

10 PM Current Affairs Quiz Compilation

22nd to 28th March, 2021

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

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GOVERNMENT SCHEMES/INITIATIVES

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding the ‘**Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain**’ campaign:

1. The Campaign will be undertaken across the country, in both rural and urban area.
2. It will be implemented in the pre-monsoon and post-monsoon period in the country.

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 “**Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain**” Campaign will be undertaken across the country, in both rural and urban areas, with the theme “catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls”.

Statement 2 is incorrect. It will be implemented from 22nd March 2021 to 30th November, 2021 - the **pre-monsoon and monsoon period** in the country.

It will be launched as a Jan Andolan to take water conservation at grass-root level through people’s participation. It is intended to nudge all stakeholders to create rainwater harvesting structures suitable to the climatic conditions and subsoil strata, to ensure proper storage of rainwater.

After the event, **Gram Sabhas** will be held in all Gram Panchayats of each district (except in the poll bound states) to discuss issues related to water and water conservation. Gram Sabhas will also take ‘Jal Shapath’ for water conservation.

Q.2) What is the mandate of the **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)**?

1. To implement and enforce the provisions of the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO).
2. To monitor the availability of drugs, identify shortages, if any, and to take remedial steps.
3. To undertake and/or sponsor relevant studies in respect of pricing of drugs/formulations.

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 **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority** was set up as an attached office of the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals on 29th August 1997. It has been entrusted inter-alia, with the following functions:

--To implement and enforce the provisions of the **Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO)**, 1995/2013.

--To undertake and/or sponsor relevant studies in respect of pricing of drugs/formulations.

--To monitor the availability of drugs, identify shortages, if any, and to take remedial steps.

To collect/maintain data on production, exports and imports, market share of individual companies, profitability of companies etc. for bulk drugs and formulations.

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--To render advice to the Central Government on changes/revisions in the drug policy and in the parliamentary matters relating to the drug pricing.

NPPA recently fixed the price of 81 medicines including off-patent anti-diabetic drugs allowing due benefits of patent expiry to the patients.

Q.3) Consider the following statements regarding the **Study in India Programme**:

1. It aims to attract international students to higher education institutions in India.
2. Admissions are merit based and only IITs and IIMs are partnered under the programme for student intake.

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. **Study in India is a programme** of the Govt of India that aims to attract international students to higher education institutions in India.

Statement 2 is incorrect. It caters to NIRF Top 100 institutes in any category except medical institutes, along with a NAAC accreditation of 3.26 or above and those which have been empaneled by UGC, be it government or private. All institutes fulfilling these criteria, partner with Study in India, including Institutes of Eminence and Institutes of National Importance.

Select 117 institutions are partners under the programme that was launched in 2018. Admissions are merit based and done through a common portal.

In a review meeting of the Education Ministry's Study in India Programme with partner institutions yesterday, Secretary Higher Education said that the criteria for institutions partnering under the programme will soon be revised so that more institutions that have the necessary infrastructure and academic quality can join the programme.

Q.4) Which of the following are the **Ease of Doing Business reforms** for States to complete to become eligible for enhanced borrowing of 0.25 percent of Gross State Domestic Product?

1. Completion of first assessment of 'District Level Business Reform Action Plan'
2. Implementation of computerized central random inspection system
3. Implementation of the Model Land Leasing Act, 2016.

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: Improvements in the ease of doing business will enable faster future growth of the state economy. Therefore, the government of India had in May 2020, decided to link grant of additional borrowing permissions to States who undertake the reforms to facilitate ease of doing business. The **reforms stipulated in this category are:**

--Completion of first assessment of 'District Level Business Reform Action Plan'

--Elimination of the requirements of renewal of registration certificates/approvals/licences obtained by businesses under various Acts.

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--Implementation of computerized central random inspection system under the Acts wherein allocation of inspectors is done centrally

In view of the **COVID-19 pandemic**, the Government of India had in May, 2020 enhanced the borrowing limit of the States by 2 percent of their GSDP. Half of this special dispensation was linked to undertaking citizen centric reforms by the States.

The four citizen centric areas for reforms identified were (a) Implementation of One Nation One Ration Card System, (b) Ease of doing business reform, (c) Urban Local body/ utility reforms and (d) Power Sector reforms.

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding **National Film Awards**:

1. These are administered by the Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF) under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
2. Gujarat has won the award for being Most Film Friendly State in National Film Awards 2019.

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 **Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF)** was set up under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in 1973 with the objective of promotion of India films and cultural exchange. DFF organizes and implements the various events and programmes to promote Indian cinema including the National Film Awards and the Dadasaheb Phalke Award.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The 67th National Film Awards winners for the year 2019 have been announced recently. **Sikkim** has bagged the award for being Most Film Friendly State.

Q.6) Who among the following have been awarded the **Gandhi Peace Prize**?

1. Mohammed bin Salman
2. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
3. Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said

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: **Gandhi Peace Prize Awards** are for Social, Economic and Political transformation through Non-violence was instituted in the year 1995. The Award comprises an amount of Rs. One Crore and a Citation. The Award may be divided between two persons / institutions who are considered by the Jury to be equally deserving of recognition in a given year.

The **Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2020 is being conferred on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman; while for the year 2019 it is being conferred on late Sultan Qaboos bin**

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Said Al Said of Oman in recognition of his vision to strengthen relations with India, and his efforts to promote peace and non-violence in the Gulf region.

Q.7) What is the objective of the recently launched **Operation Thiruvallur**?

- Safe disposal of unexploded ordnance
- Bringing back migrants from foreign countries
- Mock Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations
- None of the above

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Troops of Southern Command, Pune have launched “**Operation Thiruvallur**” under the aegis of “Aid to Civil Authorities”, involving the safe disposal of nearly 10 tonnes of **unexploded ordnance** which had possibly been collected inadvertently by some factories over a number of years located in the general area of SIPCOT Industrial Estate in Gummidipoondi in Thiruvallur district of TamilNadu.

The operation involves segregation & disposal of unexploded ordnance from a metal scrap dump, now covered with undergrowth. The dump had been unattended after a violent blast & consequent death of a factory worker a few years back.

Q.8) Consider the following statements:

- The India Medical Association (IMA) is a private organisation of registered medical practitioners.
- The National Medical Commission (NMC) is the statutory body to regulate medical education in the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct answer: C

Explanation: The **India Medical Association (IMA)** is a private organisation of registered medical practitioners and is not authorised to conduct inspection of medical colleges.

The statutory body constituted under the provisions of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 to regulate medical education in the country was Medical Council of India (MCI) that has now been replaced with the National Medical Commission, constituted with effect from 25th September, 2020.

The **National Medical Commission (NMC)** has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as National Medical Commission Act, 2019. The Aim of the National Medical Commission are to:

- improve access to quality and affordable medical education
- ensure availability of adequate and high-quality medical professionals in all parts of the country;
- encourages medical professionals to adopt latest medical research in their work and to contribute to research;
- objectively assess medical institutions periodically in a transparent manner and enforce high ethical standards in all aspects of medical services.

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Q.9) Consider the following statements regarding the proposed scheme of ‘**Poshan Abhiyan for the Elderly**’:

1. It aims to provide nutrition support to the indigent elders, who are staying in the Old Age Homes and are victims of severe malnutrition.
2. The Gram Panchayats and Urban Municipalities are the implementing agencies of the Scheme.

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: According to the ‘Report of Government of India’s Technical Group on Population Projection for India and States’ by the year 2036, population of senior citizens would be 22.74 crore (14.9%).

Statement 1 is incorrect. The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment aims to launch a Poshan Abhiyan for the Elderly**, to provide nutrition support to the indigent elders, **who are not staying** in the Old Age Homes and are victims of severe malnutrition, by focusing on procuring locally available healthy food material and serving hot-cooked mid-day meals.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Gram Panchayats and Urban Municipalities** are the implementing agencies of the Scheme. The funding for the Scheme is from the Senior Citizens Welfare Fund.

Q.10) Which of the following is/are objectives of the **National Biopharma Mission**?

1. Development of products that are at advanced stages in the product development lifecycle and relevant to the public health.
2. Developing human capital by providing specific training to address the critical skills gaps in nascent biotech companies.
3. Enhancing technology transfer and intellectual property management capabilities in private sector.

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: **Department of Biotechnology (DBT)**, has initiated the Cabinet approved National Biopharma Mission entitled: “**Industry-Academia Collaborative Mission** for Accelerating Discovery Research to Early Development for Biopharmaceuticals – Innovate in India Empowering biotech entrepreneurs & accelerating inclusive innovation”.

The approved objectives of the Mission are:

- Development of products from leads that are at advanced stages in the product development lifecycle and relevant to the public health.
- Strengthening and establishing shared infrastructure facilities for both product discovery validation and manufacturing

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-- Developing human capital by providing specific training to address the critical skills gaps in researchers, nascent biotech companies across the product development value chain, including in business plan development and market penetration.

-- Creating and enhancing technology transfer and intellectual property management capacities and capabilities in public and private sector.

Q.11) Consider the following statements:

1. The Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (INSACOG) is an Empowered Group of Ministers (eGoM) for monitoring virus mutations in India.
2. A double mutant variant of SARS-CoV-2 have been identified by INSACOG in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct answer: B

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. The **Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (INSACOG)** is a grouping of 10 National Laboratories that was established by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of India in December 2020. INSACOG is since then carrying out genomic sequencing and analysis of circulating COVID-19 viruses, and correlating epidemiological trends with genomic variants.

Statement 2 is correct. A **novel variant of the Sars-Cov-2 with double mutation** has been detected in India. The variant carries mutations that include those denoted by the letters E484Q and L452R, which have separately been linked to characteristics that make the virus spread more readily and defeat, to some extent, immunity from a vaccine or past infection.

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding the **CBSE Competency Based Education Project**:

1. It aims to replace the existing rote learning model with a competency-based framework as directed in the National Education Policy 2020.
2. The Assessment Framework for Science, Maths and English has been developed by the NITI Aayog.

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. **CBSE Competency Based Education Project** that aims to replace the existing rote learning model with a competency-based framework as directed in the NEP 2020 over the next 2-3 years.

The NEP 2020 calls for a 'shift from [an assessment system] that is summative and primarily tests rote memorisation skills to one that is more regular and formative, is more competency-based, promotes learning development for our students, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking and conceptual clarity' and 'encouraging and helping school boards to shift their assessment patterns towards meeting the skills requirements of the 21st century.

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Statement 2 is incorrect. The **CBSE Assessment Framework for Science, Maths and English** classes as part of CBSE Competency Based Education Project has been launched recently. It is to strengthen India's existing school education system for secondary level (classes 6-10) and improve the overall learning outcomes of students across India, mainly covering three subjects: English (reading), Science, and Maths.

British Council along with AlphaPlus as the UK knowledge partner, designed and developed this framework after extensive research and analysis of the current learning and assessment model in Indian schools.

Q.13) Consider the following Statements:

1. For ensuring availability of quality products to consumers, Quality Control Orders are issued by various Ministries/Departments of Government of India.
2. Bureau of Indian Standards grants license to manufacturers to use the Standard mark on the product conforming to the relevant Indian Standards.

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. **Quality Control Orders (QCOs):** For ensuring availability of quality products to consumers, Quality Control Orders (QCOs) are issued by various Ministries/Departments of Government of India in exercise of the powers conferred by section 16 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 2016 stipulating conformity of the products to Indian Standards.

Statement 2 is correct. **Standard mark (ISI mark):** BIS grants license to manufacturers to use the Standard mark (ISI mark) on the product conforming to the relevant Indian Standards.

Q.14) Consider the following statements:

1. The National Investigation Agency has the mandate to investigate human trafficking cases, including those having international ramifications.
2. Emergency Response Support System provides a pan-India, single internationally recognized number (112) system for all emergencies.
3. Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) facilitates dissemination of information about significant crimes on real time basis and enables inter-State coordination.

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: Statement 1 is correct. The Government of India amended the **National Investigation Agency Act, 2008 in 2019** to inter-alia include Section 370 and 370A (relate to trafficking) of the Indian Penal Code in the Schedule of the Act. The NIA has been given the mandate to investigate cases of human trafficking, including those having inter-state, national and international ramifications.

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Statement 2 is correct. **Emergency Response Support System** provides a pan-India, single internationally recognized number (112) system for all emergencies, with computer aided dispatch of field resources to the location of distress.

Statement 3 is correct. A national level communication platform - **Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC)** was launched by MHA in 2020 to facilitates dissemination of information about significant crimes, including human trafficking cases, across the country on real time basis and enables inter-State coordination.

Q.15) Consider the following statements:

1. DigitalSky is a Ministry of Civil Aviation initiative for enabling flights permission digitally and managing Unmanned Aircraft operations and traffic efficiently.
2. 'No Permission – No Take-off' is a software program that enables Unmanned Aircrafts to obtain a valid permission through DigitalSky platform before operating in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct??

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

Correct answer: C

Explanation: **DigitalSky is a Ministry of Civil Aviation initiative**, a highly secure and scalable platform which supports technology framework such as NPNT (No permission no take-off) designed for enabling flights permission digitally and managing Unmanned Aircraft operations and traffic efficiently.

Every UAS / RPAS sold in India under the regulations published by DGCA for UAS / RPAS, must have a secure mechanism built on to the equipment to self-authenticate its permission to take-off. It is made possible through a digitally signed document called a Permission Artefact (machine-readable) which when read by the equipment establishes its authenticity and permission to fly.

This technology framework is referred to as **NPNT (No Permission No Take-off)**. NPNT or 'No Permission – No Take-off' is a software program that enables every RPA (except Nano) to obtain a valid permission through DigitalSky platform before operating in India.

Q.16) Consider the following statements:

1. Regulation and control of manufacture, supply and distribution is listed under the Union List in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution.
2. India is the largest producer of Salt in the World.

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. **Salt is a Central Subject** in the Constitution of India and appears as Item No. 58 in the Union List of the 7th Schedule, which reads:

--Manufacture, supply and Distribution of Salt by Union Agencies and Regulation and control of manufacture, supply and distribution of salt by other agencies.

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The Central Government is responsible for controlling and regulating all aspects of Salt Industry. The **Salt Commissioners's Organization** under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry (Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion), Government of India has been entrusted with the task of Manufacture, Supply and Distribution of Salt by Union Agencies and by other Agencies.

Statement 2 is incorrect. India is the **third largest Salt producing Country** in the World after China and USA. The Salt production has reached 30 million Tonnes (from less than 2 million Tonnes in pre-independence era), meeting all human and industrial requirements and then exporting surplus to the tune of 5 million Tonnes to foreign countries worldwide.

Q.17) Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct regarding the **Electoral Bonds Scheme**?

1. The electoral bonds can only be purchased by a Person, who is a Citizen of India or Incorporated or Established in India.
2. There are no Know-Your-Customer (KYC) norms for purchase of Electoral Bonds.

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: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The Electoral Bonds under this Scheme may be purchased by a Person, who is a **Citizen of India or Incorporated or Established in India**. The definition of "Person" includes- an Individual; a Hindu Undivided Family; a Company; an Association of Persons or a Body of Individuals, whether incorporated or not.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The extant instructions issued by the Reserve Bank of India regarding **Know Your Customer norms of a Bank's customer are applicable for all Applicants** of the Electoral Bonds.

Bond matters Some charges against electoral bonds and the SC's response	
Anonymity of buyers	The scheme provides anonymity, but ensures that everything happens only through banking channels
Corporate houses can finance political parties	Anyone buying bonds will have to fulfil KYC norms. The money spent will reflect in the expense sheets of a company
Foreign corporate houses can buy bonds and influence electoral politics	Bonds can be purchased only by a person who is a citizen of India or incorporated or established in India
Bonds bought with white money can be re-purchased with black money	Bonds are not tradeable

The Supreme Court on Friday refused to stay the sale of electoral bonds.

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Q.18) Which of the following is/are objective(s) under the **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)**?

1. Achieve 20% to 30% reduction in Particulate Matter concentrations by 2024 keeping 2017 as the base year.
2. To achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

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: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)** as a long-term, time-bound, national level strategy to tackle the air pollution problem across the country in a comprehensive manner with targets to achieve 20% to 30% reduction in Particulate Matter concentrations by 2024 keeping 2017 as the base year for the comparison of concentration.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed recently by representatives of State Pollution Control Boards, Urban Local Bodies and Institutes of Repute for 132 identified cities for implementation of city specific action plans under NCAP.

Statement 2 is incorrect. India has so far **not declared its emissions peaking year** nor has it declared the target year for net-zero emissions.

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) released a report 'Peaking And Net-Zero For India's Energy Sector CO₂ Emissions: An Analytical Exposition' stating that earliest scenario would see India's emissions peaking in 2030 and reaching net zero in 2050.

Q.19) Which of the following State(s) have withdrawn **General Consent granted to Delhi Special Police Establishment (CBI)**?

1. Mizoram
2. Madhya Pradesh
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: C

Explanation: Investigation can be initiated by CBI into FIRs registered/filed with local Police with the **consent of the State Government** concerned and after due notification by the Central Government extending powers and jurisdiction of the officers of CBI to areas in the State concerned. Further, Investigation may be initiated by CBI on the specific directions of a Constitutional Court.

The following States have withdrawn General Consent under section 6 of **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act (DSPE Act), 1946**, previously granted to DSPE (CBI):

Mizoram (2015), West Bengal (2018), Chhattisgarh (2019), Rajasthan (2020), Maharashtra (2020), Kerala (2020), Jharkhand (2020), Punjab (2020).

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Q.20) What is the objective of recently launched **SAAMAR campaign of Jharkhand**?

- a) To tackle malnutrition in the state
- b) Social security benefits for labors employed in mining sector
- c) Promotion of local arts and crafts
- d) Conservation of water resources

Correct answer: A

Explanation: The Jharkhand government recently announced the launch of **SAAMAR (Strategic Action for Alleviation of Malnutrition and Anemia Reduction) campaign** to tackle malnutrition in the state.

The campaign aims to identify anemic women and malnourished children and converge various departments to effectively deal with the problem.

It has been launched with a 1000 days target. Under this annual survey will be conducted to track the progress.

Every Anganwadi Centres will be engaged to identify malnourished children. Subsequently, they will be treated at the Malnutrition Treatment Centres.

Q.21) The Ministry of Defence (MoD) recently signed a contract for purchase **Light Specialist Vehicles** to the Indian Army with which of the following organisation/company?

- a) Defence Research and Development Organisation
- b) Mahindra Defence Systems Ltd
- c) Bharat Forge
- d) Reliance Defence

Correct answer: B

Explanation: Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a contract with Mahindra Defence Systems Ltd (MDSL) for supply of 1,300 Light Specialist Vehicles to the Indian Army, at a cost of Rs 1,056 crore, on March 22, 2021. The induction of vehicles is planned to be completed in four years.

The **Light Specialist Vehicle** is a modern fighting vehicle and will be authorised to various fighting units for carriage of Medium Machine Guns, Automatic Grenade Launchers as well as Anti-tank Guided Missiles.

The Light Specialist Vehicle is indigenously designed and developed by MDSL. These combat vehicles are extremely agile with all round protection against small arms fire and will assist small independent detachments which are required to operate this weapon platform in the operational area.

The defence ministry placed an emergency order for Kalyani M4 armoured vehicles earlier this year. The M4 is built in partnership with a South African defence equipment manufacturer – Paramount Group.

Q.22) Consider the following statements regarding the **Safe City Projects**:

1. These have been sanctioned under the Nirbhaya Fund scheme.
2. These projects involve identification of hot spots for crimes against women.

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: Safe City Projects have been sanctioned by the Ministry of Home Affairs under the **Nirbhaya Fund scheme** in 8 cities (Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow & Mumbai).

These projects involve identification of hot spots for crimes against women and deployment of various components including infrastructure, technology adoption, and capacity building in community through awareness programmes. The project implementation is regularly reviewed by the State Level Apex Committee.

Q.23) Consider the following statements regarding the '**Buldhana Pattern**' for Water Conservation:

1. It eliminates the need of desiltation/ deepening of water bodies.
 2. The pattern envisages convergence of infrastructure creation with water conservation works.
- 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: Buldhana pattern relates to synchronization of national highway construction and water conservation. (Statement 2 is correct)

NITI Aayog has prepared draft guidelines for convergence of the activities of **(i) sourcing earth for improvement/construction of national highways, state roads and railways and (ii) water conservation works through desiltation/ deepening of water bodies** (Statement 1 is incorrect). This two-fold activity has already been successfully implemented as a pilot project in the Buldhana district of Maharashtra state. Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India has also issued a letter to all States/UTs and project/construction agencies in 2017 conveying that contractors/construction agencies responsible for construction of National Highways should excavate the earth as per their project requirements from such identified water bodies/areas at no cost to the village panchayats/ rural development departments/water conservation departments and transport the same to their project sites.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/ORGANISATIONS

Q.1) Consider the following statements:

1. Indo-Nepal border is open border with visa free regime.
2. Indo-Myanmar border is an open border with free movement regime (FMR) within 200 kms on both sides of the border.

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. **Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan** borders are open borders with visa free regime.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **India and Myanmar** have an arrangement called Free Movement Regime (FMR), which allows locals on both sides to go upto **16 km across the other side** and stay up to 14 days.

India sealed all entry points along the border with following the February 1 coup when the Myanmar military overthrew the democratically elected government.

Q.2) The **PovcalNet database** is an initiative of which of the following institution?

- a) World Bank
- b) International Monetary Fund
- c) United Nations Population Fund
- d) World Food Programme

Correct answer: A

Explanation: PovcalNet was developed by staff of the World Bank's Development Research Group to allow users to replicate the calculations made by the **World Bank's** researchers.

PovcalNet also allows you to calculate the poverty measures under different assumptions and to assemble the estimates using alternative economy groupings or for any set of individual economies of the user's choosing.

A new study by the Pew Research Center based on an analysis of the World Bank's PovcalNet database estimates that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionately deleterious impact on living standards in India and China in 2020, with the sharp economic contraction in the former pushing as many as 7.5 crore people into the ranks of the poor.

Q.3) Consider the following statements:

1. The UN General Assembly proclaimed the 2018-2028 as the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development".
2. The theme of World Water Day 2021 is 'Valuing Water'.

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. In order to accelerate initiatives aimed at addressing the challenges related to water resources, the General Assembly proclaimed the **2018-2028 as the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”**.

Statement 2 is correct. World Water Day, held on **22 March** every year since 1993, focuses on the importance of freshwater. The idea for this international day goes back to 1992, the year in which the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro took place. That same year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution by which 22 March of each year was declared World Day for Water, to be observed starting in 1993.

The theme of World Water Day 2021 is **valuing water**.

Q.4) What is the Kafala system?

- a) A framework defining the relationship between migrant workers and their employers
- b) A system of granting citizenship to refugees
- c) An agricultural system exclusive to middle east countries
- d) An intergovernmental extradition arrangement

Correct answer: A

Explanation: The **kafala, or sponsorship, system** defines the relationship between foreign workers and their local sponsor, or kafeel, which is usually their employer. It is found in the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** countries—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates—as well as Jordan and Lebanon.

Under this system, the state gives local individuals or companies sponsorship permits to employ foreign laborers. It was created to supply cheap, plentiful labor in an era of booming economic growth, and its defenders argue that it benefits local businesses and helps drive development.

The system has become increasingly controversial, and there is growing recognition that it is rife with exploitation. The lack of regulations and protections for migrant workers’ rights often results in low wages, poor working conditions, and employee abuse.

Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding the Indus Waters Treaty:

- 1. It was signed after the Simla Agreement on Bilateral Relations between India and Pakistan, 1972.
- 2. Under the treaty the waters of Sutlej, Ravi and Beas were allocated to India for use.

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 **Indus Waters Treaty** was signed between India and Pakistan in September 1960 in Karachi by the then Indian Prime **Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistan President Ayub Khan**.

Statement 2 is correct. Under the treaty signed between India and Pakistan in 1960, all the waters of the three eastern rivers- Sutlej, Ravi and Beas, averaging around 33 million acre-feet (MAF), were allocated to India for exclusive use.

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The waters of the **western rivers - Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab** - averaging to around 135 MAF, were allocated to Pakistan except for 'specified domestic, non-consumptive and agricultural use permitted to India'.

Q.6) The **World Water Development Report (WWDR)** is a flagship report of which of the following institution?

- a) World Health Organization
- b) UN-Water
- c) Global Water Challenge
- d) Stockholm International Water Institute

Correct answer: B

Explanation: The **United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR)** is **UN-Water's flagship report** on water and sanitation issues, focusing on a different theme each year. Launched in conjunction with World Water Day, the report is published by UNESCO, on behalf of UN-Water and its production is coordinated by the UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme.

The 2021 edition of the United Nations World Water Development Report (UN WWDR 2021) entitled 'Valuing Water' has been released recently.

Q.7) Which of the following agreements have been signed between **India and USA**?

- 1. Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement
- 2. Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement
- 3. Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement

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 three agreements — **Logistics Support Agreement (LSA)**, **Communications Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA)** and **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA)** are referred to as the foundational agreements which the U.S. signs with countries with which it has close military ties.

-- **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)**, is a tweaked India-specific version of the Logistics Support Agreement (LSA) and gives access, to both countries, to designated military facilities on either side for the purpose of refuelling and replenishment. It was signed in 2016.

-- **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)** is an India-specific version of the Communication and Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) that allows India to procure transfer specialised equipment for encrypted communications for US origin military platforms like the C-17, C-130 and P-8Is. It was signed in 2018.

-- **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA)** signed in 2020 will help India get real-time access to American geospatial intelligence that will enhance the accuracy of automated systems and weapons like missiles and armed drones. Through the sharing of

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information on maps and satellite images, it will help India access topographical and aeronautical data, and advanced products that will aid in navigation and targeting.

Q.8) Consider the following statements regarding the **Permanent Indus Commission**:

1. It has members from India, China and Pakistan.
2. It is mandated to meet regularly at least once a year.

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. As per the **Indus Water Treaty**, India and Pakistan shall each create a permanent post of Commissioner for Indus Waters, and shall appoint to this post, as often as a vacancy occurs, a person who should ordinarily be a high-ranking engineer competent in the field of hydrology and water-use.

The two Commissioners shall together form the Permanent Indus Commission.

Statement 2 is correct. The treaty mandates that the Commission shall **meet regularly at least once a year, alternately in India and Pakistan**. The Commission shall also meet when requested by either Commissioner.

The meeting was last held in Lahore, Pakistan, in August 2018. Since then, relations between the two neighbours have witnessed a series of setbacks — Pulwama attack (February 14, 2019), Balakot air strike (February 26, 2019) and the abrogation of the special status to J&K.

The Commission recently met in New Delhi to resolve a host of outstanding issues under the Indus Waters Treaty, including Pakistan's objections to the design of Indian hydropower projects on the Chenab river.

Q.9) Consider the following statements regarding the **United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)**:

1. The Council is made of all the Member States of the United Nations.
2. The Universal Periodic Review under the auspices of the UNHRC is a State-driven process to review of the human rights records of all UN Member States.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct answer: B

Explanation: The **Human Rights Council** is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the UN Office at Geneva.

Statement 1 is incorrect. The Council is made of **47 Member States**, which are **elected by the majority of members of the General Assembly** of the United Nations through direct and secret ballot.

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Statement 2 is correct. The **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all UN Member States. The UPR is a State-driven process, under the auspices of the Human Rights Council, which provides the opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations.

Q.10) Which of the following intellectual property(s) is/are covered under the **WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)**?

1. Geographical indications
2. Industrial designs
3. Integrated circuit layout-designs

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 **WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)** is the most comprehensive multilateral agreement on intellectual property (IP). It plays a central role in facilitating trade in knowledge and creativity, in resolving trade disputes over IP, and in assuring WTO members the latitude to achieve their domestic policy objectives.

The TRIPS Agreement sets minimum standards of protection for copyrights and related rights, trademarks, geographical indications (GIs), industrial designs, patents, integrated circuit layout designs, and undisclosed information.

The **TRIPS Council** monitors implementation of the TRIPS Agreement, provides a forum in which WTO Members can consult on intellectual property matters, and carries out the specific responsibilities assigned to the Council in the TRIPS Agreement.

India and South Africa have submitted a proposal for waiver from certain provisions of the Trade Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement for the prevention, treatment and containment of COVID-19, to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) TRIPS Council.

Q.11) Consider the following statements:

1. India shares its longest land border with Bangladesh.
2. Feni Bridge connects India to Bangladesh.
3. Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia.

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: Statement 1 is correct. India has 15,106 kilometers of land borders and a coastline of about 7,516 kilometers of which **maximum of 4,096.7km is along Bangladesh border**. Only 5 out of 29 Indian states have no international border or coastal line. Those long

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borders are shared with seven countries — China, Pakistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Statement 2 is correct. **Feni Bridge (Maitree Setu)** connecting Subroom (Tripura) and Ramgarh (Bangladesh) was jointly inaugurated on virtual platform by both the Prime Ministers on 09 March 2021.

Statement 3 is correct. **Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia.** Bilateral trade between India and Bangladesh has grown steadily over the last decade and the exports of Bangladesh have tripled over the last decade to cross \$1 bn in 2018-19. In the FY 2019-20, India's exports to Bangladesh were \$8.2 bn and imports were \$1.26 bn.

Q.12) Which of the following event(s) led to the **Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971**?

1. Pak Army launched 'Operation Searchlight'
2. The Awami League wins an overwhelming election victory in East Pakistan.
3. Assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

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: Events leading upto the 1971 Bangladesh liberation war:

--In 1970 the Awami League wins an overwhelming election victory in East Pakistan. The government in West Pakistan refuses to recognise the results, leading to rioting.

--Awami League launched non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement after **General Elections of December 1970**

--On 25 March 1971 Pak Army launched '**Operation Searchlight**' to quell the autonomy movement committing atrocities against unarmed Bengalis

--Millions of refugees from East Pakistan took shelter in India and Mukti Bahini stepped up guerilla warfare.

--Pakistan Air Force carried out pre-emptive air strikes on five Indian airfields on 03 December 1971 starting a full-scale war.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated in a military coup in August, 1975.

Q.13) Consider the following statements regarding **India-USA trade relations**:

1. India has been removed from the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) of USA.
2. India has an overall goods and services trade deficit with USA.

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 **Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)** provides nonreciprocal, duty-free tariff treatment to certain products imported from qualifying developing countries. Effective June 2019, President Donald Trump removed India from GSP, a

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U.S. trade and development program, for failure to provide “equitable and reasonable” market access.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The USA is one of the few countries with which **India has a trade surplus**. U.S. goods and services trade with India totaled an estimated \$146.1 billion in 2019. Exports were \$58.6 billion; imports were \$87.4 billion. The U.S. goods and services trade deficit with India was \$28.8 billion in 2019.

India-USA have agreed to strengthen the India- U.S. Trade Policy Forum (TPF) and to convene the next Ministerial-level meeting of the forum in 2021.

Q.14) Which of the following institution has published the **International Intellectual Property Index 2021**?

- a) US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre
- b) World Intellectual Property Organization
- c) Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
- d) European Union Intellectual Property Office

Correct answer: A

Explanation: **International Intellectual Property Index** is released annually by the **US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC)**. This is the ninth IP index released by the GIPC.

The Index evaluates Intellectual Property rights in 53 global economies from patent and copyright policies to commercialization of IP assets and ratification of international treaties.

The overall global IP environment improved in 2020, with positive score increasing in 32 of the 53 economies measured by the IP Index. India ranked 40th in 2020, scoring 38.4 out of 100 on a set of 50 intellectual property-related indicators.

Q.15) Which of the following institution(s) is/are organizers of the **World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2021**?

- 1. International Telecommunications Union
- 2. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
- 3. United Nations Development Programme

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 **World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2021** is being **co-organized by ITU, UNESCO, UNDP and UNCTAD**, in close collaboration with all WSIS Action Line Facilitators/Co-Facilitators.

The WSIS has proven to be an efficient mechanism for coordination of multi- stakeholder implementation activities, information exchange, creation of knowledge, sharing of best practices and continues to provide assistance in developing multi-stakeholder and public/private partnerships to advance development goals.

MOS Telecom Shri Sanjay Dhotre represented India at the World Summit on Information Society Forum 2021.

GEOGRAPHY/ENVIRONMENT

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding **House Sparrow**:

1. It is known to specifically avoid staying close to human habitations.
2. It is listed as a Vulnerable species in the IUCN Red List.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct answer: D

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. The **house sparrow** is widespread across the world, inhabiting every continent, except Antarctica, China and Japan. It is native to Eurasia and North Africa, and was introduced to South Africa, North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, Middle East, India and Central Asia, where its population thrived under a variety of environmental and climatic conditions.

It is known to stay close to human habitations, and is therefore among the most commonly found bird species in urban cities.

Statement 2 is incorrect. It is listed as species but with decreasing population trend in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Q.2) The **Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Project** is on which of the following River?

- a) Jhelum River
- b) Ravi River
- c) Sutlej River
- d) Marusudar River

Correct answer: D

Explanation: The **Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Project (1000 MW) is proposed on river Marusudar, a tributary of Chenab river**, located in Kishtwar district of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The project is envisaged as a storage scheme.

Pakistan has in past objected to the construction of this project and is expected to be discussed in the ongoing Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) meeting in New Delhi.

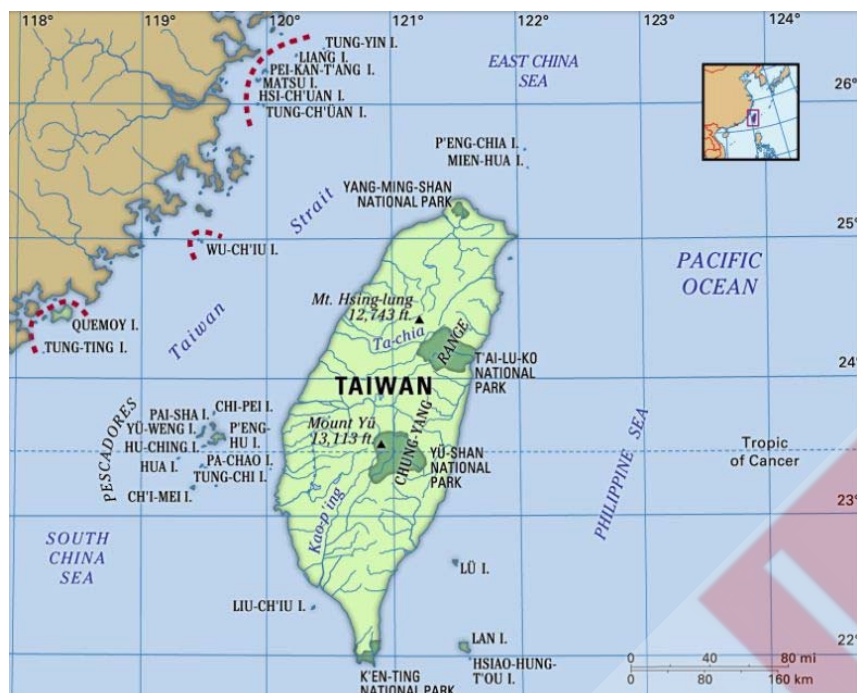
Q.3) The **Formosa Strait** is between:

- a) Taiwan and Philippines
- b) Japan and China
- c) Taiwan and Continental Asia
- d) Iberian Peninsula and Morocco

Correct answer: C

Explanation: The **Taiwan Strait, also known as the Formosa Strait**, arm of the Pacific Ocean, 100 miles (160 km) wide at its narrowest point, lies between the coast of China's Fukien province and the island of Taiwan (Formosa). The strait extends from southwest to northeast between the South and East China seas.

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The Luzon Strait is the strait between Taiwan and Luzon island of the Philippines.

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding **Madagascar**:

1. It is second largest island in the world.
2. The Rainforests of the Atsinanana is a World Heritage Site in Madagascar.

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. **Madagascar** is a large island nation located in the Indian Ocean east of Africa and the country Mozambique. It is the fourth largest island in the world after Greenland, New Guinea and Borneo; and it is an African country.

Statement 2 is correct. The **Rainforests of the Atsinanana** comprise six national parks distributed along the eastern part of the island. These relict forests are critically important for maintaining ongoing ecological processes necessary for the survival of Madagascar's unique biodiversity, which reflects the island's geological history.

As part of Mission Sagar - IV, Indian Naval Ship Jalashwa arrived at Port Ehoala, Madagascar on 22 March 2021 to deliver a consignment of 1,000 Metric Tonne of rice and 100,000 Hydroxychloroquine tablets in response to an appeal made by Madagascar for assistance to deal with natural calamities.

Q.5) Where is/are the **Cyclone Warning Centres (CWC)** established in India?

1. Thiruvananthapuram
2. Visakhapatnam
3. Ahmedabad

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Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct answer: D

Explanation: Cyclone warnings are provided by the **India Meteorological Department** from the seven Cyclone Warning Centers covering the east & west coasts of our country. Three **Area Cyclone Warning Centres (ACWCs)** are located at Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata and four **Cyclone Warning Centres (CWCs)** at Thiruvananthapuram, Visakhapatnam, Ahmedabad and Bhubaneswar. The responsibility for operational cyclone warning work for the respective area rests with the ACWCs and CWCs.

All the 13 coastal States and Union Territories are benefitted from the services provided by these warning centers.

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding the **Suez Canal**:

- 1. It connects the Mediterranean and Red Seas.
- 2. It divides Egypt from the Sinai Peninsula.
- 2. It has never been closed since it was built.

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: A

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are correct. The **Suez Canal** crosses the Suez isthmus in Egypt. It is about 193km (120 miles) long and incorporates three natural lakes. The Isthmus of Suez is the only land bridge between the African and Asian continents which used to form a single continental mass.

The canal connects the **Mediterranean and Red Seas and divides Egypt from the Sinai Peninsula.**



Statement 3 is incorrect. It was opened for navigation in 1869. Egypt nationalized the canal in July 1956. The Canal was closed few times; the last time was the most serious one when Egypt

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closed down the Suez Canal which trapped fifteen international ships in the canal for more or less eight years. The Canal was then reopened for navigation in June 1975.

Egypt's Suez Canal has been blocked by a large container ship that ran aground while turning in the narrow channel on March 23, 2021.

Q.7) The Carmichael coal mine is located in which of the following country?

- a) Russia
- b) Germany
- c) France
- d) Australia

Correct answer: D

Explanation: The Carmichael coal project, owned and operated by Indian conglomerate Adani, is currently under construction in the Queensland's Galilee Basin- one of the world's largest untouched coal reserves.

The project has been highly controversial, with disputes over its claimed economic benefits, financial viability and environmental damage.



Q.8) Consider the following statements regarding the **Teesta River**:

1. It originates in Nepal and enters India through Sikkim Himalayas.
2. Rangit River is major right bank tributary of the Teesta River.
3. Teesta river ultimately drains into Brahmaputra in Bangladesh.

Which of the statement 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

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Correct answer: B

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. **Teesta river** originates as Chhombu Chhu from a glacial lake Khangchung Chho at an elevation of 5,280 m in the northeastern corner of the **Sikkim**. The glacial lake lies at the snout of the Teesta Khangse glacier descending from Pauhunri peak (7,056 m) in north western direction.

Statement 2 is correct. Major Left bank tributaries: Lachung Chhu, Chakung Chhu, Dik Chhu, Rani Khola, Rangpo Chhu.

Major Right bank tributaries: Zemu Chhu, Rangyong Chhu, **Rangit River**.

Statement 3 is correct. Teesta river ultimately drains into **Brahmaputra** at Teestamukh Ghat in Kamarjani- Bahadurabad in Rangpur district of Bangladesh. Teesta and most of its tributaries are flashy mountain rivers and carry boulders and considerable quantity of sediment.

The flow of the river is highly variable and the reduction in its flow during lean season causes friction between India and Bangladesh. Bangladesh, being the lower riparian, is dependent on upper riparian India for keeping minimum flows in the Teesta river.

Q.9) Consider the following statements:

1. Coal can be imported in India by the consumers themselves considering their needs based on their commercial prudence.
2. India's coking coal import has consistently reduced in last 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 the present Import policy, **coal can be freely imported (under Open General Licence)** by the consumers themselves considering their needs based on their commercial prudence.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **Coking Coal** is being imported by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and other Steel manufacturing units mainly to bridge the gap between the requirement and indigenous availability and to improve the quality. Coke is imported mainly by Pig-Iron manufacturers and Iron & Steel sector consumers using mini-blast furnace. Details of import of coal during the last six years (in Million Tonnes):

Coal	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20(Prov.)*	2020-21(Prov.)*
Coking Coal	44.56	41.64	47.00	51.84	51.83	35.16
Non-Coking Coal	159.39	149.31	161.27	183.40	196.71	121.24
Total Coal Import	203.95	190.95	208.27	235.24	248.54	156.40
Coke	3.07	4.35	4.58	4.93	2.91	NA

*Import upto December, 2020 (Source: DGCI&S and CBIS's website)

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Q.10) Where are **Garo Hills** located?

1. Western margin of Mizoram State
2. West of Shillong Plateau
3. East of Jaintia Hills

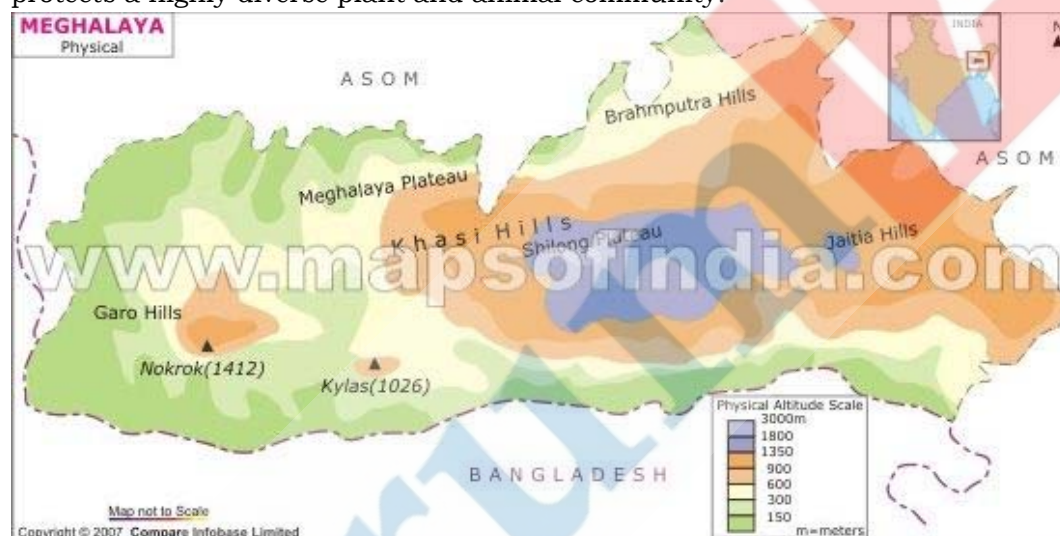
Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct answer: B

Explanation: Garo Hills, in western **Meghalaya state**, comprises the western margin of the Shillong Plateau and rises to a top elevation of about 4,600 feet (1,400 metres). It is much west of the Jaintia Hills, which are in eastern Meghalaya.

The population is mainly Garo. Nokrek National Park, in the western part of the region, protects a highly diverse plant and animal community.



Q.11) The **Matua Community** people are resident of which of the following State in India?

- a) West Bengal
- b) Andhra Pradesh
- c) Rajasthan
- d) Madhya Pradesh

Correct answer: A

Explanation: **Matuas are Namasudras**, a Scheduled Caste group with a large presence in **West Bengal**. Matuas trace their ancestry to East Bengal, and many of them entered West Bengal after Partition and after the formation of Bangladesh. The Matua Mahasangha, a religious reforms movement and a sect, was formed by Harichand Thakur in East Bengal in the mid-1800s.

Prime Minister on his visit to Bangladesh is to meet the descendents of Harichandra Thakur and other Matua community representatives at Orakandi, Bangladesh.

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Q.12) The **Zabarwan Range** is in which of the following State/Union Territory?

- a) Jammu & Kashmir
- b) Arunachal Pradesh
- c) Sikkim
- d) West Bengal

Correct answer: A

Explanation: The **Zabarwan Range** is a short sub-mountain range between Pir Panjal and Great Himalayan Range in the central part of the **Kashmir** Valley.

-- On the northern slopes of the central part of the Zabarwan Range there are three Mughal gardens built by Emperor Shah Jahan. These include Chashma Shahi, Nishat Bagh, and Shalimar Garden alongside the Pari Mahal.

-- The Zabarwan mountain range possesses great Himalayan features with rich wildlife. The Dachigam National Park is the main feature of the range.

-- The highest peak of this range is Mahadev Peak at 13,013 feet.

-- The **tulip garden** is located at the foothills of Zaberwan range with an overview of Dal Lake and is the largest tulip garden in Asia. It was recently opened for visitors at the onset of spring season.

Q.13) The **Tigray region** has been in news recently, where is it?

- a) Sudan
- b) Lebanon
- c) Turkey
- d) Ethiopia

Correct answer: D

Explanation: Tigray is Ethiopia's northernmost region. Bordering Eritrea, it is home to most of the country's estimated 7 million ethnic Tigrayans. The ethnic group, which accounts for about 6% of Ethiopia's population, have had a major influence in national affairs. In November 2020, the regional government — controlled by the Tigray People's Liberation Front, a leftist political party — launched a full-scale siege of a key Ethiopian military base at Sero, using tanks, heavy guns and mortars.



POLITY

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding the Constitutional provisions on **Election Commission of India**:

1. It consist of the Chief Election Commissioner and such number of other Election Commissioners, as the President may from time-to-time fix.
2. The procedure for removal of the Chief Election Commissioner is same as for the President of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. **Article 324(2)** states that the Election Commission shall consist of the Chief Election Commissioner and such number of other Election Commissioners, if any, as the President may from time-to-time fix and the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners shall, subject to the provisions of any law made in that behalf by Parliament, be made by the President.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Article 32(5) states that the Chief Election Commissioner shall not be removed from his office except in like manner and on the like grounds as a **Judge of the Supreme Court** and the conditions of service of the Chief Election Commissioner shall not be varied to his disadvantage after his appointment:

Provided further that any other Election Commissioner or a Regional Commissioner shall not be removed from office except on the recommendation of the Chief Election Commissioner.

Q.2) Consider the following statements:

1. Constitution mandates that an arrested person shall not be denied the right to consult, and to be defended by, a legal practitioner of his choice.
2. Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) provides that an accused is entitled to be accompanied by an advocate of his choice throughout interrogation.

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. **Article 22(1) of the Constitution** provides that no person who is arrested shall be detained in custody without being informed, as soon as may be, of the grounds for such arrest nor shall he be denied the right to consult, and to be defended by, a legal practitioner of his choice.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **Section 41D of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)** states that an accused is entitled to “meet an advocate of his choice during interrogation, though not throughout interrogation”.

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Q.3) Consider the following statements:

1. Parliament is empowered to prescribe the number of Judges constituting the Supreme Court of India.
 2. Judges of the Supreme Court hold office until they attain the age of sixty-five year.
- 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.

Article 124 of the Constitution states that there shall be a *Supreme Court of India consisting of a Chief Justice of India and, until Parliament by law prescribes a larger number, of not more than seven other Judges.*

Parliament last year passed the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill to increase the **number of judges in Supreme Court number from 30 to 33.**

The Judges remain in office until they reach the retirement age — **65 for Supreme Court judges and 62 for high court judges.**

Q.4) Consider the following statements regarding the **Model Code of Conduct** during elections:

1. The Ministers can combine their official visit with electioneering work.
2. There is a ban on the transfer of all officials connected with the conduct of the election without prior approval of Election Commission.

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 **Model Code of Conduct** states that the Ministers shall not combine their official visit with electioneering work and shall not also make use of official machinery or personnel during the electioneering work. No transport including official air-crafts, vehicles etc. shall be used for furtherance of the interest of any party or a candidate. Statement 2 is correct. There shall be a total **ban on the transfer and posting of all officers/officials** directly or indirectly connected with the conduct of the election. If any transfer or posting of an officer is considered necessary, prior approval of the Commission shall be obtained.

Q.5) Who among the following can be appointed as the **Judge of the Supreme Court**?

1. One who has been for three years a Judge of a High Court
2. One who has been for ten years an advocate of a High Court
3. Who is a distinguished jurist in the opinion of the President

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

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

Correct answer: B

Explanation: Article 124(3) of the Constitution provide for eligibility to be appointed as a Judge of Supreme Court, it states that: A person shall not be qualified for appointment as a Judge of the Supreme Court unless he is a citizen of India and

- has been for at least five years a Judge of a High Court or of two or more such Courts in succession; or
- has been for at least ten years an advocate of a High Court or of two or more such Courts in succession; or
- is, in the opinion of the President, a distinguished jurist.

Q.6) Consider the following statements regarding the **Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021:**

1. It empowers the Parliament to make Rules to regulate the procedure and conduct of business in the Delhi Legislative Assembly.
2. It requires the Lieutenant Governor to reserve those Bills for the President which incidentally cover any of the matters outside the purview of the Legislative Assembly.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct answer: B

Explanation: The **Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021** have been passed in both houses of the Parliament recently.

Statement 1 is incorrect. While the original Act allows the Legislative Assembly to make Rules to regulate the procedure and conduct of business in the Assembly. The Bill provides that such **Rules must be consistent with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha.**

Statement 2 is correct. The Act requires the LG to reserve certain Bills passed by the Legislative Assembly for the consideration of the President. These Bills are those: (i) which may diminish the powers of the High Court of Delhi, (ii) which the President may direct to be reserved, (iii) dealing with the salaries and allowances of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and members of the Assembly and the Ministers, or (iv) relating to official languages of the Assembly or the NCT of Delhi.

The Amendment Bill requires the LG to also **reserve those Bills for the President** which incidentally cover any of the matters outside the purview of the powers of the Legislative Assembly.

Q.7) Consider the following statements:

1. Adjournment sine die means termination of the sitting of the House without fixing any definite date for its next sitting.
2. The power to adjourn the House sine die vests exclusively with the President.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only

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

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. The **adjournment of the House** means the suspension of the sitting of the House till the following or some later day or hour of time. **Adjournment sine die** means termination of the sitting of the House without specifying or fixing any definite date for its next sitting.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The power to adjourn the House from time to time or sine die vests in the **Presiding Officer**.

A session is terminated only by prorogation and not by adjournment. The session of the House is terminated by an order called the "Prorogation Order" made by the President under article 85(2) of the Constitution. Usually, prorogation follows the adjournment of the House sine die.

Q.8) Consider the following statements regarding the **Electoral Bonds Scheme**:

1. All Political Parties registered under the Representation of the People Act, 1951 are eligible for benefits under the scheme.
2. The bond is issued to the buyer on non-refundable basis and no interest is payable on these 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: B

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. Only Political Parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 **and secured not less than one per cent of the votes** polled in the last General Election to the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly are eligible to open Current Account for Redemption of Electoral Bonds.

Statement 2 is correct. Once the Electoral Bond is purchased it cannot be cancelled and no amount will be refunded to the Purchaser. Further, **no interest** is given by the banks on these bonds.

Q.9) Consider the following statements:

1. Constitution provides for appointment of additional judges to the High Courts to look after any temporary increase in the business of a High Court.
2. A retired Judge appointed as ad-hoc Judge has all jurisdiction, powers and privileges and is deemed to be a Judge of that High Court.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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Correct answer: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. **Article 224 (1) of the Constitution** provides that if by reason of any temporary increase in the business of a High Court or by reason of arrears of work therein, it appears to the President that the number of the Judges of that Court should be for the time being increased, the President may appoint duly qualified persons to be additional Judges of the Court for such period not exceeding two years as he may specify.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **Article 224A of the Constitution** provides for appointment of retired Judges to sit and act as a Judge of the High Court for that State, and every such person so requested shall, while so sitting and acting, be entitled to such allowances as the President may by order determine and have all the jurisdiction, powers and privileges of, **but shall not otherwise be deemed to be, a Judge of that High Court.**

Q.10) Which of the following is/are ground(s) for **exemption from disclosure** of information provided under the **Right to Information Act, 2005**?

1. Information including commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property
2. If the disclosure of information would cause a breach of privilege of Parliament
3. Information received in confidence from foreign Government

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: Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005 provides for exemption from disclosure of information on certain grounds, which include:

- information, disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State, relation with foreign State or lead to incitement of an offence;
- information which has been expressly forbidden to be published by any court of law
- information, the disclosure of which would cause a breach of privilege of Parliament or the State Legislature;
- information including commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property
- information received in confidence from foreign Government;
- information, the disclosure of which would endanger the life or physical safety of any person
- information which would impede the process of investigation or apprehension or prosecution of offenders;
- cabinet papers including records of deliberations of the Council of Ministers, Secretaries and other officers
- information which relates to personal information the disclosure of which has no relationship to any public activity or interest

Q.11) Consider the following statements regarding the **National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) Bill, 2021**:

1. The shares of NBFID will only be held by Central and State Governments.
2. NBFID will fulfill developmental objectives like facilitating the development of the market for bonds, loans, and derivatives for infrastructure financing.

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: The **National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Bill, 2021** was passed in Parliament recently to establish the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NBFID) as the principal development financial institution (DFIs) for infrastructure financing.

Statement 1 is incorrect. NBFID will be set up as a corporate body with authorised share capital of one lakh crore rupees. **Shares of NBFID** may be held by central government, multilateral institutions, sovereign wealth funds, pension funds, insurers, financial institutions, banks, and any other institution prescribed by the central government.

Statement 2 is correct. NBFID will have both **financial as well as developmental** objectives.

-- Financial objectives will be to directly or indirectly lend, invest, or attract investments for infrastructure projects located entirely or partly in India.

-- Developmental objectives include facilitating the development of the market for bonds, loans, and derivatives for infrastructure financing.

Q.12) Consider the following statements regarding the **Representation of the People Act, 1951**:

1. No person can convene any public meeting in connection with an election within forty-eight hours ending with hour fixed for conclusion of poll.
2. Election Commission can ban the publication of exit polls for period of polling.

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. **Article 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951** explicitly prohibits the public meetings during period of **forty-eight hours ending with hour fixed for conclusion of poll**. No person shall:

-- convene, hold or attend, join or address any public meeting or procession in connection with an election; or

-- display to the public any election matter by means of cinematograph, television or other similar apparatus; or

-- propagate any election matter to the public by holding, or by arranging the holding of, any musical concert or any theatrical performance or any other entertainment or amusement with a view to attracting the members of the public thereto,

in any polling area during the period of **forty-eight hours ending with the fixed for the conclusion of the poll for any election in the polling area**.

Statement 2 is correct. Section 126A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 empowers the Election Commission to put restriction on publication and dissemination of result of exit polls;

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Further, it states that in case of a general election, the period may commence from the beginning of the hours fixed for poll on the first day of poll and continue till half an hour after closing of the poll in all the States and Union territories.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Q.1) Consider the following statements regarding the **Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)**:

1. It works by transmitting millions of polarized photons over a fiber optic cable.
2. It relies on complex mathematical algorithms for secure encryption of transmitted data.

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

Statement 2 is incorrect. The Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology underpins Quantum Communication technology that ensures unconditional data security by virtue of the principles of quantum mechanics, which is not possible with the conventional encryption systems. The **conventional cryptosystems used for data-encryption rely on the complexity of mathematical algorithms**, whereas the security offered by quantum communication is based on the laws of Physics.

For the first time in the country, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully demonstrated free-space Quantum Communication over a distance of 300 m.

Q.2) Which of the following defence equipment is/are manufactured by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**?

1. Sukhoi-30MKI
2. Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH)
3. Pilatus PC-7

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 list of defence equipment manufactured by **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited:**

-- Fighters: Su-30MKI, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, MiG-21/Bison, Jaguar

-- Trainers: Kiran MK I/II, Hawk

-- Transport Aircraft: Do-228, HS-748

-- Helicopters: Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Chetak, Cheetah, Cheetal

HAL is also manufacturing Engines, Communication equipment, Navigation equipment, Display systems, Hydraulic systems, Electric equipment etc., required for aircraft/helicopters.

The Pilatus PC-7 Turbo Trainer is a low-wing tandem-seat training aircraft designed and manufactured by Pilatus Aircraft of Switzerland.

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Q.3) Consider the following statements regarding **Reverse Osmosis (RO)**:

1. RO membrane allows the passage of water molecules but not the majority of dissolved salts, organics, bacteria and pyrogens.
2. Reverse Osmosis occurs naturally without energy required to push water through membrane.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

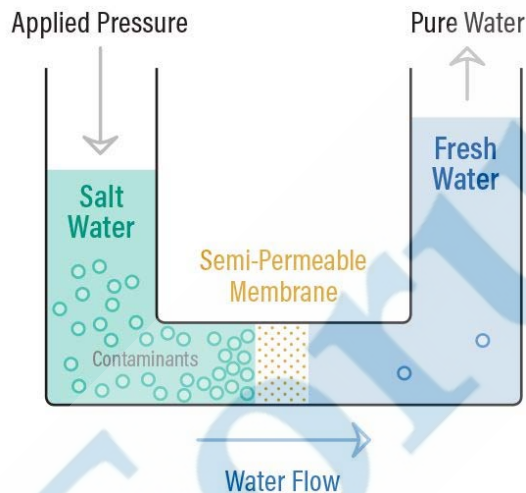
- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Statement 1 is correct. A **reverse osmosis membrane** is a semi-permeable membrane that allows the passage of water molecules but not the majority of dissolved salts, organics, bacteria and pyrogens.

Statement 2 is incorrect. **Osmosis** is a naturally occurring phenomenon and one of the most important processes in nature. It is a process where a weaker saline solution will tend to migrate to a strong saline solution. Whereas Osmosis occurs naturally without energy required, to reverse the process of osmosis one needs to apply energy to the more saline solution.

Reverse Osmosis



Q.4) Which of the **SARS-COV-2 mutant variation** have been found in **India** so far?

1. 501Y.V1
2. 501Y.V3
3. CAL.20C

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: A

Explanation: Multiple SARS-CoV-2 variants are circulating globally. Several new variants emerged in the fall of 2020, of which **UK, South Africa and Brazil variants have been found in India so far.**

MUTANT MENACE

Variants of concern

Variant name	Detected in India	Samples*	Status
501Y.V1 (UK)	✓	6.82%	Emerged in Britain in December and possibly 50% more transmissible
501Y.V2 (SA)	✓	0.32%	Emerged in South Africa in December. Shown to reduce efficacy in vaccines.
501Y.V3 (Brazil)	✓	0.01%	Emerged in Brazil in late 2020. Mutations similar to 501Y.V2 and can escape immunity
CAL.20C (US)	✗		Common in California and about 20% more infectious. Carries the L452R mutation.

*Among 10,787 samples from covid-19 positive international travellers tested over the past 6-8 months.

Source: NYT coronavirus variant tracker, PIB

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Q.5) Consider the following statements regarding the **NISAR mission**:

1. It is a joint collaboration mission between NASA and ISRO.
2. It is designed to observe and take measurements of Earth's most complex processes like ecosystem disturbances, ice-sheet collapse, and natural hazards.

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 **NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) Mission** will measure Earth's changing ecosystems, dynamic surfaces, and ice masses providing information about biomass, natural hazards, sea level rise, and groundwater, and will support a host of other applications.

The satellite will be launched in 2022 from the Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota, India, into a near-polar orbit. NISAR will observe Earth's land and ice-covered surfaces globally with 12-day regularity on ascending and descending passes, sampling Earth on average every 6 days for a baseline 3-year mission.

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Q.6) What is **Parosmia**?

- a) Loss of taste
- b) Loss of Skin sensation
- c) Loss of three-dimensional vision
- d) Distortions in the sense of smell

Correct answer: D

Explanation: Parosmia is a medical term. It describes a condition in which affected individuals experience distortions in the sense of smell. A person with parosmia is able to detect certain odours. But they might experience the smell of certain things as different and often unpleasant. People who are recovering their sense of smell following a loss from a virus or an injury typically experience parosmia.

Ageusia is a condition, characterized by a complete loss of taste function of the tongue.

Anosmia is the partial or complete loss of the sense of smell. This loss may be temporary or permanent.

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ART/CULTURE

Q.1) The **Shigmo Festival** is celebrated in which of the following State?

- a) Goa
- b) Kerala
- c) Odisha
- d) Haryana

Correct answer: A

Explanation: Shigmo is one of the most celebrated festivals in the Indian state of **Goa**. It is a festival of colors, dance, music, and well-lit colorful float parades. The festival is the celebration of a rich, golden harvest of paddy by the tribal communities of Goa.

There are two variants to Shigmo festival; DhaktoShigmo (small Shigmo) and VhadloShigmo (big Shigmo). The small Shigmo or the DhaktoShigmo is generally celebrated by the farmers, labour class and the rural population; whereas the VhadloShigmo is celebrated on a major scale and everyone takes part in the same.