

## *10 PM Current Affairs Quiz Compilation*

22th to 28th February, 2021

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

## 10 PM Compilation for the Week - 22th to 28th February, 2021

### **POLITY**

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**Q.1)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Legislative Councils**:

1. The total number of members in the Legislative Council of a State cannot be less than forty.
2. The Legislative Council of a State is subject to dissolution along with the Legislative Assembly every five years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. As per **article 171 of the Constitution** the total number of members in the Legislative Council of a State having such a Council shall not exceed one third of the total number of members in the Legislative Assembly of that State:

Provided that the total number of members in the Legislative Council of a State shall in no case be less than forty.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The provisions for the Legislative Councils are similar to that for Rajyasabha.

**Article 172 of the Constitution** provides that the Legislative Council of a State shall not be subject to dissolution, but as nearly as possible one-third of the members thereof shall retire as soon as may be on the expiration of every second year in accordance with the provisions made in that behalf by Parliament by law.

**Q.2)** Consider the following statements regarding the recommendations by the **Fifteenth Finance Commission (XVFC)**:

1. XVFC has recommend that health spending by States should be increased to more than 8 per cent of their budget by 2022.
2. For all urban local bodies, 100 per cent of the grants are performance-linked.

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. XVFC has recommend that health spending by States should be increased to more than **8 per cent of their budget by 2022**.

Given the inter-State disparity in the availability of medical doctors, it is essential to constitute an **All India Medical and Health Service** as is envisaged under Section 2A of the All-India Services Act, 1951.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The total size of the grant to local governments should be Rs. 4,36,361 crores for the period 2021-26.

Of these total grants, Rs. 8,000 crores is performance-based grants for incubation of new cities and Rs. 450 crores is for shared municipal services. A sum of Rs. 2,36,805 crores is earmarked

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for rural local bodies, Rs.1,21,055 crore for urban local bodies and Rs. 70,051 crores for health grants through local governments.

**Urban local bodies have been categorized into two groups**, based on population, and different norms have been used for flow of grants to each, based on their specific needs and aspirations. Basic grants are proposed only for cities/towns having a population of less than a million. **For Million-Plus cities, 100 per cent of the grants are performance-linked through the Million-Plus Cities Challenge Fund (MCF).**

**Q.3)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)**:

1. It criminalizes any attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government established by law in India.
  2. The offence of sedition is punishable by death sentence.
- Which of the statements given above is/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. **Section 124A of the IPC**, which deals with sedition, states, "Whoever, words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government established by law in India shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine."

Statement 2 is incorrect. Sedition is a non-bailable offence. Punishment under the law varies from imprisonment up to **three years to a life term and fine**. A person charged under this law can't apply for a government job. They have to live without their passport and must present themselves in the court as and when required.

**Q.4)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Interstate Migrant Workmen Act 1979**:

1. This law is applicable to all the establishments employing five or more labors.
  2. Employment of inter-State migrant workmen in any establishment is prohibited unless it is duly registered under this Act.
- Which of the statements given above is/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 **Interstate Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act 1979** is applicable to, every establishment in which **five or more interstate migrant workmen** (whether or not in addition to other workmen) are employed or who were employed on any day of the preceding twelve months.

Statement 2 is correct. Employment of inter-State migrant workmen in any establishment is prohibited unless it is duly registered under this Act.

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Some of the important **duties of the employer** are:

--Maintain the registers indicating the details of interstate workers and make available for scrutiny by the statutory authorities.

--Principal employer shall be liable to bear the wages and other benefits to interstate workers in case of failure by the contractor to affect the same. Liable for the prescribed punishments for violations committed under this Act.

--In case of any employment injury or fatal accident, ensure the same is informed to authorities of States concerned and to the kins of the deceased through the contractor.

# *NITI Aayog, along with a working subgroup of officials and members of civil society, has prepared a draft national migrant labour policy. It mentions that the Ministry of Labour and Employment should amend the 1979 Act for effective utilisation to protect migrants.*

**Q.5)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Anti-Defection Law**:

1. Voluntarily giving up of the membership of party does not amount to defection.
2. The law does not specify a time-period for the Presiding Officer to decide on a disqualification plea.

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 **Tenth Schedule** was inserted in the Constitution in 1985. It lays down the process by which legislators may be disqualified on grounds of defection by the Presiding Officer of a legislature based on a petition by any other member of the House.

A legislator is deemed to have defected if he either **voluntarily gives up** the membership of his party or disobeys the directives of the party leadership on a vote. This implies that a legislator defying (abstaining or voting against) the party whip on any issue can lose his membership of the House. The law applies to both Parliament and state assemblies.

Statement 2 is correct. The law **does not specify a time-period** for the Presiding Officer to decide on a disqualification plea. There have been several cases where the Courts have expressed concern about the unnecessary delay in deciding such petitions.

**Q.6)** Consider the following statements regarding **parliamentary privileges in India**:

1. According to the Constitution, the powers, privileges and immunities of Parliament are to be defined by Parliament.
2. No member of Parliament is liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said by him in Parliamentary committee.

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. According to the **Constitution**, the powers, privileges and immunities of Parliament and MPs are to be defined by **Parliament**. No law has so far been enacted in this respect. In the absence of any such law, it continues to be governed by conventions.

Statement 2 is correct. The Constitution of India specifies some of the privileges. These are freedom of speech in Parliament; immunity to a member from any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said or any vote given by him in **Parliament or any committee thereof**; immunity to a person from proceedings in any court in respect of the publication by or under the authority of either House of Parliament of any report, paper, votes or proceedings.

**Q.7)** Who among the following is eligible to vote by **postal ballot** in India?

1. Army personnel
2. Government employees posted outside India
3. A person under preventive detention

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:** Several categories of citizens are eligible to vote through postal ballot in India in which a voter can cast her vote remotely by recording her preference on the ballot paper and sending it back to the election officer before counting.

Members of the armed forces like the **Army, Navy and Air Force**, members of the armed police force of a state (serving outside the state), government employees posted outside India and their spouses are entitled to vote only by post.

Voters under **preventive detention** are also allowed to vote through postal ballot.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) had written to the Law Ministry on November 27 last year with the proposal of extending postal ballots to overseas electors. This facility would not be extended to them for the upcoming elections to the Assam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal Assemblies.

**Q.8)** Consider the following statements regarding the **State Legislatures**:

1. The Legislative Council of a State is not subject to dissolution.
2. A person to be qualified to fill a seat in the Legislative Assembly must be older than thirty five years of age.
3. State Election Commission is mandated to conduct election to the Legislative Assemblies of States.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. The **Legislative Council** of a State shall not be subject to dissolution, but as nearly as possible one third of the members thereof shall retire as soon as may be on the expiration of every second year in accordance with the provisions made in that behalf by Parliament by law.

Statement 2 is incorrect. As per article 173 of the Constitution a person shall not be qualified to be chosen to fill a seat in the Legislature of a State unless he—

--is a citizen of India, and makes and subscribes before some person authorised in that behalf by the Election Commission an oath or affirmation according to the form set out for the purpose in the Third Schedule;

--is, in the case of a seat in the Legislative Assembly, not less than twenty-five years of age and, in the case of a seat in the Legislative Council, not less than thirty years of age.

Statement 3 is incorrect. The **Election Commission of India** is the authority to conduct the elections to the State Legislatures.

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### **GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/INITIATIVES**

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**Q.1)** Which of the following is/are correctly matched?

1. SWAYAM - DTH channels telecasting of high-quality educational programmes
2. DIKSHA - National Digital Infrastructure for Teachers
3. Swayam Prabha - Online platform hosting courses from Class 9 till post-graduation

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Option 1 and 3 initiative's functions are interchanged.

**SWAYAM** seeks to bridge the digital divide for students who have hitherto remained untouched by the digital revolution and have not been able to join the mainstream of the knowledge economy. This is done through a platform that facilitates hosting of all the courses, taught in classrooms from Class 9 till post-graduation to be accessed by anyone, anywhere at any time.

**SWAYAM PRABHA** is a group of 34 DTH channels devoted to telecasting of high-quality educational programmes on 24X7 basis using the GSAT-15 satellite.

**DIKSHA** serves as National Digital Infrastructure for Teachers. It enables, accelerates and amplifies solutions in realm of teacher education. It seeks to aid teachers to learn and train themselves for which assessment resources will be available. It will help teachers to create training content, profile, in-class resources, assessment aids, news and announcement and connect with teacher community.

**Q.2)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**:

1. It is a statutory authority.
2. It is the National Standard Body of India.
2. BIS is a member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 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 correct statements.

The **Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016**, has been implemented since 12 October 2017.

The highlights of the new BIS Act are:

--Positions BIS as the **National Standards Body**.

--Allows multiple conformity assessment schemes in line with global practices.

--Enables the Government to include products under mandatory certification on grounds of health, safety, environment, national security and prevention of deceptive practices.

--Enables the Government to bring Hallmarking of precious metal articles under mandatory certification.

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The **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)** is an independent, non-governmental membership organization and the world's largest developer of voluntary International Standards. BIS is a founder member of ISO and is actively involved in development of International Standards by acting as Participating (P) member or Observer (O) member on various Technical Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Groups, etc.

**Q.3)** Consider the following statements regarding the **National Translation Mission (NTM)**:

1. It aims to disseminate knowledge in all Indian languages listed in the eighth schedule of the Constitution through translation.
  2. It is being implemented by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs.
- 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. **National Translation Mission (NTM)** is a Government of India scheme to establish translation as an industry in general and, to facilitate higher education by making knowledge texts accessible to students and academics in Indian languages in particular. The vision is to create a knowledge society by transcending language barriers. NTM aims to disseminate knowledge in all Indian languages listed in the **VIII schedule of the Constitution through translation.**

Statement 2 is incorrect. **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL)** is the nodal agency and the chief facilitator for NTM and the Mission operates from the CIIL premises in Mysore.

# *The idea to celebrate International Mother Language Day (Feb 21) was the initiative of Bangladesh. It was approved at the 1999 UNESCO General Conference and has been observed throughout the world since 2000. The theme of the Day this year, "Fostering multilingualism for inclusion in education and society".*

**Q.4)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Technology Development Board (TDB)**:

1. It is a statutory authority.
2. It confers the National Technology Awards for commercialization of innovative indigenous technologies.

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:** The Government of India constituted the **Technology Development Board (TDB)** in September 1996, under the Technology Development Board Act, 1995, as a statutory body, to promote development and commercialization of indigenous technology and adaptation of imported technology for wider application.

The TDB is the first organization of its kind within the government framework with the **sole objective of commercializing the fruit of indigenous research.** The Board plays a pro-active role by encouraging enterprises to take up technology-oriented products.

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A total of 12 companies have been selected for the **National Technology Awards 2020** for commercialization of successful commercialization of innovative indigenous technologies. They have been selected under three categories --indigenous technologies, MSME, and startups. Every year, for furtherance of its mandate, TDB seeks applications for prestigious National awards for commercialization of technologies under these three categories.

**Q.5)** Consider the following statements regarding the **National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)**:

1. It assists the government in bringing about governance reforms through studies, training and knowledge sharing.
2. NCGG Governing Body is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary.

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 **National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)** is an autonomous institute under the aegis of Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India.

The NCGG has been set up to assist in bringing about **governance reforms** through studies, training, knowledge sharing and promotion of good ideas. It seeks to carry out policy relevant research and prepare case studies; curate training courses for civil servants from India and other developing countries; provide a platform for sharing of existing knowledge and pro-actively seek out and develop ideas for their implementation in the government, both at the National and International Level.

NCGG is governed by a **Governing Body, under the Chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary**. The Management Committee is chaired by Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances.

# A two-day international virtual workshop on "Good Governance Practices in a Pandemic" between Civil Services Commission (CSC), Maldives and National Centre for Good Governance, DARPG, Government of India is being organized on 23rd and 24th February 2021.

**Q.6)** Consider the following statements regarding the recently launched **National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM)**:

1. It aims to build the shared digital infrastructure to strengthen the capacity of the urban ecosystem to solve complex problems.
2. It has been launched by the NITI Aayog in partnership with the World Bank.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **National Urban Digital Mission** aims to build the shared digital infrastructure that will strengthen the capacity of the urban ecosystem to solve complex

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problems at scale and speed. It is built as a public good and provides the ecosystem actors the foundational digital building blocks, ready-to-use platforms, standards, specifications and frameworks.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM) has been launched by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** along with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

The NUDM will be anchored by the Centre for Digital Governance (CDG) at the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA).

**Q.7)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0 (IMI)**:

1. The focus of the IMI 3.0 will be the children and pregnant women who have missed their vaccine doses during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. It aimed to vaccinate the target population with all the available vaccines under Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP).

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 incorrect.

The focus of the **Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0** will be the children and pregnant women who have missed their vaccine doses during the COVID-19 pandemic. They will be identified and vaccinated during the two rounds. Beneficiaries from migration areas and hard to reach areas will be targeted as they may have **missed their vaccine doses during COVID19**.

Intensified Mission Indradhanush 3.0 (IMI 3.0) aimed to reach the unreached population with all the available vaccines under **Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP)** and thereby accelerate the full immunization and complete immunization coverage of children and pregnant women.

As per the Guidelines released for IMI 3.0, the districts have been classified to reflect 313 low risk; 152 as medium risk; and 250 as high-risk districts. IMI 3.0 will have two rounds starting from February 22 and March 22, 2021 and will be conducted in pre-identified 250 districts/urban areas across 29 States/UTs in the country.

**Q.8)** Consider the following statements regarding the **India Urban Data Exchange (IUDX)**:

1. It has been developed in partnership between the Smart Cities Mission and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).
2. It is an open-source software platform to facilitate exchange of data amongst various stakeholders in a city.

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:** Both statements are correct.

The **India Urban Data Exchange** has been developed in partnership between the Smart Cities Mission and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru. IUDX serves as a seamless interface for data providers and data users, including ULBs, to share, request, and access datasets related to cities, urban governance, and urban service delivery.

IUDX is an **open-source software** platform which facilitates the secure, authenticated, and managed exchange of data amongst various data platforms, 3rd party authenticated and authorised applications, and other sources. As the number of cities on IUDX expands, this will scale up to uniform and seamless sharing between data producers and data consumers across urban India.

**Q.9)** Which of the following government entities are brought together through the **PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation)** platform?

1. Prime Ministers Office
2. Ministry of Home Affairs
3. Chief Secretaries of States

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: C**

**Explanation: PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation)** is a unique integrating and interactive platform. The platform is aimed at addressing common man's grievances, and simultaneously monitoring and reviewing important programmes and projects of the Government of India as well as projects flagged by State Governments.

**It is a three-tier system:** PMO, Union Government Secretaries, and Chief Secretaries of the States.

A built-in feature of PRAGATI is that these directions will remain in the system for further follow up and review till the finality of the matter.

The PRAGATI platform uniquely bundles three latest technologies: Digital data management, video-conferencing and geo-spatial technology.

*# Prime Minister recently chaired the 36th PRAGATI meeting.*

**Q.10)** Which of the following drugs/components are being covered under the **Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Pharmaceuticals?**

1. Orphan Drugs
2. Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients
3. Auto-immune Drugs

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 Union Cabinet has approved **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Pharmaceuticals** over a period of Financial Year 2020-21 to 2028-29.

The scheme will be part of the umbrella scheme for the Development of Pharmaceutical Industry. The objective of the scheme is to enhance India's manufacturing capabilities by increasing investment and production in the sector and contributing to product diversification to high value goods in the pharmaceutical sector.

The scheme shall cover pharmaceutical goods under three categories as mentioned below:

**Category 1:** Biopharmaceuticals; Complex generic drugs; Patented drugs or drugs nearing patent expiry; Cell based or gene therapy drugs; Orphan drugs; Special empty capsules like HPMC, Pullulan, enteric etc.; Complex excipients; Phyto-pharmaceuticals: Other drugs as approved.

**Category 2:** Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients / Key Starting Materials / Drug Intermediates.

**Category 3:** Repurposed drugs; Auto immune drugs, anti-cancer drugs, anti-diabetic drugs, anti-infective drugs, cardiovascular drugs, psychotropic drugs and anti-retroviral drugs; In vitro diagnostic devices; Other drugs as approved; Other drugs not manufactured in India.

*# Indian pharmaceutical industry is 3rd largest in the world by volume and is worth USD 40 billion in terms of value.*

**Q.11)** The **Maritime India Summit 2021** is being organised by which of the following institution?

- a) Ministry of State for Ports, Shipping & Waterways
- b) NITI Aayog
- c) Indian Navy
- d) Indian Ocean Rim Association

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The **Maritime India Summit 2021**, maiden flagship initiative of the **Minister of State for Ports, Shipping & Waterways** Government of India is being organised from 2nd March to 4th March 2021, to promote both international and domestic investment in the Ports and Maritime Sector.

The event will be attended by various stakeholders in the maritime sector including senior and eminent policy planners, domestic and international investors, CEOs of Indian and global maritime companies, industry experts, thought leaders, technology providers, bankers and insurers, representatives of major ports and shipping lines from across the world.

**Q.12)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021**:

1. It mandates social media intermediaries, to establish a grievance redressal mechanism for receiving resolving complaints from the users or victims.
2. The rules are applicable evenly to all Social Media Intermediaries and do not make any distinction based on number of users.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Amidst growing concerns around lack of transparency, accountability and rights of users related to digital media and after elaborate consultation with the public and stakeholders, the **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021** has been framed in exercise of powers under section 87 (2) of the Information Technology Act, 2000 and in supersession of the earlier Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011.

Statement 1 is correct. The Rules seek to empower the users by mandating the intermediaries, including social media intermediaries, to establish a **grievance redressal mechanism** for receiving resolving complaints from the users or victims.

Intermediaries shall appoint a Grievance Officer to deal with such complaints and share the name and contact details of such officer. Grievance Officer shall acknowledge the complaint within twenty-four hours and resolve it within fifteen days from its receipt.

Statement 2 is incorrect. To encourage innovations and enable growth of new social media intermediaries without subjecting smaller platforms to significant compliance requirement, the Rules make a distinction between **social media intermediaries and significant social media intermediaries**.

**This distinction is based on the number of users on the social media platform.** Government is empowered to notify the threshold of user base that will distinguish between social media intermediaries and significant social media intermediaries. The Rules require the significant social media intermediaries to follow certain additional due diligence.

**Q.13)** Which of the following place(s) have been selected under the Phase IV of the **Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)** initiative of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G)?

1. Kumbhalgarh Fort, Rajasthan
2. Kalighat Temple, West Bengal
3. Niti Village, Uttarakhand

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:** The **Swachh Iconic Places (SIP)** initiative of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) initiative aims at enhancing the experience of both domestic and foreign visitors by improving the sanitation and cleanliness standards at and around the sites. The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti has announced the selection of the following Twelve (12) iconic sites under **Phase IV of SIP**:

1. Ajanta Caves, Maharashtra; 2. Sanchi Stupa, Madhya Pradesh; 3. Kumbhalgarh Fort, Rajasthan; 4. Jaisalmer Fort, Rajasthan; 5. Ramdevra, Rajasthan; 6. Golconda Fort, Telangana; 7. Sun Temple, Konark Odisha; 8. Rock Garden, Chandigarh; 9. Dal Lake, Jammu & Kashmir; 10. Banke Bihari Temple Mathura, Uttar Pradesh; 11. Agra Fort, Uttar Pradesh; and 12. Kalighat Temple, West Bengal.

**Phase I Iconic sites:** 1. Ajmer Sharif Dargah; 2. CST Mumbai; 3. Golden Temple, Amritsar; 4. Kamakhya Temple, Assam; 5. Maikarnika Ghat, Varanasi; 6. Meenakshi Temple, Madurai; 7. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, Katra, J&K; 8. Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri; 9. The Taj Mahal, Agra; 10. Tirupati Temple, Tirumala

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**Phase II Iconic sites:** 1. Gangotri; 2. Yamunotri; 3. Mahakaleshwar Temple, Ujjain; 4. Char Minar, Hyderabad; 5. Church and Convent of St. Francis of Assisi, Goa; 6. Adi Shankaracharya's abode Kaladi in Ernakulam; 7. Gomateshwar in Shravanbelgola; 8. Baijnath Dham, Devghar; 9. Gaya Tirth in Bihar; 10. Somnath Temple in Gujarat.

**Phase III Iconic sites:** 1. Sree Dharma Sastha Temple; 2. Mana Village, Uttarakhand; 3. Vidur Kuti Temple, Uttar Pradesh; 4. Shri Sarveshwar Mahadev Temple; 5. Shri Nag Vasuki Temple; 6. Kanvashram, Uttar Pradesh; 7. Ema Keithel, Manipur; 8. Hazarduari Palace, West Bengal; 9. Pangong Tso; 10. Sri Raghvendra Swamy Mutt Mantralayam

**Q.14)** Consider the following statements regarding the recently launched **City Innovation Exchange (CiX) platform**:

1. It will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges.
2. It is to be used as a platform for trading of Municipal bonds.

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 **City Innovation Exchange (CiX)** platform was launched recently by Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

The CiX will connect cities to innovators across the national ecosystem to design innovative solutions for their pressing challenges. The platform will ease the discovery, design & validation of solutions through a robust, transparent and user centric process that will reduce barriers for innovators and cities to discover fitting solutions.

Statement 2 is incorrect. No such provision has been made. The platform will bring together **Citizen Organisations-Academia- Businesses- Government** to co-create for the future of Urban India in a transparent and sustainable manner.

**Q.15)** Which of the following institution is organizing the **Global Bio-India 2021** congregation?

- a) World Health Organization
- b) Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority
- c) Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology
- d) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

**Correct answer: C**

**Explanation:** To showcase the strength and opportunities of the India's biotechnology sector at national level and to the global community, the **second edition of Global Bio-India** will be organised from 1-3 March 2021 on digital platform. The theme for this year is "Transforming lives" and tag line "Biosciences to Bioeconomy".

Global Bio-India is one of the largest biotechnology stakeholders' conglomerates that is being co-organised by the **Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology** along with its Public Sector Undertaking, Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) in partnership with industry association Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE) and Invest India.

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**Q.16)** Consider the following statements regarding the Indian **National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)**:

1. It is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Science & Technology.
2. It provides round-the-clock monitoring and warning services for the coastal population through the Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)** was established as an autonomous body in 1999 under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and is a unit of the Earth System Science Organization (ESSO). Statement 2 is correct. Provides round-the-clock monitoring and warning services for the coastal population on tsunamis, storm surges, high waves, etc. through the in-house **Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC)**.

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO designated ITEWC as a Regional Tsunami Service Provider (RTSP) to provide tsunami warnings to countries on the Indian Ocean Rim.

# *The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) is planning to take the help of the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) for aerial mapping of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep to get a better picture of the ocean floor, also called 'bathymetric' study.*

**Q.17)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021**:

1. Significant social media intermediaries are to enable identification of the first originator of the information for investigation to authorities.
2. The Central Board of Film Certification will classify the content on OTT platforms into age-based categories.

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. **Significant social media intermediaries** providing services primarily in the nature of messaging shall enable identification of the first originator of the information that is required only for the purposes of:

--prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution or punishment of an offence related to sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, or public order or of incitement to an offence relating to the above or in relation with rape, sexually explicit material or child sexual abuse material punishable with imprisonment for a term of not less than five years.

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Intermediary shall not be required to disclose the contents of any message or any other information to the first originator.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The OTT platforms, called as the publishers of online curated content in the rules, would **self-classify** the content into five age-based categories- U (Universal), U/A 7+, U/A 13+, U/A 16+, and A (Adult).

Platforms would be required to implement parental locks for content classified as U/A 13+ or higher, and reliable age verification mechanisms for content classified as "A".

**Q.18)** What is the objective of the recently launched **E-Daakhil portal**?

- a) Filing income tax returns
- b) Filing Goods & Services tax returns
- c) Admission of students to Central Government run schools
- d) E-filing of consumer complaints

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** **E-Daakhil** portal launched by **National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission** (NCDRC) for Consumer grievance redressal is now operational in 15 States/UTs.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019, which has come into force from 20th July, 2020, has provision for e-filing of consumer complaints in the Consumer Commissions and online payment of the fees for filing a complaint. A web application for E-filing of consumer complaints named e-daakhil has been developed by NIC for the purpose.

The e-daakhil portal empowers the consumer and their advocates to file the consumer complaints along with payment of requisite fees online from anywhere for the redressal of their complaints. It also facilitates the consumer commissions to scrutinize the complaints online to accept, reject or forward the complaint to the concerned commission for further processing.

**Q.19)** Consider the following statements regarding the **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)**:

- 1. NIP covers both economic and social infrastructure projects.
- 2. NIP is to be funded wholly by the Central Government.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)** covers both economic (Power, Telecom, Shipping etc.) and social (education, water, health etc.) infrastructure projects- based on the updated Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure.

Out of the total expected capital expenditure of Rs 111 lakh Crore, projects worth Rs 44 lakh Crore (40%) are under implementation, projects worth Rs 33 lakh Crore (30%) are at a conceptual stage, projects worth Rs 22 lakh Crore (20%) are under development (project identified and DPR prepared, but yet to draw-down funds) and the balance projects worth Rs 11 lakh Crore (10%) are unclassified.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The overall funding mix for the NIP is likely to be through the **Central and state budgets, borrowings and private sector participation**. The Centre (39 per cent) and states (40 per cent) are expected to have an almost equal share in implementing the projects, while the private sector has a 21 per cent share.



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While presenting the **Union Budget 2021-22** the Union Minister for Finance announced that in order to achieve the target of National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) in the coming years the Government proposes following three steps: creation of institutional structures, big thrust on monetizing assets and enhancing the share of capital expenditure in Central and State budgets.

**Q.20)** Which of the following component(s) is/are covered under the **Production Linked Incentive Scheme for IT Hardware**?

1. Laptops
2. Tablets
3. Servers

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 Union Cabinet has approved the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for IT Hardware**. The scheme proposes production linked incentive to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investments in the value chain of IT Hardware. The Target Segments under the proposed Scheme include **Laptops, Tablets, All-in-One PCs and Servers**. The Scheme shall, extend an incentive of 4% to 2% / 1% on net incremental sales (over base year 2019-20) of goods manufactured in India and covered under the target segment, to eligible companies, for a period of four years.

**Q.21)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Digital Media Ethics Code Relating to Digital Media and OTT Platforms under the Information Technology Rules 2021**:

1. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) will formulate an oversight mechanism for the code.
2. Publishers of news on digital media are required to observe the Programme Code under the Cable Television Networks Regulation Act.

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 Digital Media Ethics Code Relating to Digital Media and OTT Platforms are to be administered by **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB)**.

MIB shall formulate an oversight mechanism. It shall publish a charter for self-regulating bodies, including Codes of Practices. It shall establish an Inter-Departmental Committee for hearing grievances.

Statement 2 is correct. Publishers of news on digital media would be required to observe Norms of Journalistic Conduct of the Press Council of India and the **Programme Code under the**

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**Cable Television Networks Regulation Act** thereby providing a level playing field between the offline (Print, TV) and digital media.

**Q.22)** Who among the following are currently **Ex-officio Members of the NITI Aayog**?

1. Minister of Defence
2. Minister of Finance
3. Minister of External Affairs

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:** The **NITI Aayog** comprises of the Prime Minister of India as the Chairperson; Governing Council comprising the Chief Ministers of all the States and Lt. Governors of Union Territories. Further, Maximum of 4 members of the Union Council of Ministers nominated by the Prime Minister as ex-officio members of the NITI Aayog.

The **current composition of the NITI Aayog** includes the following as Ex-officio Members:

- Shri Raj Nath Singh, Minister of Defence
- Shri Amit Shah, Minister of Home Affairs
- Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Finance and Minister of Corporate Affairs
- Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare; Minister of Rural Development; Minister of Panchayati Raj.

# *The sixth meeting of the Governing Council of NITI Aayog was held recently.*

**Q.23)** Which of the following is/are the **central agencies for procurement of oilseeds & pulses**?

1. National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED)
2. National Consumer Cooperative Federation of India Ltd. (NCCF)
3. Small Farmers Agro Consortium (SFAC)

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 Government announces, **Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for major agricultural commodities** each year in both the Crop seasons CACP recommends MSP for twenty-two (22) crops and Fair & Remunerative Price (FRP) for sugarcane.

Apart from Sugarcane for which FRP is declared by the Department of Food & Public Distribution, twenty-two crops covered under MSP are Paddy, Jowar, Bajra, Maize, Ragi, Arhar, Moong, Urad, Groundnut-in-shell, Soyabean, Sunflower, Sesamum, Nigerseed, Cotton, Wheat, Barley, Gram, Masur (lentil), Rapeseed/Mustardseed, Safflower, Jute and Copra.

In addition, MSP for Toria and De-Husked coconut is fixed by the Department on the basis of MSP's of Rapeseed/Mustardseed and Copra respectively.

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**NAFED, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) National Consumer Cooperative Federation of India Ltd. (NCCF), Small Farmers Agro Consortium (SFAC)** are the central agencies for procurement of oilseeds & pulses. However, NAFED is also an additional central agency for procurement of cotton, in addition to Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) under the DAC.

**Q.24)** Consider the following statements regarding **Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)**:

1. It aims to preserve heritage of traditional arts and crafts of minority communities.
2. The artisans are organized into Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) which can be a Producer Company under Companies Act, 2013.

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. **Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI)** is an initiative by Ministry of MSME to promote Cluster development. **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** is the nodal Agency for promotion of Cluster development for Khadi.

# *USTTAD scheme of Ministry of Minority Affairs aims to preserve heritage of traditional arts and crafts of minority communities and build capacity of traditional crafts persons and artisans.*

Statement 2 is correct. SFURTI clusters are of two types i.e., **Regular Cluster** (500 artisans) with Government assistance of up to Rs.2.5 crore and **Major Cluster** (more than 500 artisans) with Government assistance up to Rs.5 crore.

The artisans are organized into SPVs which can be (i) a Society registered under Societies (Registration) Act, 1860, (ii) a Co-operative Society under an appropriate statute, (iii) a Producer Company under Section 465 (1) of Companies Act, 2013 (18 of 2013), (iv) a Section 8 Company under the Companies Act, 2013 (18 of 2013) or (v) a Trust.

Under the Scheme, the Ministry supports various interventions including setting up of infrastructure through Common Facility Centers (CFCs), procurement of new machineries, creating raw material banks, design intervention, improved packaging, improvement of marketing Infrastructure, improved skills and capacity development through training and exposure visits, etc.

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### GEOGRAPHY

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**Q.1)** Which of the following place receives **highest annual rainfall**?

- a) Mawsynram, India
- b) Tutunendo, Colombia
- c) Debundscha, Cameroon
- d) Big Bog, Hawaii

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The average annual rainfall in **Mawsynram, Meghalaya** which is recognised as the world's wettest by the Guinness Book of Records, is 11,871mm – more than 10 times the Indian national average of 1,083mm.

# *The other three options are among the highest rainfall areas of the world.*

# *A recent study that looked at the rainfall pattern in the past 119 years found a decreasing trend at Cherrapunji and nearby areas. The team analysed daily rain gauge measurements during 1901–2019, and noted that the changes in the Indian Ocean temperature have a huge effect on the rainfall in the region.*

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

- 1. India shares its longest land border with China.
  - 2. China shares its longest land border with 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: D**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **India** shares longest border with **Bangladesh** followed by China.

India has 15,106.7 Km of land border: Bangladesh 4096.7 km, China 3488 km, Pakistan 3323 km, Nepal 1751 km, Myanmar 1643 km, Bhutan 699 km, Afghanistan 106 km.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **China** shares longest border with **Mongolia** followed by Russia.

**China's border countries (14):** Afghanistan 91 km, Bhutan 477 km, Burma 2129 km, India 3488 km, Kazakhstan 1765 km, North Korea 1352 km, Kyrgyzstan 1063 km, Laos 475 km, **Mongolia 4630 km**, Nepal 1389 km, Pakistan 438 km, Russia (northeast) 4133 km and Russia (northwest) 46 km, Tajikistan 477 km, Vietnam 1297 km. Several of these border lengths are disputed, such as China's border with Pakistan via PoK.

**Q.3)** **Dhauliganga River** is a tributary of which of the following river?

- a) Hooghly
- b) Alaknanda
- c) Yamuna
- d) Brahmaputra

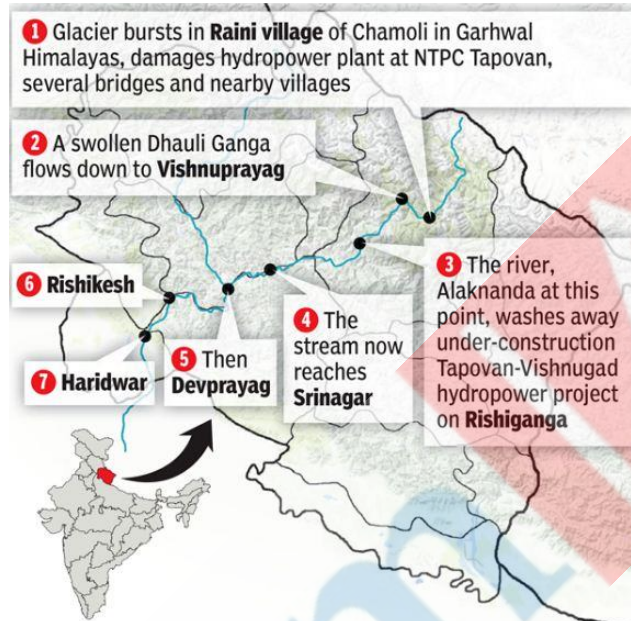
**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** **Dhauliganga** rises in the vicinity of the Niti Pass in the border regions between Garhwal and southwestern Tibet. It flows southwards until it meets the Rishiganga on its left

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bank at Rini, in the vicinity of Tapovan in Chamoli district and flows westwards until it meets the **Alaknanda** at Vishnuprayag.

**Various tributaries joining River Alaknanda** are: Dhauliganga river at Vishnuprayag, Nandakini River at Nandaprayag, Pindar River at Karnaprayag, Mandakini River at Rudraprayag, and finally it meets Bhagirathi River at Devprayag.



# The Union Home Secretary reviewed the status of the artificial lake which has formed in the wake of the avalanche incident in the upper catchment of the Rishiganga River in Chamoli District of Uttarakhand.

**Q.4)** The **Devsthal Optical Telescope Facility** is located in which of the following State/UT?

- a) Uttarakhand
- b) Himachal Pradesh
- c) Ladakh
- d) Rajasthan

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The 3.6m Optical Telescope Facility Devasthal is in Nainital, **Uttarakhand**. The world-class 3.6-meter optical telescope set up at the place has assumed global importance for observing a number of time-critical cosmic explosive events such as Gamma Ray Bursts and Supernovae. **It is the Asia's largest fully steerable optical telescope.**

It was set up in year 2016 by **Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES)**, an autonomous research institute of DST with support from Belgian government and established India's role as a global player in astronomy research and is facilitating strong future collaborations with national, international institutions and industries.

**Q.5)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Bare-Bellied Hedgehog**:

- 1. It is endemic to dry scrubby areas in south-eastern India.
- 2. It is protected under the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. The **Bare-bellied hedgehog (*Paraechinus nudiventris*)**, also known as the Madras hedgehog, is a species of hedgehog that is endemic to dry scrubby areas in south-eastern India.

Statement 2 is incorrect. It is listed as Least Concern under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. It is not listed in the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

**Q.6) The National Waterway -1 passes through which of the following States?**

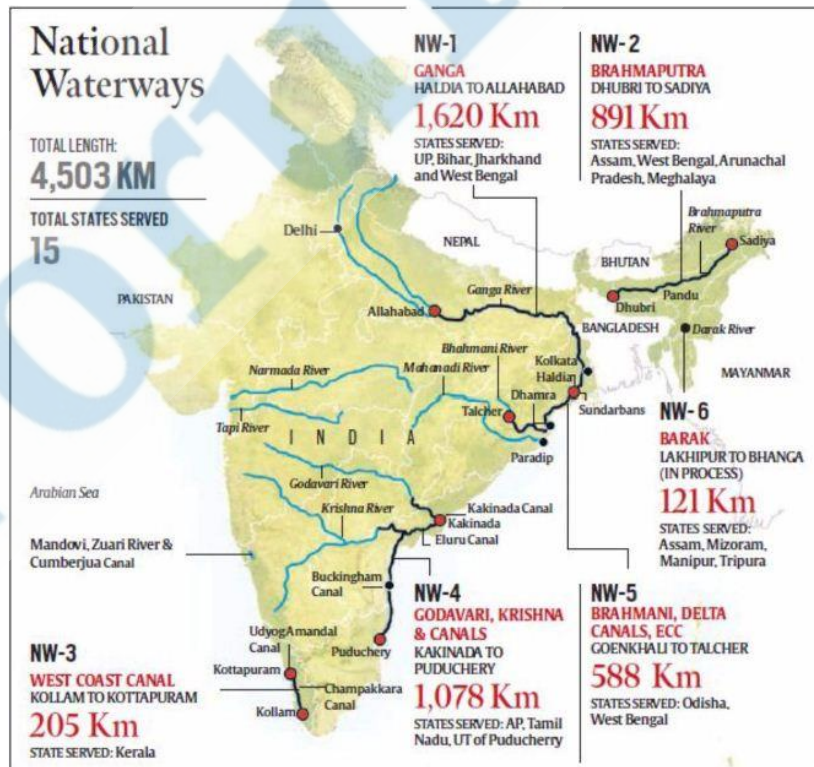
- 1. Assam
- 2. West Bengal
- 3. Jharkhand

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** The **National Waterway 1** of length 1620 km on Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System (Haldia - Allahabad) passes through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand & West Bengal.



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# A Memorandum of Understanding is signed between IWAI and MOL (Asia Oceania) Pte. Ltd for transportation of LPG (Liquified Natural Gas) through barges on National Waterways-1 and National Waterways-2

**Q.7)** Which of the following country does *not* border **Syria**?

- a) Jordan
- b) Iran
- c) Turkey
- d) Israel

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Syria is bounded by **Turkey** to the north, by **Iraq** to the east and southeast, by **Jordan** to the south, and by **Lebanon** and **Israel** to the southwest.



**Q.8)** Which of the following statements is/are *incorrect*?

- 1. The Tropic of Cancer crosses through the Sahara Desert.
- 2. South Sudan forms the southern part of the Sahara Desert.

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

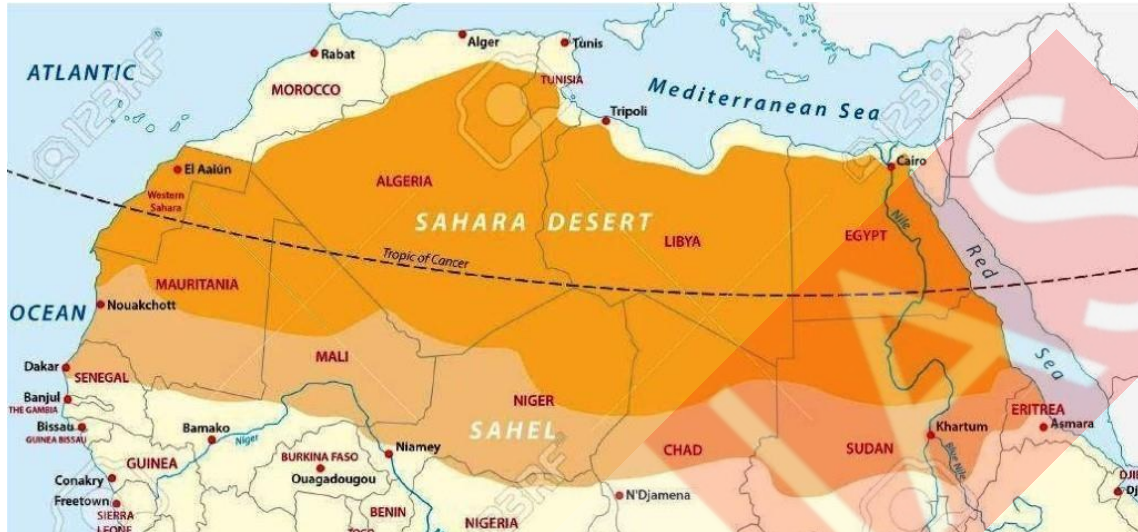
**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** The **Sahara Desert** has been hit by an icy blast with temperatures dipping below freezing recently. Aïn Séfra in Algeria - known as “The Gateway to the Desert” - is around 1,000 metres above sea level and surrounded by the Atlas Mountains, also experienced snowfall.

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Statement 1 is correct. There are 16 countries, 3 continents and 6 water bodies through which the Tropic of Cancer passes including Egypt, Libya, Niger, Algeria, Mali, Western Sahara, Mauritania.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Sahara Desert does not cover the are under **South Sudan**.



**Q.9)** The **Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary** is in which of the following State?

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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The **Karlapat sanctuary** is located in Kalahandi district, **Odisha** covering a dense patch of lush green dry deciduous forest. The sanctuary is rich in wildlife such as leopard, gaur, sambar, nilgai, barking deer, mouse deer, soft claws ottawa, a wide variety of birds and reptiles.

# *Recently six elephants died of Haemorrhagic Septicaemia (HS) in Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary.*



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### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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**Q.1)** Which of the following is/are **waterborne diseases**?

1. Cholera
2. Hepatitis A
3. Typhoid

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: Waterborne diseases** are caused by a variety of microorganisms, biotoxins, and toxic contaminants, which lead to devastating illnesses such as **cholera, schistosomiasis and other gastrointestinal problems**. Outbreaks of waterborne diseases often occur after a severe precipitation event (rainfall, snowfall).

**Cholera** is an intestinal infection caused by the bacteria *Vibrio cholera* acquired through infected food and water leading to massive watery diarrhoea, vomiting, cramps and dehydration.

**Hepatitis A and E** are viral diseases caused by the ingestion of contaminated food or water or through direct contact with an infected person. Both affect the liver and can cause mild to severe illness.

**Typhoid and Paratyphoid** are associated with poor sanitation and untreated water supplies. Typhoid is caused by the bacteria *Salmonella Typhi* while Paratyphoid is caused due to the infection of *Salmonella Paratyphi A*.

*# Telangana has joined a group of States that has ensured tap water connections to all schools and anganwadi centres (AWCs). Telangana was among States like Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana and Tamil Nadu, which reported the provision of tap water in all schools and AWCs.*

**Q.2)** Consider the following statements regarding **Anti-microbial resistance**:

1. It refers to human the body becoming resistant to treatment through antibiotics.
2. It occurs naturally over time, usually through genetic changes.

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. **Antibiotic resistance** happens when germs like bacteria and fungi develop the ability to defeat the drugs designed to kill them.

Antibiotic resistance does not mean the body is becoming resistant to antibiotics; it is that bacteria have become resistant to the antibiotics designed to kill them.

Statement 2 is correct. **AMR occurs naturally over time**, usually through genetic changes. Antimicrobial resistant organisms are found in people, animals, food, plants and the

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environment (in water, soil and air). They can spread from person to person or between people and animals, including from food of animal origin.

The main drivers of antimicrobial resistance include the misuse and overuse of antimicrobials; lack of access to **clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)** for both humans and animals; poor infection and disease prevention and control in health-care facilities and farms; poor access to quality, affordable medicines, vaccines and diagnostics; lack of awareness and knowledge; and lack of enforcement of legislation.

**Q.3)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)**:

1. Total fertility levels of about 2.1 children per woman is considered as the Replacement-level fertility.

2. India's TFR has fallen below the Replacement-level fertility.

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:** The **Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** is average number of live births a woman would have by age 50 if she were subject, throughout her life, to the age-specific fertility rates observed in a given year. Its calculation assumes that there is no mortality.

Statement 1 is correct. **Replacement-level fertility** is considered at total fertility levels of about 2.1 children per woman. This value represents the average number of children a woman would need to have to reproduce herself by bearing a daughter who survives to childbearing age. If replacement level fertility is sustained over a sufficiently long period, each generation will exactly replace itself in the absence of migration.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **India's TFR is still above Replacement level at 2.2**, however several states have achieved the replacement levels. Of the 17 states analysed in the NFHS-5 data, except for Bihar, Manipur and Meghalaya, all other states have a TFR of 2.1 or less, which implies that most states have attained replacement level fertility.

*# Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare while addressing the 'Population versus Planet' Conference noted that the country has witnessed significant decline in both fertility and mortality; the crude birth rate which was recorded at 40.8 per 1000 in 1951 has declined to 20.0 in 2018; Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has declined from 6.0 in 1951 to 2.2 in 2015-16; death rate in India has declined from 7 in 2012 to 6.2 in 2018.*

**Q.4)** Which of the following is/are **Zoonotic Diseases**?

- 1. Ebola
- 2. Lyme disease
- 3. Salmonellosis

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: Zoonotic diseases** (also known as zoonoses) are caused by germs that spread between animals and people. Zoonotic pathogens may be bacterial, viral or parasitic, or may involve unconventional agents and can spread to humans through direct contact or through food, water or the environment.

Several zoonotic diseases of most concern are: Zoonotic influenza, Salmonellosis, West Nile virus, Plague, Emerging coronaviruses (e.g., severe acute respiratory syndrome and Middle East respiratory syndrome, COVID-19), Ebola viral disease, Rabies, Brucellosis, Lyme disease etc.

**Q.5)** Consider the following statements regarding the **human liver**:

1. Bile helps carry away waste products from the liver.
  2. All the blood leaving the stomach and intestines passes through the liver.
- 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:** The **liver** is located in the upper right-hand portion of the abdominal cavity, beneath the diaphragm, and on top of the stomach, right kidney, and intestines.

The liver holds about one pint (**13%**) of the **body's blood supply** at any given moment. The liver consists of 2 main lobes. Both are made up of 8 segments that consist of 1,000 lobules (small lobes).

The liver regulates most chemical levels in the blood and excretes a product called **bile**. This helps carry away waste products from the liver. All the blood leaving the stomach and intestines passes through the liver. The liver processes this blood and breaks down, balances, and creates the nutrients and also metabolizes drugs into forms that are easier to use for the rest of the body or that are nontoxic.

*# Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, launched the operational guidelines for Integration of NAFLD (Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease) with NPCDCS (National Programme for Prevention & Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke) recently.*

**Q.6)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Haemorrhagic septicaemia (HS)**:

1. It is a bacterial disease.
2. It is a zoonotic disease transmitted from bats to humans.

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. **Haemorrhagic septicaemia (HS)** is a contagious bacterial disease caused by two serotypes of *Pasteurella multocida*, B2 and E2.

Statement 2 is incorrect. It affects **cattle** and water buffaloes with a high mortality rate in infected animals. There are no reported cases of human infection.

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In many **Asian countries** HS disease outbreaks mostly occur during the climatic conditions typical of monsoon (high humidity and high temperatures); however, with climate change, incidences of disease may occur any month of the year.

# *Six elephants have died of Haemorrhagic Septicaemia(HS) in Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary located in Odisha's Kalahandi district.*

**Q.7)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Brent Crude**:

1. It is a blend of crude oil recovered from the Persian Gulf.
2. It is a light and sweet grade crude oil.

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. **Brent blend** is a blend of crude oil extracted from oilfields in the **North Sea** between the United Kingdom and Norway.

Statement 2 is correct. Crude from this region is **light and sweet**, making them ideal for the refining of diesel fuel, gasoline, and other high-demand products.

# *Indian Crude Basket is weighted average of Dubai and Oman (sour) and the Brent Crude (sweet) crude oil prices.*

# *Sweet crude oil contains small amounts of hydrogen sulfide and carbon dioxide and it is commonly used for processing into gasoline, kerosene, and high-quality diesel. Before sour crude oil can be refined into gasoline, impurities need to be removed, therefore increasing the cost of processing.*

**Q.8)** What is/are the properties of **ideal thermoelectric materials**?

1. High thermal conductivity
2. Low electrical conductivity

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: D**

**Explanation: Thermoelectricity** is formed when heat is converted into energy. What makes a material have the ability to create thermal electricity is both **high electrical conductivity and low thermal conductivity**.

Electrons flow back and forth on what is called a temperature gradient. Since we generally know that metal is a good energy conductor, electrons that are responsible for creating the thermoelectric energy can flow easily through metal.

Furthermore, a typical thermoelectric material should have low thermal conductivity and thus must maintain a temperature gradient.

# *Scientists from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru, an autonomous institution of the Department of Science & Technology (DST) have*

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identified a lead-free material called Cadmium (Cd) doped Silver Antimony Telluride (AgSbTe<sub>2</sub>) which can efficiently allow recovery of electricity from 'waste heat'.

**Q.9)** Which of the following animal dormant states is/are correctly matched?

1. Hibernation - Hot or dry period
2. Brumation - Winter
3. Estivation - Summer

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** The environment that an animal lives in affects their dormancy behavior greatly. Animals might go through **hibernation, brumation or estivation (aestivation)**.

**Hibernation** refers to the deep sleep that some warm-blooded animals engage in during the **winter**. **Brumation** is known as the hibernation for cold-blooded animals.

**Estivation** is when animals are dormant because weather conditions are very **hot and dry**. Their breathing rate, heart rate and metabolic rate decrease to conserve energy under these harsh conditions.

Therefore, only option 2 is correctly matched.

**Q.10)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Sun**:

1. The Sun rotates more quickly at its equator than at its poles.
2. Sunspots are darker and at higher temperature than other areas on Sun.

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. Since the Sun is a ball of gas/plasma, it does not have to rotate rigidly like the solid planets and moons do. In fact, the **Sun's equatorial regions rotate faster** (taking only about 24 days) than the polar regions (which rotate once in more than 30 days).

This differential rotation persists to about a third of the way inside the Sun, where the rotation becomes uniform from pole to pole.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **Sunspots** are areas that appear dark on the surface of the Sun. They appear dark because they are **cooler than other parts** of the Sun's surface. Solar flares are a sudden explosion of energy caused by tangling, crossing or reorganizing of magnetic field lines near sunspots.

**Q.11)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Alzheimer's Disease**:

1. It is a bacterial disease with no cure.
2. It causes the brain to shrink and brain cells to die.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **The exact causes of Alzheimer's disease aren't fully understood.** But at a basic level, brain proteins fail to function normally, which disrupts the work of brain cells (neurons) and triggers a series of toxic events. Neurons are damaged, lose connections to each other and eventually die.

Scientists believe that for most people, Alzheimer's disease is caused by a **combination of genetic, lifestyle and environmental factors that affect the brain over time.**

Statement 2 is correct. Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurologic disorder that causes the brain to shrink (atrophy) and brain cells to die. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia — a continuous decline in thinking, behavioral and social skills that affects a person's ability to function independently.

*# The novel drug candidate TGR63 developed by the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology team has potential as a promising drug candidate for AD treatment.*

**Q.12)** Consider the following statements regarding the **COVAXIN**:

1. It has been developed by Bharat Biotech is developed in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
2. It is a live attenuated virus type vaccine.

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. **COVAXIN**, India's indigenous COVID-19 vaccine by Bharat Biotech is developed in collaboration with the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) - National Institute of Virology (NIV).**

Statement 2 is incorrect. The vaccine developed by BBIL is a highly purified, whole virion, inactivated SARS-CoV2.

The vaccine is developed using **Whole-Virion Inactivated Vero Cell** derived platform technology. Inactivated vaccines do not replicate and are therefore unlikely to revert and cause pathological effects. They contain dead virus, incapable of infecting people but still able to instruct the immune system to mount a defensive reaction against an infection.

*# The vaccine is formulated with Algel-IMDG, which contains chemisorbed TLR7/8 agonist onto aluminium hydroxide gel to generate the requisite type of immune responses. A CSIR constituent lab, Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Hyderabad, was approached by BBIL to develop the synthetic route for the agonist molecule with indigenous chemicals.*

**Q.13)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Tuberculosis** (TB):

1. The TB bacteria can attack only lungs in the human body.
2. TB bacteria are spread through the air from one person to another.

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3. Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) is a vaccine for tuberculosis (TB) disease.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **Tuberculosis (TB)** is caused by a bacterium called *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but TB bacteria **can attack any part of the body** such as the kidney, spine, and brain.

Statement 2 is correct. TB bacteria are spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacteria are put into the air when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, speaks, or sings. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected.

Statement 3 is correct. **Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG)** is a vaccine for tuberculosis (TB) disease.

# *The Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) was launched in 1997 with implementation of Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course Strategy, Programme is further renamed as National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme in the year 2020 by Central TB Division and aims to eliminate TB by 2025.*

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### HISTORY

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**Q.1)** Consider the following statements regarding **Saint Ravidas**:

1. He was a contemporary of the King Harshavardhana of Kannauj.
2. Mirabai was a disciple of Guru Ravidas.

Which of the statements given above is/ra 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. **Ravidas**, also called Raidas, (flourished 15th or 16th century), mystic and poet who was one of the most renowned of the saints of the North Indian bhakti movement.

**Harshavardhana** (606-647 A.D.) ascended the throne of Thaneshwar and Kannauj on the death of his brother, Rajyavardhana in seventh century.

Statement 2 is correct. Saint Ravidas is believed to be a disciple of the bhakti saint-poet Ramananda and a contemporary of the bhakti saint-poet Kabir. One of his famous disciples was the saint, **Mirabai**.

**Adi Granth** of Sikhs and **Panchvani** are the major documented sources of the literary works of Guru Ravidas.



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### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/ORGANISATIONS

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**Q.1)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Mission Innovation**:

1. It is a global initiative to accelerate global clean energy innovation with the objective to make clean energy widely affordable.
2. India is a member of the Mission Innovation.

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. **Mission Innovation (MI)** is a global initiative working to reinvigorate and accelerate global clean energy innovation with the objective to make clean energy widely affordable.

MI was announced at **COP21 on November, 2015**, as world leaders came together in Paris to commit to ambitious efforts to combat climate change.

Statement 2 is correct. Mission Innovation (MI) is a global initiative of 24 countries, **including India and the European Commission** (on behalf of the European Union). These 25 members have committed to seek to double public investment in clean energy RD&D and are engaging with the private sector, fostering international collaboration and celebrating innovators.

**Q.2)** Which of the following constitute the **International Bill of Human Rights**?

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
3. Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War

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:** What is known as the **International Bill of Human Rights** is made up of:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

In 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UDHR. This was the first time that countries agreed on a comprehensive statement of inalienable human rights. The UDHR is not a treaty, so it does not directly create legal obligations for States.

The covenants, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights were opened for signature in 1966 and entered into force in 1976. **India ratified both the covenants in 1979.**

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**Q.3)** Consider the following statements:

1. Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures in trade agreements are applied to protect human, animal or plant life.
2. India does not have a trade agreement with any of the African 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

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS)** measures are quarantine and biosecurity measures which applied to protect human, animal or plant life or health from risks arising from the introduction, establishment and spread of pests and diseases and from risks arising from additives, toxins and contaminants in food and feed.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **India and Mauritius** recently signed a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement.

**The CECPA is the first trade Agreement signed by India with a country in Africa.** The Agreement is a limited agreement, which will cover Trade in Goods, Rules of Origin, Trade in Services, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, Dispute Settlement, Movement of Natural Persons, Telecom, Financial services, Customs Procedures and Cooperation in other Areas.

**Q.4)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Paris Agreement** under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):

1. It requires each Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions (NDCs) that it intends to achieve.
2. Starting in 2023 and then every five years, governments will take stock of the implementation of the Agreement to assess the collective progress under the agreement.

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 **2015 Paris Agreement** established a goal to limit average global temperature rise to well below 2° degrees C, and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5° degrees C.

To meet this goal, every country is expected to prepare and communicate a **nationally determined contribution (NDC)** every five years. NDCs include targets, measures and policies and are the basis for national climate action plans.

Statement 2 is correct. Starting in 2023 and then every five years, governments will take stock of the implementation of the Agreement to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and its long-term goals.

The outcome of the **global stock-take** will inform the preparation of subsequent NDCs, in order to allow for increased ambition and climate action to achieve the purpose of the Paris Agreement and its long-term goals.

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# The United Kingdom is holding the Presidency of the UNSC for the month of February 2021 and it is organizing the United Nations Security Council Open Debate on "Addressing climate-related risks to international peace and security".

**Q.5)** Which of the following reports/indices are correctly matched?

1. Rule of Law Index - Freedom House
2. Press Freedom Index - Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
3. Corruption Perception Index - Transparency International

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** The **Rule of Law Index** is a quantitative assessment tool by the **World Justice Project (WJP)** designed to offer a detailed and comprehensive picture of the extent to which countries adhere to the rule of law in practice.

The Paris based **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** publishes annually a World Press Freedom Index (WPFI) purporting to evaluate the level of freedom available to the media.

Since its inception in 1995, the **Corruption Perceptions Index, Transparency International's** flagship research product Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ranks countries "by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, as determined by expert assessments and opinion surveys."

**Q.6)** Consider the following statements regarding **BRICS**:

1. BRICS National Security Advisors' meeting deliberates on Counter Terrorism, Cyber Security, peace & stability as well as national security of BRICS countries.
2. India is the chair of BRICS for 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:** The leaders of **BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China)** countries met for the first time in St. Petersburg, Russia, on the margins of G8 Outreach Summit in July 2006. BRIC group was renamed as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) after **South Africa** was accepted as a full member at the BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York in September 2010.

Statement 1 is correct. **BRICS National Security Advisors'** meeting is an important component of the BRICS Political and Security Pillar of cooperation. Under this meeting, the High Representatives on National Security deliberate on security issues such as Counter Terrorism, Cyber Security, peace & stability, transnational organized crime, as well as national security of BRICS countries.

Statement 2 is correct. **India assumed the BRICS Chairship in 2021**, at a time when BRICS is celebrating its 15th anniversary. Under the theme BRICS@15: Intra-BRICS Cooperation,

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India's approach is focused on strengthening collaboration through Continuity, Consolidation and Consensus.

# India hosted a Meeting of BRICS Finance and Central Bank Deputies recently.

**Q.7)** What is the objective of the annual **India-USA Executive Steering Group (ESG) Meeting**?

- a) Plan and discuss defense force's cooperation
- b) Implementation of bilateral trade arrangements
- c) Plan Head of State/Government summits
- d) Cooperation in agriculture and pharmaceuticals

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The 24th edition of the **India-USA Executive Steering Group (ESG)** meeting was held at New Delhi from 22 to 24 Feb 2021. The meeting was attended by a 12-member delegation from the US Army in person and virtually by 40 officers from different locations from the USA.

The forum is an Army-to-Army engagement that meets every year alternately in India and USA to discuss **Army to Army cooperation**.

A number of contemporary issues of mutual interests were discussed with an aim to enhance the engagements in diverse fields. For the first time the meeting was held both in person and through virtual mode owing to restrictions of COVID-19.

**Q.8)** Consider the following statements regarding the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**:

1. It is a self-funding specialized agency of the United Nations.
2. The Global Innovation Index is an annual publication of the WIPO.
3. Technology and Innovative Support Centers (TISCs) is an initiative of the WIPO to support innovators in developing countries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is correct. **UN specialized agencies** are international organizations working with the UN, in accordance with relationship agreements between each organization and the UN.

Specialized Agencies each have a process for admitting members and appointing their administrative head. WIPO is a **self-funding** organization and a **specialized agency** of United Nations.

Statement 2 is correct. The Global Innovation Index is published annually by Cornell University, INSEAD and the WIPO. Its 80 indicators explore a broad vision of innovation, including political environment, education, infrastructure and business sophistication.

Statement 3 is correct. The **WIPO Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC)** program provides innovators in developing countries with access to locally based, high quality technology information and related services, helping them to exploit their innovative potential and to create, protect, and manage their intellectual property (IP) rights.

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**Q.9)** Which of the following is *not* a **G20 member** country?

- a) Egypt
- b) Mexico
- c) Indonesia
- d) Argentina

**Correct answer: A**

**Explanation:** The **members of the G20** are: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union. Its members account for more than 80 percent of world GDP, 75 percent of global trade and 60 percent of the population of the planet.

The forum has met every year since 1999 and since 2008 has included a yearly Leaders' Summit, with the participation of the respective Heads of State and Government.

# *Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs participated virtually in the First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting under the Italian Presidency recently.*

**Q.10)** Consider the following statements regarding the **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)**:

1. AIIB membership is limited to the countries located in Asia only.
2. It has a Permanent Observer status in the deliberations of both the United Nations General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.
3. The Financing operations of AIIB are limited to sovereign backed financing and it does not lend to private enterprises.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. **AIIB has non-regional members as well.** Membership in AIIB is open to members of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the Asian Development Bank.

Statement 2 is correct. In 2018, AIIB was granted **Permanent Observer status in the deliberations of both the United Nations General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council**, the two development-focused principal organs of the global body.

Statement 3 is incorrect. **AIIB provides non-sovereign backed financing as well.** Sovereign-Backed financing is considered a loan to, or guaranteed by, a member. Non-sovereign Backed financing includes any financing to or for the benefit of a private enterprise or a sub-sovereign entity (such as a political or administrative subdivision of a member or a public sector entity) that is not backed by a guarantee or counter-guarantee and indemnity provided by the member to the Bank.

# *The Government of India and AIIB recently signed a loan agreement for a \$304 million Assam Intra-State Transmission System Enhancement Project to improve reliability, capacity and security of the power transmission network in the State of Assam.*

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**Q.11)** Consider the following statements regarding the **International Commission on Large Dams (INCOLD)**:

1. It is an inter-governmental organization which provides a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience in dam engineering.
2. India is among the countries having National Committees for INCOLD.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Correct answer: B**

**Explanation:** Statement 1 is incorrect. The **International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD)** is a **non-governmental International Organization** which provides a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience in dam engineering.

The Organization leads the profession in ensuring that dams are built safely, efficiently, economically, and without detrimental effects on the environment.

Statement 2 is correct. ICOLD was founded in 1928 and has National Committees from more than 100 countries with approximately 10 000 individual members.

The **Committee for International Commission on Large Dams, (INCOLD)** is the Indian Committee interacting with ICOLD Central Office in Paris and helps in dissemination, in India, of information about new developments in dam engineering, besides projecting India's expertise at international level through participation in various events of ICOLD.

# *International Commission on Large Dams (INCOLD) in collaboration with Central Water Commission (CWC), Dam Rehabilitation Improvement Project (DRIP) and National Hydrology Project (NHP) is organising Symposium on "Sustainable Development of Dams and River Basins" under the aegis of ICOLD at New Delhi.*

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### ECONOMICS

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**Q.1)** Which of the following factors make demand of a product **inelastic**?

1. High competition in product category
2. No close substitute for the product

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:** The **inelastic demand** occurs when the demand for a product doesn't change as much as the price. Inelastic demand is one of the three types of demand elasticity. It describes how much demand changes when the price does. The other two are:

--Elastic demand is when changes in price impact the quantity demanded.

--Unit elastic demand is when changes in price cause an equal change in demand.

Major factors for a product having inelasticity of demand are:

--**No substitutes**; if there is an easy substitute for a good or service, the substitute makes the demand for the good more elastic.

--having little or **no competition** in the market; if a firm has monopoly power, then it is able to charge higher prices

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

1. Reserve Bank of India pays commission to banks for undertaking government agency businesses.
2. Private sector banks are barred from undertaking Government-related banking transactions such as taxes and revenue payment facilities.

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. For undertaking government agency business, the **RBI pays a commission to banks**. The central bank carries out the general banking business of the central and state governments through agency banks appointed under Section 45 of the RBI Act, 1934.

The government transactions eligible to commission are revenue receipts, payments on behalf of the central and state governments, pension payments, and any other item specified by the RBI.

Statement 2 is incorrect. In 2012, the finance ministry had not allowed private banks, barring some, to undertake government business for three years.

In 2015, the government had continued with the embargo, and allowed the private sector with existing government agency business to continue without any fresh authorisation to private banks.

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Recently, Government of India has **lifted the embargo on private sector banks** (only a few were permitted earlier) for the conduct of Government-related banking transactions such as taxes and other revenue payment facilities, pension payments, small savings schemes, etc. This step is expected to further enhance customer convenience, spur competition and higher efficiency in the standards of customer services.

**Q.3)** Consider the following statements regarding **Nidhi Companies**:

1. They are registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
2. It is a type of Non-banking financial institution.

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 and 2 is correct.

**Nidhi Company** is a financial institution or a type of NBFC that is involved in depositing and lending money to their members. This company is registered under the **Companies Act, 2013** and is managed, as per the RBI's guidelines.

All the transactions are performed by the company's members only. Since all the transactions are focused on the shareholders of the Nidhi Company, RBI has exempted the notified Nidhi companies from the core acts of RBI.

*#Ministry of Corporate Affairs has advised investors to verify the antecedents / status of a Nidhi Company especially their declaration of their status as Nidhi Company by the Central Government before becoming its member and investing their hard-earned money in such companies.*

**Q.4)** Which of the following institution publishes the **Advance Estimates of National Income** in India?

- a) NITI Aayog
- b) Department of Economic Affairs
- c) Reserve Bank of India
- d) National Statistical Office

**Correct answer: D**

**Explanation: National Statistical Office (NSO)** is mandated to prepare 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.

The National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has recently released the **Second Advance Estimates of National Income, 2020-21**.

The approach for compiling the advance estimates is based on **Benchmark-Indicator Method**. The sector-wise estimates are obtained by extrapolation of indicators like Index of Industrial Production (IIP), financial performance of Listed Companies in the Private Corporate Sector, Second Advance Estimates of Crop Production, Accounts of Central & State Governments among others.