

ForumIAS

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Prelims Marathon

9th to 15th November, 2020

*HISTORY
ECONOMICS
POLITY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT*

History

Q.1) In which of the following archaeological site found the presence of a three-fold Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Iron Age settlements?

- Mehrgarh
- Belan Valley
- Soan Valley
- Burzahom

ANS: B

Explanation: Koldihwa, in Belan valley (unique in terms of the presence of a three-fold Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Iron Age settlements), Koldihwa and Mahagara, south of Allahabad (many strata of circular huts along with crude hand-made pottery; earliest evidence of rice cultivation in the world).

Source: Poonam Dahiya (Ancient & Medieval India)

Q.2) Which of the following crops are grown in Harappan Civilization?

- Rice
- Cotton
- Ground Nut
- Barley

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1, 2 and 4 only
- 2 and 4 only
- 2, 3 and 4 only
- 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANS: A

Explanation: The Harappan civilisation was the earliest known civilisation to produce cotton. Known as Sindon by the Greeks as from Sindh.

- In the Indus plain, people sowed seeds in the flood plains in November, when the flood water receded and reaped their harvests of wheat and barley in April, before the advent of the next flood.
- They produced sufficient food grains to feed themselves and the surplus food grains were stored in granaries.

The characteristic features pertaining to the agricultural practices of the Harappans are mentioned below:

- The Harappans grew wheat (especially in Mehrgarh), barley, horse gram, peas, melon, watermelon, sesame, dates, millets, grapes, henna (mehndi), garlic, mustard, rice (Lothal).
- They also exploited riverine and marine resources wherever possible. For example, molluscs were an important protein-rich food element in the coastal sites of Gujarat people.

Source: NCERT

Q.3) Consider the following statements regarding “Harappan Civilization”:

- Harappan Civilization is considered as a secular society.
- Idolatri was practiced in Harappan cities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Harappan civilisation is considered as a secular society as not a single structure qualifying as temple has been found.

- Sacred ritual spots included the Great Bath at Mohenjo-Daro, where the elite in all likelihood undertook ritual activity that included ceremonial bathing.
- Idolatry was practiced.

Source: NCERT

Q.4) There is still no consensus on the original home of Aryans and different theories are postulated which further continue the debate. Which of the following personality propounded the European theory of Aryans?

- a) Max Mueller
- b) Sir William Zones
- c) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- d) Alexander Cunningham

ANS: B

Explanation: Indo-Aryans are believed to be the composers of Vedic texts.

The term Indo-Aryans is basically a linguistic term and refers to speakers of a sub group of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family of languages.

Rig Veda composers describe themselves as Arya (a cultural/ethnic term etymologically derived from ar meaning to cultivate, literally meaning kinsmen or companion, in Sanskrit it means favourably disposed new comers and later it implied men of good family noble).

There is still no consensus on the original home of Aryans and different theories are postulated which further continue the debate.

European theory was propounded by Sir William Zones.

Source: Poonam Dahiya

Q.5) Dhanur Veda is the Upveda of which of the following?

- a) Rig Veda
- b) Sama Veda
- c) Yajur Veda
- d) Atharva Veda

ANS: C

Explanation: The Yajur Veda deals with the procedure for the performance of sacrifices. The texts are further divided into:

- Shukla Yajur Veda/White Yajur Veda/Vajasaneya (contains only the Mantras) It contains the Madhyandina and Kanva recensions.
- Krishna Yajur Veda/Black Yajur Veda (contains mantras and prose explanations/commentary). It contains the Kathaka, Maitrayani, Taittiriya, and Kapishthala recensions.
- The Upveda of the Yajur Veda is the Dhanur Veda.

Source: Poonam Dahiya

Q.6) Arrange the following dynasties in chronological order:

1. Haryanka Dynasty
2. Shishunga Dynasty
3. Mauryan Dynasty
4. Nanda Dynasty

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Haryanka Dynasty, Shishunga Dynasty, Nanda Dynasty followed by Mauryan Dynasty.

Source: Poonam Dahiya

Q.7) Milindapanho is a dialogue on various philosophical issues between the Indo – Greek king Milinda and which of the following personality?

- a) Buddhaghosa
- b) Mahavsta
- c) Suddhodhana
- d) Nagasena

ANS: D

Explanation: Milindapanho (written in Pali, it consists of a dialogue on various philosophical issues between the Indo- Greek king Milinda/Menander and the monk Nagasena).

Source: Poonam Dahiya

Q.8) The terms, “**rekha-prasada, phamsana, valabhi**” is related to which of the following?

- a) Dravida style of architecture
- b) Nagara style of architecture
- c) Hoyasala style of architecture
- d) Panchayatan style of architecture

ANS: B

Explanation: There are many subdivisions of nagara temples depending on the shape of the shikhara.

- The most common name for the simple shikhara which is square at the base and whose walls curve or slope inward to a point on top is called the 'latina' or the **rekha-prasada type of shikara**.
- The second major type of architectural form in the nagara order is the **phamsana**. Phamsana buildings tend to be broader and shorter than latina ones.
- The third main sub-type of the nagara building is what is generally called the **valabhi type**. These are rectangular buildings with a roof that rises into a vaulted chamber. The edge of this vaulted chamber is rounded, like the bamboo or wooden wagons that would have been drawn by bullocks in ancient times. They are usually called 'wagon vaulted buildings'.

Source: NCERT

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

Q.9) “Tasvir Khana”- a formal artistic studio is established by which of the following?

- a) Babar
- b) Aurangzeb
- c) Akbar
- d) Jahangir

ANS: C

Explanation: Tasvir Khana.

- Akbar was responsible for establishment of an entire department devoted to the paintings and scribing of his documents.
- He established a formal artistic studio called Tasvir Khana where the artists were hired on salary and they developed their own styles.
- Akbar looked upon paintings as a means of study and amusement. He believed that a painting could show the demeanor of the subject and regularly gave awards to those painters who created lifelike images.

Source: NCERT

Q.10) Consider the following statements regarding the **Uttarapatha and Dakshinapatha**:

1. Uttarapatha route stretches from North-west India to present day Gujarat coast.
2. Dakshinapatha route stretches from port city of Tamralipti to Arikamedu.

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

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Craft products like textile goods, ivory products, pots, etc., were exported over long distances by merchants. All the major cities were situated on river banks and trade routes, and were connected with each other.

- The two major trans-regional routes of the time were known as Uttarapatha (of northern India, stretching from the north-west across the Indo-Gangetic plains to the port city of Tamralipti on the Bay of Bengal).
- Dakshinapatha (of southern India, stretching from Pataliputra in Magadha to Pratishthana on the Godavari, and connected to ports on the western coast).

Source: NCERT

Economy

Q.1) Which of the following are the indicators of “**World Happiness Index**”?

1. GDP per capita
2. Social support
3. Environmental sustainability
4. Healthy life expectancy
5. Generosity

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: The Sustainable Development Solutions Network for the United Nations released the World Happiness Report on 20th March, 2020.

- The World Happiness Report ranks 156 countries by how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be.
- The rankings are based on polling (Gallup World Poll) which looks at six variables: GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity, and absence of corruption.
- The 2020 Report for the first time ranked cities around the world by their subjective well-being and looked into how the social, urban and natural environments combine to affect happiness.

Source: The Hindu

Q.2) Which of the following countries is/are part of “**East Asian Miracle 1993**”?

1. China
2. Japan
3. South Korea
4. Thailand
5. Philippines

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Eight countries in East Asia—Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia—have become known as the “East Asian miracle” because of their economies’ dramatic growth.

- In these eight countries real per capita GDP rose twice as fast as in any other regional grouping between 1965 and 1990.
- Even more impressive is their simultaneous significant reduction in poverty and income inequality.

Source: Ramesh Singh

Q.3) Which of the following five year plan is based on the “**Harrod – Domar model**”?

- a) First five year plan
- b) Second five year plan
- c) Fifth five year plan
- d) Tenth five year plan

ANS: A

Explanation:

First Plan (1951 - 56)	It was based on Harrod-Domar Model . Influx of refugees, severe food shortage & mounting inflation confronted the country at the onset of the first five year Plan.
Target Growth : 2.1 %	The Plan Focussed on agriculture , price stability, power and transport
Actual Growth 3.6 %	It was a successful plan primarily because of good harvests in the last two years of the plan. Objectives of rehabilitation of refugees, food self sufficiency & control of prices were more or less achieved.

Source: MoSPI

Q.4) “**The Planned Economy of India**” book was written by which of the following?

- a) Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
- b) Dadabhai Naoroji
- c) M. Visvesvaraya
- d) Jawaharlal Nehru

ANS: C

Explanation: The credit of proposing the first blueprint of Indian planning is given to the popular civil engineer and the ex-Dewan of the Mysore state, M. Visvesvaraya.

In his book *The Planned Economy of India*, published in 1934, he outlined the broad contours of his plan proposal.

Source: Ramesh Singh

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding “**Insolvency and bankruptcy code**”:

1. It was introduced in 2016.
2. Under IBC, either the creditor (banks) or the loaner (defaulter) can initiate insolvency proceedings.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Insolvency and bankruptcy code 2016 was introduced to resolve the bankruptcy crisis in corporate sector.

- Under IBC, either the creditor (banks) or the loaner (defaulter) can initiate insolvency proceedings.
- It is done by submitting a plea to the adjudicating authority, the National Companies Law Tribunal (NCLT).
- According to IBC, a financial creditor holds an important role in the corporate insolvency process.
- The Committee of Creditors (CoC) under IBC includes all financial creditors of a corporate debtor.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

- The CoC will appoint and supervise the Insolvency Professional.
- It has the power to either approve or reject the resolution plan to revive the debtor, or to proceed to liquidate the debtor.

Source: Ramesh Singh

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding “**Government e-Marketplace (GeM)**”:

1. It is the Commerce Ministry’s online marketplace.
2. Recently government made it mandatory for sellers on the GeM portal to clarify the country of origin of their goods when registering new products.

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

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is the Commerce Ministry’s online marketplace.

- It procures goods and services by various Ministries and government bodies.
- Products sold on the portal range from stationery used by government officials to medical products that are used on patients.
- The government made it mandatory for sellers on the GeM portal to clarify the country of origin of their goods when registering new products.

Source: The Hindu

Q.7) Consider the following statements regarding “**Monetization of Deficit**”:

1. Indian government till now never resort to monetization of deficit.
2. FRBM Act as amended in 2017 contained an escape clause which permits monetization of the deficit under special circumstances.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Monetization of fiscal deficits involves the financing of such extra expenses with money, instead of debt to be repaid at some future dates.

So, it is a form of "non-debt financing". As a result, under monetization, there is no increase in net (not gross) public debt.

It can occur only through one of two modalities:

- Direct Monetization (DM): Under this method, RBI prints new currency and purchases government bonds directly from the primary market (from the government) using this currency. As a result, this supports the spending needs of the government.
- Indirect monetization (IM): In this method, deficits are monetized as the government issues bonds in the primary market and the RBI purchases an equivalent amount of government bonds from the secondary market in the form of Open Market Operations (OMOs).

Monetization of deficit was in practice in India till 1997, whereby the central bank automatically monetized government deficit through the issuance of ad-hoc treasury bills.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

- In 1994 and 1997, two agreements were signed between the government and RBI to completely phase out funding through ad-hoc treasury bills.
- Later on, with the enactment of Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003, RBI was completely barred from subscribing to the primary issuances of the government.
- The FRBM Act as amended in 2017 contained an escape clause which permits monetization of the deficit under special circumstances.

Source: The Hindu

Q.8) Which of the following is called as “**Broad Money**”?

- a) M0
- b) M1
- c) M2
- d) M3

ANS: D

Explanation: Reserve Money (M0): also called High Powered money, monetary base, base money etc.

- $M0 = \text{Currency in Circulation} + \text{Bankers' Deposits with RBI} + \text{Other Deposits with RBI}$.
- **Narrow Money (M1) = Currency with public + Demand deposits with the Banking system (current account, saving account) + other deposits with RBI.**
- $M2 = M1 + \text{Savings deposits of post office savings banks}$.
- **Broad Money (M3) = M1 + Time deposits with the banking system.**
- $M4 = M3 + \text{All deposits with post office savings banks}$

Source: Ramesh Singh

Q.9) The “**International Comparison Programme**” is often seen in news is associated with which of the following?

- a) IMF
- b) World Bank
- c) World Economic Forum
- d) UNDP

ANS: B

Explanation: ICP is worldwide data-collection initiative that is managed by World Bank under auspices of UN Statistical Commission.

- The main objective of the ICP is to produce comparable volume measures of GDP and its expenditure components based on Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs).
- India has participated in ICP rounds since its inception in 1970.
- Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is National Implementing Agency for ICP in India.
- India was co-Chair of the ICP Governing Board along with Austria for the ICP 2017 cycle.
- Next ICP comparison will be conducted for reference year 2021.

Source: The Hindu

Q.10) The term “**Side Pocketing**” often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Non-Banking Finance Corporations
- b) Mutual Funds
- c) Insurance Sector
- d) Viability Gap Funding

ANS: B

Explanation: Simply put, side pocketing is a framework that allows mutual funds to segregate the bad assets in a separate portfolio within their debt schemes.

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) introduced the framework in December — primarily triggered by the IL&FS fiasco — after it emerged that many fund houses have huge exposure to the beleaguered entity and could potentially take a huge hit on their net asset value thereby affecting investor returns.
- If a debt instrument is downgraded to default rating by credit rating agencies, then the fund house has the option to create a side pocket so that good assets can be ring-fenced.
- Side pocketing segregates the bad assets from the good ones.
- All existing investors in the scheme are allotted equal number of units in the segregated portfolio as held in the main portfolio and no redemption or subscription is allowed in the segregated portfolio.
- Thereafter, the units have to be listed on a stock exchange within 10 days to facilitate exit of the unit holders.
- Effectively, this makes the price discovery of the bad assets a transparent procedure with investors having the freedom of either selling it at prevailing price or holding it if they expect the value to recover in future.

Source: The Hindu

Polity

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding “Regulating Act, 1833”:

1. It made the Governor-General of Bengal as the Governor - General of India and vested in him military powers and civil powers.
2. The Governor-General of India was given exclusive legislative powers for the entire British India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Regulating Act, 1833 was the final step towards centralization in British India.

The features of this Act were as follows:

- It made the Governor-General of Bengal as the Governor - General of India and vested in him all civil and military powers. Thus, the act created, for the first time, Government of India having authority over the entire territorial area possessed by the British in India. Lord William Bentick was the first Governor-General of India.
- It deprived the Governor of Bombay and Madras of their legislative powers. The Governor-General of India was given exclusive legislative powers for the entire British India. The laws made under the previous acts were called as Regulations, while laws made under this act were called as Acts.
- It ended the activities of the East India Company as a commercial body, which became a purely administrative body. It provided that the Company’s territories in India were held by it ‘in trust for His Majesty, His heirs and successors’.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.2) Which of the following words are found in the Objectives Resolution of 1946?

1. Sovereign
2. Justice
3. Equality
4. Integrity
5. Fraternity

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: On December 13, 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru moved the historic ‘Objectives Resolution’ in the Assembly. It laid down the fundamentals and philosophy of the constitutional structure. It read:

- “This Constituent Assembly declares its firm and solemn resolve to proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution”.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

- Where in shall be guaranteed and secured to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality; and
- Where by shall be maintained the integrity of the territory of the Republic and its sovereign rights on land, sea and air according to justice and the law of civilized nations.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.3) Which of the following amendment process (s) is/are come (s) under Article 368?

1. Simple Majority.
2. Special majority of the Parliament.
3. Special majority of the Parliament and with the ratification by half of the total states.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The Constitution of India is neither rigid nor flexible, but a synthesis of both. Article 368 provides for two types of amendments:

- Some provisions can be amended by a special majority of the Parliament, i.e., a two-third majority of the members of each House present and voting, and a majority of the total membership of each House.
- Some other provisions can be amended by a special majority of the Parliament and with the ratification by half of the total states.

At the same time, some provisions of the Constitution can be amended by a simple majority of the Parliament in the manner of ordinary legislative process. Notably, these amendments do not come under Article 368.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.4) Which of the following states in India follow the Inner Line Permit (ILP)?

1. Arunachal Pradesh
2. Mizoram
3. Tripura
4. Manipur

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: Inner Line Permit is a concept drawn by colonial rulers; the Inner Line separated the tribal-populated hill areas in the Northeast from the plains.

- To enter and stay for any period in these areas, Indian citizens from other areas need an Inner Line Permit (ILP).
- The Inner Line protects Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram, and Manipur was added lately.

Source: Indian Express

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

Q.5) Alma Ata Declaration is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Health
- b) Education
- c) Vaccination
- d) Sustainable Development

ANS: A

Explanation: The Declaration of Alma-Ata was adopted at the International Conference on Primary Health Care, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 6–12 September 1978.

It expressed the need for urgent action by all governments, all health and development workers, and the world community to protect and promote the health of all people.

Source: WHO

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding the “Atal Bhujal Yojana”:

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme aims to improve ground water management through community participation in identified priority areas in seven States.
2. It is funded by Asian Development Bank.
3. It pays special attention to those areas where groundwater was very low.

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

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Atal Bhujal scheme to strengthen the institutional framework for participatory groundwater management and bringing about behavioral changes at the community level for sustainable groundwater resource management in seven States.

- The scheme will be implemented in about 8,350 gram panchayats in 78 districts of Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
- Of the total outlay of ₹6,000 crore to be provided from 2020-21 to 2024-25, 50% will be in the form of World Bank loan to be repaid by the Central government.
- The remaining part will be made available via Central assistance from regular budgetary support.
- The entire World Bank’s loan component and the Central assistance will be passed on to the States as grants.
- The Prime Minister said the scheme, or the guidelines related to the Jal Jeevan Mission, were big steps in proving the resolve to deliver water to every household in the country by 2024.
- He said the Jal Jeevan Mission would work towards delivering piped water supply to every house and Atal Bhujal scheme would pay special attention to those areas where groundwater was very low.

Source: The Hindu

Q.7) Consider the following statements regarding the “Cyber Shiksha”:

1. It is launched by Facebook & Data Security Council of India (DSCI) in association with Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY).
2. It is exclusively for women and making them Industry ready by imparting the requisite technical skills in the domain of Cyber Security.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Microsoft & Data Security Council of India (DSCI) in association with ISEA of Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) have launched Project Cyber Shikshaa for skilling women engineering graduates in the niche field of Cyber Security in September 2018.

As part of this program, C-DAC, NIELIT and other noted training partners are conducting training exclusively for women and making them Industry ready by imparting the requisite technical skills in the domain of Cyber Security.

Source: Indian Express

Q.8) Which of the following states are covered under the provisions of the Sixth Schedule of Indian Constitution?

- 1. Assam
- 2. Sikkim
- 3. Tripura
- 4. Nagaland
- 5. Mizoram

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The Sixth Schedule consists of provisions for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, according to Article 244a of the Indian Constitution.

- Passed by the Constituent Assembly in 1949, it seeks to safeguard the rights of tribal population through the formation of Autonomous District Councils (ADC).
- ADCs are bodies representing a district to which the Constitution has given varying degrees of autonomy within the state legislature.
- The governors of these states are empowered to reorganize boundaries of the tribal areas. In simpler terms, she or he can choose to include or exclude any area, increase or decrease the boundaries and unite two or more autonomous districts into one.

They can also alter or change the names of autonomous regions without a separate legislation.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.9) The provisions of the “Part XVI” of the Indian Constitution are related to which of the following?

- a) Mother Tongue.
- b) Finance, Property, Contract and Suits.
- c) Political parties.
- d) Special provisions relating to certain classes.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

ANS: D

Explanation: In order to realize the objectives of equality and justice as laid down in the Preamble, the Constitution makes special provisions for the scheduled castes (SCs), the scheduled tribes (STs), the backward classes (BCs) and the Anglo-Indians.

These special provisions are contained in Part XVI of the Constitution from Articles 330 to 342.

Source: Laxmikanth

Q.10) Consider the following statements regarding “writs”:

1. The Supreme Court and the high courts can issue the writs.
2. Parliament can empower any other court to issue writs.

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

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The Supreme Court (under Article 32) and the high courts (under Article 226) can issue the writs of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, certiorari and quo-warranto.

- Further, the Parliament (under Article 32) can empower any other court to issue these writs.
- Since no such provision has been made so far, only the Supreme Court and the high courts can issue the writs and not any other court.

Source: Laxmikanth

Science and technology

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding “Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe)”:

1. It will act as an interface between ISRO and private parties.
2. IN-SPACe is to be a facilitator and not a regulator.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: A

Explanation: The Government of India has announced the creation of a new “Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe)”.

- IN-SPACe will be an autonomous nodal agency under the Department of Space.
- It is expected to be functional within 6 months (from June 2020). IN-SPACe is supposed to be a facilitator and a regulator.
- It will act as an interface between ISRO and private parties. It will provide the necessary support for the private space industry to conduct its activities.
- IN-SPACe will assess the needs and demands of private players including educational and research institutions.
- It will explore ways to accommodate these requirements in consultation with ISRO.
- It will also assess how best to utilise India’s space resources and increase space-based activities

Source: The Hindu

Q.2) Which of the following factors is/are responsible for nascent growth of Indian Space Sector in tapping global space industry?

1. Indian space industry’s role has been mainly that of suppliers of components and sub-systems.
2. Indian industries do not have the resources or the technology to undertake independent space projects or provide space-based services.
3. The demand for space-based applications and services is growing even within India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Currently, there does exist private industry involvement in India’s space sector. In fact, a large part of manufacturing and fabrication of rockets and satellites now happens in the private sector.

- There is an increasing participation of research institutions as well. However, Indian industry had a barely 3% share in a rapidly growing global space economy.
- Currently, the value of the global space industry is estimated to be \$360 billion. Only 2% of this market goes for rocket and satellite launch services, which require fairly large infrastructure and heavy investment.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

Reasons for lagging behind:

Till now, Indian space industry's role has been mainly that of suppliers of components and sub-systems.

- Indian industries do not have the resources or the technology to undertake independent space projects or provide space-based services.
- Additionally, the demand for space-based applications and services is growing even within India.
- The need for satellite data, imageries and space technology now cuts across sectors. It ranges from weather to agriculture to transport to urban development, and more.
- But, ISRO is unable to cater to this. ISRO would have to be expanded 10 times the current level to meet all the demand that is arising.

Source: The Hindu

Q.3) Recently which of the following institution collaborated with International Transport Forum (ITF) to launch a new online project called “De-carbonizing Transport in India”?

- a) Ministry of Road and Transport
- b) Ministry of Railways
- c) NITI Aayog
- d) Department of Space

ANS: C

Explanation: NITI Aayog and International Transport Forum (ITF) will collaborate to launch a new online project called “Decarbonizing Transport in India”.

- It is to chart out a path for a low-carbon transport system in the country. It will offer an opportunity to provide inputs for transport challenges and their relation to CO2 reduction in the country.
- The project will include designing a transport emissions assessment framework for India, providing the government with a detailed understanding of transport activities and CO2 emissions as a basis for decision making.
- It is a part of the ITF’s DTEE (De-carbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies) series of projects.
- DTEEs aimed at lowering carbon emissions across different regions in the world. The current participants in the initiative are India, Argentina, Azerbaijan, and Morocco.

Source: Indian Express

Q.4) Recently, Government of India was launched “SATYABHAMA Portal” is related to which of the following?

- a) Mines and minerals
- b) Food processing
- c) Space goods
- d) Automobiles

ANS: A

Explanation: Union Ministry of Mines has launched a portal "SATYABHAMA (Science and Technology Yojana for Atmanirbhar Bharat in Mining Advancement)".

- Its aim is to promote research and development in the mining and minerals sector.
- It has been launched to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the Science and Technology Programme Scheme.
- Under the Science and Technology Programme Scheme, the Ministry of Mines promotes research in applied geosciences, mineral exploration, mining and allied

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

areas, mineral processing, optimum utilization and conservation of the mineral resources of the country.

- The portal has been designed, developed and implemented by the National Informatics Centre (NIC). The portal is also integrated with NGO Darpan Portal of NITI Aayog.

Source: The Hindu

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding “Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) Initiative”:

1. It aims at improving the research ecosystem of India’s higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian institutions and the best institutions in the world.
 2. IIT – Kanpur is the National Coordinating Institute to implement the SPARC programme.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: A

Explanation: Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development.

- IIT, Kharagpur is the National Coordinating Institute to implement the SPARC programme.
- It aims at improving the research ecosystem of India’s higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian institutions and the best institutions in the world.

Source: Indian Express

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding “UN Arms Trade treaty”:

1. It is a multilateral treaty that regulates the international trade in conventional weapons.
2. India is not a member of 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

ANS: C

Explanation: The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a multilateral treaty that regulates the international trade in conventional weapons.

- The treaty was negotiated in New York City at a global conference under the auspices of the UN in 2012. UN General Assembly adopted the ATT in 2013.
- It entered into force on 4th December 2014. 105 states have ratified the treaty, and a further 32 states have signed but not ratified it. [India is not a member to this treaty]
- It requires member countries to keep records of international transfers of weapons and to prohibit cross border shipments that could be used in human rights violations or attacks on civilians.
- Recently China’s efforts to join the treaty has been rejected by the United States.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

- It comes after US President Donald Trump announced plans last year to pull the United States out of the agreement which entered into force in 2014.
- The US Senate never ratified the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty, even after former president Barack Obama endorsed it.

Source: The Hindu

Q.7) “Seabed 2030” project often seen in news is launched by which of the following?

- a) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- b) Nippon foundation
- c) UNCLOS
- d) International Seabed Authority

ANS: B

Explanation: Announcing a new milestone in the history of marine exploration, an international collaboration of researchers said on June 21 that it had finished mapping nearly one-fifth of the world’s ocean floor.

- The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project, which is coordinating efforts to complete the mapping of the entire ocean floor by 2030, said on World Hydrography Day (June 21) that it had added 1.45 crore square kilometres of new bathymetric data to its latest grid.
- Since the launch of the project in 2017, the surveying of the ocean bed as per modern standards has gone up from around 6 per cent to 19 per cent.

Source: Indian Express

Q.8) Which of the following space agencies is part of “International Space Station (ISS)”?

1. NASA
2. Roscosmos
3. China National Space Administration
4. JAXA
5. European Space Agency
6. ISRO

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: International Space Station (ISS) is a modular space station (habitable artificial satellite) in low Earth orbit.

- The ISS programme is a multi-national collaborative project between five participating space agencies: 1. NASA (United States), 2. Roscosmos (Russia), 3. JAXA (Japan), 4. ESA (Europe), 5. CSA (Canada).
- The ownership and use of the space station are established by intergovernmental treaties and agreements.
- It is suited for testing the spacecraft systems and equipment required for possible future long-duration missions to the Moon and Mars.
- It is the largest artificial object in space and the largest satellite in low Earth orbit, regularly visible to the naked eye from Earth's surface.
- It circles the Earth in roughly 93 minutes, completing 15.5 orbits per day.

Source: NASA

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

Q.9) The “**Helsinki Declaration**” is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- It is related to ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects, including research on identifiable human material and data.
- It is related to development of indigenous methods of farming and agriculture system.
- It is related to promote efficiency of multiple types of renewable.
- None.

ANS: A

Explanation: The World Medical Association (WMA) has developed the Declaration of Helsinki as a statement of ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects, including research on identifiable human material and data.

- The Declaration of Geneva of the WMA binds the physician with the words, “The health of my patient will be my first consideration,” and the International Code of Medical Ethics declares that, “A physician shall act in the patient’s best interest when providing medical care.”
- It is the duty of the physician to promote and safeguard the health, well-being and rights of patients, including those who are involved in medical research.
- The physician’s knowledge and conscience are dedicated to the fulfillment of this duty.
- Medical progress is based on research that ultimately must include studies involving human subjects.

Source: The Hindu

Q.10) The term “**HELINA**” is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- It is sonar radar to measure depth of the deep sea.
- It is a Helicopter Launched Nag missile.
- It is a surface to Air missile.
- Stealth Frigate.

ANS: B

Explanation: HELINA is an acronym for Helicopter Launched Nag missile.

- Nag is a third generation Anti-Tank guided missile indigenously developed under –Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) of DRDO.
- Anti-Tank Guided Missiles are primarily designed to hit and destroy heavily armored military vehicles.
- Helina is the helicopter launch variant of Nag, which can be fired from Dhruv advanced light helicopter and HAL Rudra attack helicopter.

Source: The Hindu

Geography

Q.1) Consider the following statements:

1. The Union Territory Puducherry is spread in three states.
2. All territories of Puducherry were French enclaves before independence.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The Union Territory of Puducherry comprises of four coastal regions namely Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam.

- Puducherry and Karaikal are situated on the East Coast of Tamil Nadu, Yanam in Andhra Pradesh and Mahe on the West Coast in Kerala.
- The city of Puducherry is the Capital of this Union Territory. It lies on the east coast about 162 kms south of Chennai (Madras) located on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal.
- There are no hills or forests in this region. The major soil types found here are red ferralitic, black clay and coastal alluvial.
- The main spoken language is Tamil; though Telugu, Malayalam, English and French are spoken by a considerable number of people.
- Although the majority of the population is Hindu, there are quite a number of Christians and Muslims, whereas Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists are few in comparison.
- It is to be noted here that all four territories coming under Puducherry Union Territory were French exclaves before Independence.

Source: Periyar Geography

Q.2) Which of the following states of India share border with Bangladesh?

1. West Bengal
2. Assam
3. Meghalaya
4. Manipur
5. Tripura

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: B

Explanation: Bangladesh shares border with West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

Source: NCERT

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

Q.3) Which of the following pair (s) is/are NOT correctly matched?

Commission	:	Boundary line between
1. Radcliffe line	:	India and Bangladesh
2. Mc Mohan line	:	India and Myanmar
3. Durand line	:	India and Afghanistan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Radcliffe Line: Border line between India and Pakistan, and India and Bangladesh. The border between India and Pakistan was decided by Sir Cyril Radcliffe in 1947.

Mc Mohan Line: Border line between India and China. This line was decided by Sir Henry Mc Mohan in 1914.

Durand Line: Border line between India and Afghanistan. This line was decided by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand in 1896.

Source: Periyar Geography

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding mountain peaks:

- 1. The highest mountain peak in India is Mount Godwin Austin is situated in Karakoram mountain range.
- 2. The highest mountain peak of Himalayas is Mount Everest.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: C

Explanation: The highest mountain peak of the Himalayas is Mount Everest. It is also the highest mountain peak of the world.

The highest mountain peak in India is Mount Godwin Austin is situated in Karakoram mountain range. At present it is a part of the POK.

Source: Periyar Geography

Q.5) Which of the following hills are located in Arunachal Pradesh?

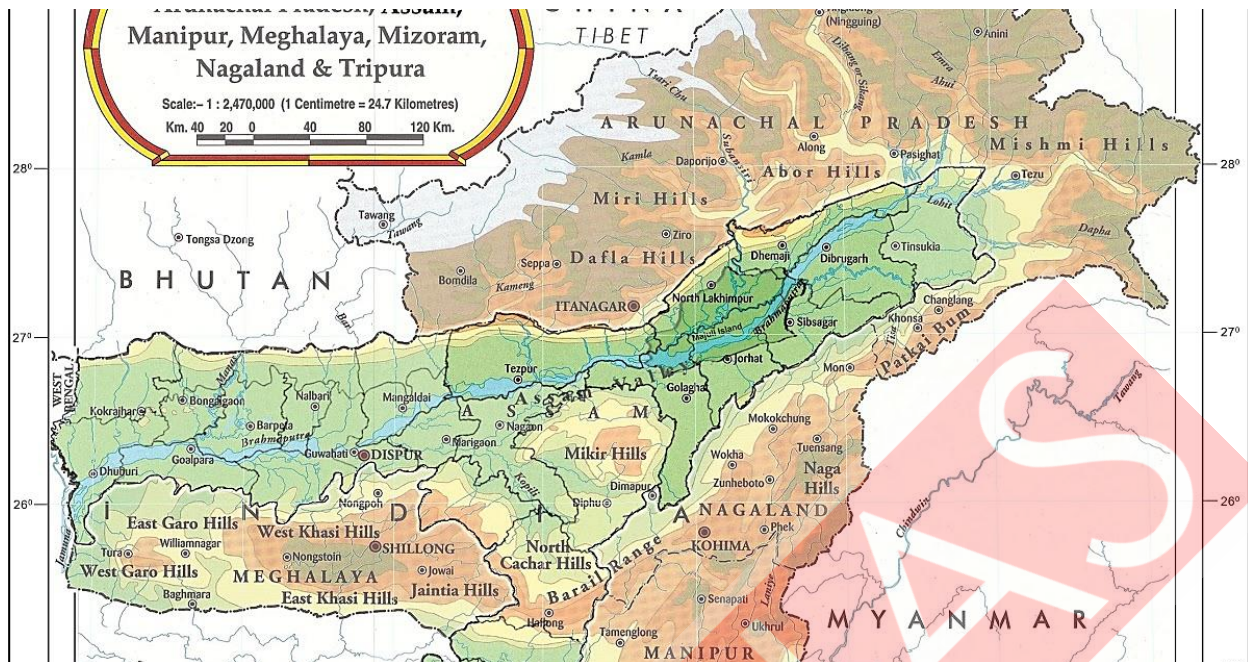
- 1. Daffla Hills
- 2. Miri Hills
- 3. Abor Hills
- 4. Mikir Hills

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: A

Explanation:



Source: Maps of India

Q.6) “Mana pass and Niti Pass” is located in which of the following state?

- a) Himachal Pradesh
- b) Uttarakhand
- c) Sikkim
- d) Arunachal Pradesh

ANS: B

Explanation: Mana Pass and Niti Pass– It is in Uttarakhand. The road to the kailash and the Manasarovar passes through it.

Source: NCERT

Q.7) Which of the following are the evidences in support of the **Continental Drift**?

- 1. Jig – Saw – Fit.
- 2. Tillite.
- 3. Placer deposits.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: A variety of evidence was offered in support of the continental drift. Some of these are given below.

The Matching of Continents (Jig-Saw-Fit): The shorelines of Africa and South America facing each other have a remarkable and unmistakable match.

- It may be noted that a map produced using a computer programme to find the best fit of the Atlantic margin was presented by Bullard in 1964.
- It proved to be quite perfect. The match was tried at 1,000- fathom line instead of the present shoreline.

Tillite: It is the sedimentary rock formed out of deposits of glaciers.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

- The Gondawana system of sediments from India is known to have its counterparts in six different landmasses of the Southern Hemisphere.
- At the base, the system has thick tillite indicating extensive and prolonged glaciation.
- The glacial tillite provides unambiguous evidence of palaeo-climates and also of drifting of continents.

Placer Deposits: The occurrence of rich placer deposits of gold in the Ghana coast and the absolute absence of source rock in the region is an amazing fact.

The gold bearing veins are in Brazil and it is obvious that the gold deposits of the Ghana are derived from the Brazil plateau when the two continents lay side by side.

Source: NCERT

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

Minor plate	:	Location
1. Philippine plate	:	Between Asiatic and Pacific plates
2. Cocos plate	:	Between Asiatic and Pacific plate
3. Caroline plate	:	Between Central America and Pacific plate

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: A

Explanation: Some important minor plates are listed below:

- Cocos plate: Between Central America and Pacific plate
- Nazca plate: Between South America and Pacific plate
- Arabian plate: Mostly the Saudi Arabian landmass
- Philippine plate: Between the Asiatic and Pacific plate
- Caroline plate: Between the Philippine and Indian plate (North of New Guinea)
- Fuji plate: North-east of Australia.

Source: National Geographic Channel

Q.9) Which of the following Ocean Current is **NOT** a cold ocean current?

- a) Kuroshio Current
- b) Oyashio Current
- c) Canaries Current
- d) Labrador Current

ANS: A

Explanation: The Kuroshio, also known as the Black or Japan Current or the Black Stream, is a north-flowing, warm ocean current on the west side of the North Pacific Ocean.

Source: NCERT

Q.10) “**Lake Pampulha**” is recently in news is located in which of the following country?

- a) Brazil
- b) Australia
- c) Russia
- d) Iran

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

ANS: A

Explanation: In a lake in Brazil, researchers have discovered a virus that they find unusual and intriguing called Yaravirus, it has a “puzzling origin and phylogeny”, they report in a study on the pre-print server bioRxiv.

- The Yaravirus infects amoeba and has genes that have not been described before, something that could challenge how DNA viruses are classified.
- The researchers found the Yaravirus while looking in the lake for giant viruses that infect amoeba.
- Because of the Yaravirus’s small size, it was unlike other viruses that infect amoeba and they named it as a tribute to Yara, the “mother of waters” in the mythological stories of the Tupi-Guarani indigenous tribes.

Source: Indian Express

ForumIAS

Environment

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding “Tiger estimation”:

1. It is conducted for every five years by National Tiger Conservation Authority.
2. It is technically supported by World Wide Fund for Nature.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: D

Explanation: The All India Tiger Estimation done every four year once, it is

- Steered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority
- Technically supported by Wildlife Institute of India
- Implemented by State Forest Departments and partners.

Source: The Hindu

Q.2) Consider the following statements regarding “Climate Investment Funds”:

1. They are implemented by the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) to bridge the financing and learning gap between international climate change agreements.
2. They were designed by developed and developing 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

ANS: C

Explanation: The Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) are implemented by the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) to bridge the financing and learning gap between international climate change agreements.

- They were designed by developed and developing countries. The World Bank is the Trustee of the CIFs.
- It includes a “sunset clause” to ensure that the Fund’s activities do not prejudice the outcome on the UNFCCC negotiations.

CIFs are two distinct funds

- Clean Technology Fund
- Strategic Climate Fund.

The CTF promotes scaled-up financing for demonstration, deployment and transfer of low carbon technologies with a significant potential for long-term greenhouse gas emissions savings.

Source: World Bank

Q.3) Recently, which of the following African country planted more than 200 million trees in a single day?

- a) Nigeria
- b) Egypt
- c) Ethiopia

d) Botswana

ANS: C

Explanation: Ethiopians planted more than 200 million trees on July 29, 2019 which officials stated will be a world record.

- The ambitious initiative of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed aims to help restore the country's landscape which experts say is fast being eroded by deforestation and climate change.
- The state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting Corporate announced more than 224 million trees were planted on Monday, surpassing the initial goal of 200 million trees planted in one day.
- Ethiopia is in the midst of a tree planting campaign in which it aims to plant 4 billion trees between May and October.

Agriculture officials stated that so far more than 2.6 billion trees have been planted in almost all parts of the East African nation.

Source: The Hindu

Q.4) With reference to conservation of biodiversity in India, which of the following Central Acts deals with conservation of Biodiversity?

1. Fisheries Act 1897.
2. Indian Forests Act 1927.
3. Water (prevention and control of pollution) act 1974.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: D

Explanation: Conservation of biodiversity includes the preservation of all species, flora and fauna, the enhancement of wildlife habitat, the control of wildlife problems and the sustainable use of forests and wildlife.

- The rapid rate of extinction of many species of animals is an increasing concern. Habitat preservation and enhancement are critical to existence of wildlife in an area.
- Animals cannot live in an area that does not provide proper food, cover, water and special needs.
- People's activities alter many habitats, which acts as a detriment to wildlife. Conservation and sustainable use of biological resources based on local knowledge systems and practices is ingrained in the Indian ethos and way of life.

Legislation Relevant To Biodiversity Conservation:

- Fisheries Act 1897.
- Indian Forests Act 1927.
- Mining and Mineral Development Regulation Act 1957.
- Prevention of cruelty to animals 1960.
- Wildlife protection act 1972.
- Water (prevention and control of pollution) act 1974.
- Forest Conservation Act 1980.
- Air (prevention and control of pollution) act 1981.
- Environment Protection Act 1986.
- Biological Diversity Act 2002.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

- Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers (recognition of rights) act 2006.

Source: Vikaspedia

Q.5) Consider the following statements:

1. Nilgiri Tahr is endemic to North East Himalayas.
2. The “big four” snakes - the common cobra, common krait, Russell’s viper, and saw-scaled viper are found in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: B

Explanation: The Nilgiri Tahr (*Nilgiritragus hylocrius*, former name is *Hemitragus hylocrius*) is an endangered mountain ungulate endemic to the southern part of the Western Ghats.

- The species is found in a roughly 400 km stretch in the Western Ghats which falls in the states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- The Eravikulam National Park has the highest density and largest surviving population of Nilgiri tahr.

"Big Four" refers to the four most common venomous snake species in India—spectacled cobra (*Naja naja*), saw-scaled viper (*Echis carinatus*), Russell's viper (*Daboia russelii*) and common krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*).

Source: The Hindu

Q.6) Recently, which of the following country forests are affected by beetle infestation and which has turned climate-stressed woodlands into brown ecological graveyards?

- a) Canada
- b) Serbia
- c) Argentina
- d) Germany

ANS: D

Explanation: Germany's forests have long been treasured by its people, so the country has reacted with alarm and dismay as a beetle infestation has turned climate-stressed woodlands into brown ecological graveyards.

- After two unusually hot summers in a row, vast patches of the forests mythologised by medieval fairytales, Goethe's writings and Romantic painters have turned into tinder-dry dead zones.
- Given the scale of the threat to the one third of German territory covered by trees, Chancellor Angela Merkel's government convened a "national forest summit" on September 2019.

Source: The Hindu

Q.7) The “Nandankanan Zoological Park” is often seen in news is located in which of the following state?

- a) Andhra Pradesh
- b) Kerala
- c) Pondicherry
- d) None

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

ANS: D

Explanation: Nandankanan Zoological Park is a premier large zoo of India.

- Unlike other zoos in the country, Nandankanan is built right inside the forest and set in a completely natural environment.
- The animals are housed in enclosures with greenery with a feel of real forest and live with no fear or apprehension of becoming the hunter's prey.
- Nandankanan is 15 kms from Odisha's capital, Bhubaneswar.
- The Bhubaneswar railway station is at a distance of 18 kms and the Biju Patnaik International Airport is at a distance of 20 kms.

Source: The Hindu

Q.8) Consider the following statements regarding the “Wildlife Protection Act, 1972”:

1. It has six schedules which give varying degrees of protection.
2. Blue Whale falls in Schedule II of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANS: A

Explanation: The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 provides for the protection of wild animals, birds and plants; and for matters connected there with or ancillary or incidental thereto.

- It extends to the whole of India.
- It has six schedules which give varying degrees of protection.
- The blue whale falls in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Source: The Hindu

Q.9) Which of the following place is known for “Salt water crocodile”?

- a) Gulf of Mannar
- b) Bhitarkanika
- c) Chilika Lake
- d) Sundarbans

ANS: B & D

Explanation: Crocodiles are ambush hunters and apex predator of river systems of the India.

- There are three crocodilians species found in India, Mugger crocodile, the Gharial and the Saltwater Crocodile.
- Mugger crocodile and the gharial are found throughout the Indian subcontinent and they are ambush hunters, mostly prey on fish, reptiles, birds and mammals.
- Saltwater Crocodiles are the largest species of crocodilians family and largest of all living reptiles in the world.
- The apex predator found in saline and brackish mangrove swamp forest of Bhitarkanika and Sunderbans.
- Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapara district of Odisha is a separates swamp region and mangroves forest.
- The park is home to largest Saltwater Crocodiles in India and many other species of reptiles such as White Crocodile, Indian Python and King Cobra.

Source: The Hindu

Q.10) The “**Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE)**” is often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Protected areas
- b) Solar Energy
- c) Organic Farming
- d) None

ANS: A

Explanation: Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) is the assessment of how well protected areas such as national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, conservation reserves, community reserves and tiger reserves are being managed and their effectiveness in conserving target flora and fauna.

Source: The Hindu

ForumIAS

Miscellaneous

Q.1) Which of the following pair (s) is/are correctly matched?

Caves	:	State
1. Kanheri caves	:	Gujarat
2. Belum caves	:	Andhra Pradesh
3. Barabar caves	:	Madhya Pradesh

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 2 only
- d) None

ANS: C

Explanation: Kanheri caves: Kanheri the Kanhasela, Krishnagiri, Kanhagiri of ancient inscriptions, is located north of Mumbai and was a major Buddhist centre.

- Kanheri is located in the island of Salsette and 6 miles from Thana.
- The Kanheri Caves demonstrate the Buddhist influence on the art and culture of India.
- Kanheri comes from the Sanskrit Krishnagiri, which means Black Mountain.
- They were chiseled out of a massive basaltic rock outcropping.

Belum caves: are located in Andhra Pradesh.

Barabar caves: The Barabar Caves are the oldest surviving rock-cut caves in India, mostly dating from the Maurya Empire (322–185 BCE), some with Ashokan inscriptions, located in the Bela Ganj Block of Gaya district, Bihar, India, 24 km north of Gaya.

- The caves were used by ascetics from the Ajivika sect, founded by Makkali Gosala, a contemporary of Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, and of Mahavira, the last and 24th Tirthankara of Jainism.

Also present at the site are several rock-cut Buddhist and Hindu sculptures.

Source: NCERT

Q.2) The “Buddha Nullah” – is a seasonal stream often seen in news is located in which of the following state?

- a) Bihar
- b) Punjab
- c) Rajasthan
- d) Himachal Pradesh

ANS: B

Explanation: Originating at village Koom Kalan of Ludhiana (Punjab) and running for 47 kms till Walipur Kalan where it merges with River Sutlej, this stream carrying fresh water was earlier known as ‘Buddha Dariya’.

- Over the years, the name got changed to Buddha Nullah (drain) owing to the sewage, industrial and domestic waste that is dumped into it in the 14-km stretch within Ludhiana city municipal corporation limits beginning from Tajpur road.
- There are three major sources polluting Buddha Nullah – untreated sewage waste from Ludhiana city Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), untreated industrial effluents

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

from 228 dyeing units, and 16 'outlets', which are directly releasing sewage and industrial waste into the stream.

- Of these 16 outlets, 11 are "MC disposal points" through which the civic body is directly releasing untreated sewage waste into the stream.

Source: Indian Express

Q.3) The words "Saranda and Chaibasa" often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Underground reservoirs
- b) Bauxite Mines
- c) Copper Mines
- d) Iron ore reserves

ANS: D

Explanation: Saranda and Chaibasa — in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district had large iron ore reserves.

- The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) will soon form a committee to explore the prospect of opening conservation or no-mining zone in Saranda and Chaibasa in West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand for iron ore mining.

Management Plan for Sustainable Mining (MPSM), which regulates mining in Chaibasa and the Saranda Sal forest area.

Source: The Hindu

Q.4) Which of the following is/are NOT correct about "Subsidiary Alliance System"?

1. An Indian ruler entering into Subsidiary Alliance with the British had to dissolve his own armed forces and accept British forces.
2. If Indian ruler failed to pay army's maintenance, a portion of his territory would be taken away and ceded to the Zamindars.
3. No other Indian power to interfere in its internal affairs.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

ANS: A

Explanation: Wellesley broadened the scope of this arrangement by his Subsidiary Alliance System, bringing under it Hyderabad, Mysore, Lucknow, the Maratha Peshwa, the Bhonsle (Kolhapur) and Sindhia (Gwalior).

The provisions of the Subsidiary Treaty are:

- An Indian ruler entering into Subsidiary Alliance with the British had to dissolve his own armed forces and accept British forces and a British Resident in his territory.
- He had to pay for the British army's maintenance. If he failed, a portion of his territory would be taken away and ceded to the British.
- The protected prince was to sever all connections with European powers other than the British, especially the French.
- No European should be employed without the permission of the British.
- No negotiation with any Indian power should be held without the Company's permission and
- No other Indian power to interfere in its internal affairs.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

Source: NCERT

Q.5) “Our position is not that truths are to be in all religions, but that all established religions of the World are true” – was described by which of the following personality?

- a) Keshab Chandra Sen
- b) Swami Vivekananda
- c) Rabindranath Tagore
- d) Raja Ram Mohan Roy

ANS: A

Explanation: The development of the Western culture and ideology forced the traditional institutions to revitalize themselves.

- During the second half of the nineteenth century, the expression of protest and desire for change were articulated through various reform movements.
- What gave these reform movements an ideological unity were rationalism, religious universalism and humanism.
- For example, Raja Rammohun Roy repudiated the infallibility of the Vedas and during the Aligarh Movement, Syed Ahmed Khan emphasized that religious tenets were not immutable.
- As Keshab Chandra Sen said, ‘Our position is not that truths are to be in all religions, but that all established religions of the World are true.’

Source: NCERT

Q.6) The word “**monetary transmission**” often seen in news is related to which of the following?

- a) Judicious distribution of GST collection between Centre and states.
- b) The pass-through of the RBI’s rate actions to the economy at large.
- c) Smooth transmission of tax devolution to states from centre.
- d) Providing timely credit for agriculture and other economically weaker sections.

ANS: B

Explanation: Monetary transmission is the pass-through of the RBI’s rate actions to the economy at large.

- As you know, the RBI’s most important task is to keep tabs on inflation by adjusting money supply.
- It also monitors the exchange rate. To control all this, the RBI uses many monetary tools.
- The repo rate, reverse repo rate and cash reserve requirement are being the key instruments.
- Let us take the repo rate, for instance. This is the rate at which the RBI lends short-term funds to banks to manage their day-to-day operations.
- When the RBI wants to stimulate growth, it cuts the repo rate to reduce the cost of borrowings.

Banks get money at a cheaper rate. If this is passed on to borrowers, then monetary transmission is said to have happened smoothly.

Source: The Hindu

Q.7) Consider the following statements regarding the “**steel sector in India**”:

1. India is the 2nd largest producer of crude steel in the world from 2017 onwards.
2. The per-capita consumption of finished steel in India is less than world average.

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

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

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

ANS: A

Explanation: In CY 2019, the world crude steel production reached 1870 million tonnes (mt) and showed a growth of 3.4% over CY 2018.

- China remained world's largest crude steel producer in same period (996 mt) followed by India (111mt), Japan (99mt) and the USA (88mt).
- **Per capita finished steel consumption in 2018 was 224.5 kg for world and 590.1 kg for China** (Source: World Steel Association).
- **The same for India was 73.3 kg in 2018** (Source: JPC) and 75.7 kg (provisional) in 2019. The per capita consumption of India in 2018-19 was 74.1 kg and that in 2019-20 was 74.6 kg (prov.)

The Indian steel industry has entered into a new development stage, post de-regulation, riding high on the resurgent economy and rising demand for steel.

- **Rapid rise in production has resulted in India becoming the 2nd largest producer of crude steel during 2018 and 2019 (prov), from its 3rd largest status in 2017.**
- The country was also the largest producer of Sponge Iron or DRI in the world and the 3rd largest finished steel consumer in the world after China & USA in 2019 (prov.)

Source: Economic Survey

Q.8) Besides earth, which of the following celestial body has places with standing bodies of liquid on the surface?

- a) Jupiter
- b) Venus
- c) Titan
- d) Moon

ANS: C

Explanation: Titan and Earth are the solar system's two places with standing bodies of liquid on the surface. Titan boasts lakes, rivers and seas of hydrocarbons: compounds of hydrogen and carbon like those that are the main components of petroleum and natural gas.

"Titan is the most Earth-like body in the solar system. It has lakes, canyons, rivers, dune fields of organic sand particles about the same size as silica sand grains on Earth".

Source: NASA

Q.9) Which of the following state has the unique distinction of having three (3) biosphere reserves of UNESCO (MAB) programme?

- a) Odisha
- b) Arunachal Pradesh
- c) Madhya Pradesh
- d) Tamil Nadu

ANS: D

Explanation: Tamil Nadu has been a pioneer State in Protected Area management and development of forest resources and wildlife.

PRELIMS MARATHON COMPILATION FOR THE WEEK - 9th TO 15th NOVEMBER, 2020

- The total area under the protected area management is 7,072.95 sq. km. which comes to 30.92% of the State's Forest area.
- The Protected Areas in the State includes 5 National parks, 15 Wildlife sanctuaries, 15 bird sanctuaries and 2 conservation reserves besides 4 Tiger Reserves viz. Anamalai, Kalakkad - Mundanthurai, Mudumalai and Sathyamangalam.
- These Protected Areas have been established under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Further Tamil Nadu also has the distinction of having 3 Biosphere Reserves viz. Nilgiris, Gulf of Mannar and Agasthiarmalai, which are internationally acclaimed for their rich and unique biodiversity.

Source: ENVIS

Q.10) "Recycling of nutrients in the ecosystem through the process of mineralization of dead organic materials is the most important role for decomposers", which of the following given is decomposers?

- a) Autotrophs
- b) Heterotrophs
- c) Phagotrophs
- d) Saprotrophs

ANS: D

Explanation: Saprotrophs feed by a process known as absorptive nutrition, in which the nutritional substrate (e.g., dead organism or other nonliving organic matter) is directly digested by a variety of enzymes that are excreted by the saprotroph.

The enzymes convert the detritus into simpler molecules, which are then absorbed by the cells to feed the organism.

Source: NCERT