar**:

1. He established the Scheduled Caste Federation and Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha.

2. He was awarded with Bharat Ratna posthumously.

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. **Scheduled Castes Federation (SCF)** was an organisation in India founded by B. R. Ambedkar in 1942 to campaign for the rights of the Dalit community.

Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha is a central institution formed by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar for removing difficulties of the untouchables and placing their grievances before government.

Statement 2 is correct. BR Ambedkar was conferred **Bharat Ratna** posthumously on March 31, **1990**.

In 1956, Ambedkar converted to Buddhism. He completed the final manuscript of his book on Buddhism 'The Buddha and His Dhamma' in December 1956. Three days later, on 6 December, he passed away.

Q.2) Which of the following is/are correctly matched?

1. Parliament House - Edwin Lutyens

2. Chandigarh Capitol Complex - Le Corbusier

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: Option 1 is correctly matched. India's current **Parliament building was designed by the famous architects Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker** who were responsible for the planning and construction of New Delhi. The Foundation Stone of Parliament House was laid on 12 February 1921 by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught.

Option 2 is correctly matched. **Le Corbusier**, was a Swiss-French architect, designer, painter, urban planner, writer, and one of the pioneers of what is now regarded as modern architecture.

Corbusier was 63 when he started work on **Chandigarh**, after several of his plans to reconstruct cities of Europe, after World War II, were rejected.

Chandigarh Capitol Complex, located in the sector-1 of Chandigarh, is a government compound designed by the architect Le Corbusier and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.