

ForumIAS

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Prelims Marathon

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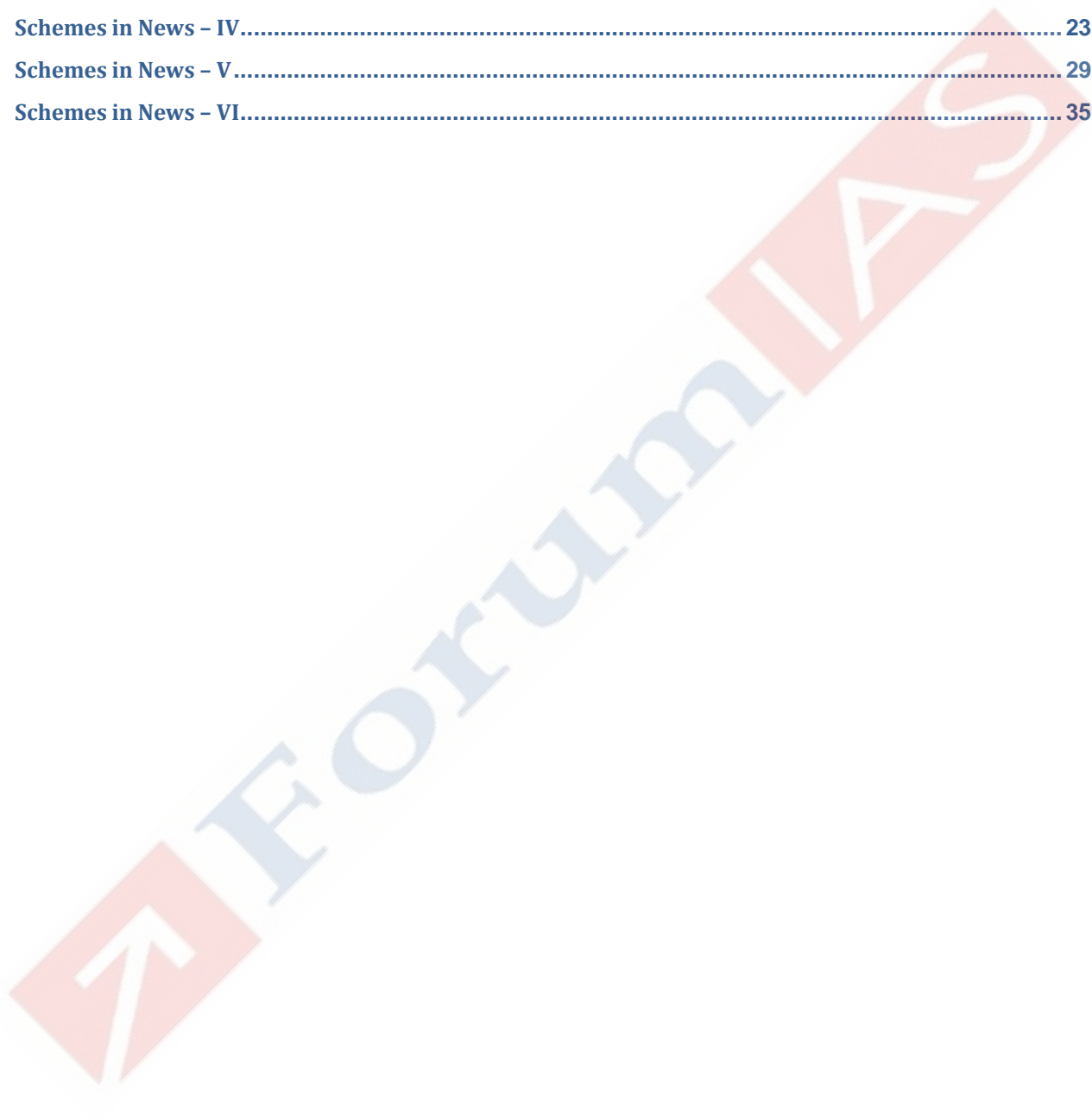
*HISTORY
ECONOMICS
POLITY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT*

FORUMIAS



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Schemes in News - I

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Prime Minister Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme:

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
2. The loan structure offers a collateral-free first tranche working capital loan up to ₹50,000.
3. The geographic coverage of the scheme is strictly restricted to street vendors operating within statutory towns.
4. The framework includes an interest subsidy of 7% per annum on timely or early repayment of the loan.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 4 are correct:** PM SVANidhi was introduced as a Central Sector Scheme under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to provide collateral-free working capital loans to street vendors. It incentivizes credit discipline with a 7% per annum interest subsidy on timely repayments and offers cashback incentives up to ₹1,600 annually for digital transactions. Its operational period has been extended until March 31, 2030.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Under the enhanced guidelines, the collateral-free loan amounts are scaled progressively across three tranches: the 1st tranche is ₹15,000 (up from ₹10,000), the 2nd tranche is ₹25,000 (up from ₹20,000), and only the 3rd tranche allows up to ₹50,000.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The spatial applicability has been expanded beyond statutory towns to explicitly include vendors in census towns and peri-urban/rural areas, removing the strict urban constraint.

2. Consider the following statements regarding the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS):

1. It is a flagship initiative implemented by the Meity and Ministry of Heavy Industries to promote domestic manufacturing.
2. The scheme utilizes a total financial outlay of ₹22,919 crore approved by the Union Cabinet in 2024.
3. The incentive structure provides a turnover-linked incentive for 6 years and a capital expenditure (capex) incentive for 5 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 2 and 3 are correct:** Approved in 2024 with a total financial allocation of ₹22,919 crore, ECMS addresses cost disabilities via hybrid fiscal mechanisms. It provides a turnover-linked incentive spanning 6 years (inclusive of a 1-year gestation window) and a capital expenditure (capex) incentive

for 5 years. It targets critical components like Printed Circuit Boards (PCBs), Camera Modules, and Copper-Clad Laminates to reduce import reliance.

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) alone.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the Scheme SITAA:

1. It is an innovation-driven collaboration program launched by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).
2. It operates under the statutory administration of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. The scheme focuses on R&D in biometric, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and cybersecurity solutions.
4. It includes dedicated innovation challenges for Face Liveness Detection and Presentation Attack Detection (PAD).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1, 3, and 4 are correct:** SITAA is a specialized collaboration initiative launched by UIDAI to unite startups, academia, and industry partners to counter deepfakes and spoofing threats. It leverages three specific innovation challenges: Face Liveness Detection, Presentation Attack Detection (PAD), and Contactless Fingerprint Authentication through everyday mobile devices to reinforce digital public infrastructure.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** UIDAI and its associated developmental innovations operate under the administrative domain of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

4. Consider the following statements regarding the Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) Scheme:

1. It functions as a flagship financial incentive component under the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
2. The program is jointly implemented by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG).
3. The allocated financial outlay under the SIGHT scheme is set at a fixed sum of ₹5,000 crore out of the total mission budget.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 2 are correct:** The SIGHT scheme is a major market-catalyzing component under the National Green Hydrogen Mission, implemented through joint efforts by MNRE and MoPNG. It features multiple bidding avenues (Modes 1, 2A, and 2B) utilizing reverse auctions executed by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and Oil Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) to make green hydrogen cost-competitive with fossil fuels.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The scheme commands a massive share of the clean energy transition budget, with an allocation of ₹17,490 crore out of the total ₹19,744 crore earmarked for the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

5. Consider the following statements regarding the Apna Ghar Initiative:

1. It is a highway-based resting infrastructure scheme for truck drivers launched in 2025 by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
2. The infrastructure centers are built, operated, and managed at fuel retail stations by Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).

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)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Apna Ghar program addresses commercial vehicle driver fatigue and highway safety by providing operational rest houses equipped with beds, clean toilets, bathing areas (Houdas), dining spaces, and purified drinking water. These facilities are deployed and managed at fuel retail outlets on national and state highways by public sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs). It includes the 'Apna Ghar' mobile application for bookings and feedback analytics.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The initiative was launched under the administrative control of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB) Awards:

1. The awards are instituted by the Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation under the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
2. The initiative operates as a component under the urban-centric Amrut 2.0 mission to eliminate rural water storage structures.
3. The evaluation parameters focus on public-private community participation guided by the 3Cs mantra: Community, CSR, and Cost.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 3 are correct:** Originally rooted in water management frameworks established in 2018, the community-driven JSJB awards recognize outstanding grassroots water stewardship under the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign. It prioritizes the 3Cs strategy (Community, CSR, and Cost) to construct and maintain artificial recharge and storage assets, encouraging districts to set up targeted water structures.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Far from eliminating rural structures or being restricted to urban pockets, the initiative promotes nationwide water security by collaborating with both rural panchayats and urban local bodies to fund groundwater recharge grids.

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Cohort Connect 2025 platform:

1. It is a nationwide scientific initiative launched under the Phenome India program by the Ministry of Science & Technology.
2. The primary aim of the platform is the immediate eradication of vectors responsible for acute tropical malaria transmission in urban slums.
3. The initiative aggregates India's major longitudinal cohort studies to explore genetic, lifestyle, and environmental influences on non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 3 are correct:** Launched at CSIR-IMMT Bhubaneswar, Cohort Connect 2025 is a nationwide scientific coordination body under the Ministry of Science & Technology. It brings together major longitudinal health studies to build a comprehensive genetic and clinical dataset tailored to India's population diversity. This supports precision medicine, disease prediction, and therapeutic mapping for metabolic and chronic conditions (such as diabetes, cancer, and the diabetes-TB co-infection link).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The platform is focused on chronic, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and long-term population health patterns through advanced genomic sequencing, not immediate vector eradication or urban pest control campaigns.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the Market Access Support (MAS) Intervention:

1. It is implemented as an operational sub-scheme under the NIRYAT DISHA component of the Export Promotion Mission (EPM).
2. The program is administered by the Ministry of MSME, Ministry of MSME and Ministry of External Affairs.
3. The framework mandates a strict minimum of 35% participation from Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in supported international trade events.
4. The initiative offers partial airfare assistance specifically for exporters whose business turnover does not exceed ₹75 lakh.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1, 3, and 4 are correct:** The MAS Intervention provides financial and institutional backing to expand global footprint opportunities for Indian exporters. It offers rolling calendars for trade fairs, data-driven outcome tracking via trade.gov.in, and specific financial rationalization caps. This includes airfare support for small businesses and a mandatory 35% minimum reservation for MSMEs to ensure inclusion.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The intervention is jointly implemented by the Department of Commerce (Ministry of Commerce and Industry), the Ministry of MSME, and the Ministry of Finance.

9. Consider the following statements with regard to the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY):

1. It provides auto-renewable, one-year term life insurance coverage of ₹2 lakh payable on death resulting from any cause.
2. The scheme is open to all individual bank or post office account holders within the specific age bracket of 18 to 70 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)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statement 1 is correct:** PMJJBY is one of the three flagship Jan Suraksha schemes providing low-cost insurance. It offers a ₹2 lakh term life insurance payout for death due to any cause, operating on a fixed annual cycle from June 1 to May 31 with a premium of ₹436 per annum, implemented via life insurers and banking partners.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The eligible age window for PMJJBY is strictly 18 to 50 years (with risk cover extending up to 55 years subject to regular premium payouts). The 18 to 70 age bracket applies to its accident insurance counterpart, the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).

10. Consider the following statements regarding the ADEETIE:

1. It is a clean energy adoption initiative launched by the Union Ministry of Power.
2. The field implementation of the technological framework is executed by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).
3. The financial mechanism relies on a fixed interest subvention of 15% across all large-scale multinational conglomerates.
4. The initiative utilizes a cluster-based rollout model targeting identified industrial clusters across successive phases.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1, 2, and 4 are correct:** The ADEETIE scheme scales up low-carbon industrial growth over a multi-year budget layout (FY 2025–26 to FY 2027–28). Implemented by BEE, it provides technical handholding like investment-grade energy audits (IGEA) and digital monitoring portals. It deploys its solutions through an organized cluster-based strategy, beginning with Phase I (60 clusters) and expanding into Phase II (100 additional clusters).

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The fiscal interest subvention is designed to support smaller enterprises, offering a 5% subvention for Micro and Small Enterprises and 3% for Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), rather than a 15% rate for large multinational corporations.

Schemes in News - II

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Khelo India ASMITA initiative:

1. It functions as a dedicated sports program under the nodal administration of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
2. The inaugural edition of the initiative featured a competitive football league launched in Jalgaon, Maharashtra during the 2025–26 cycle.
3. The core operational mandate of the program targets elite, senior international women athletes preparing for Olympic qualification tournaments.
4. The initiative is structured to foster social inclusion by identifying and nurturing grassroots talent from rural, tribal, and minority backgrounds.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 2 and 4 are correct:** The Khelo India ASMITA initiative was introduced during the 2025–26 cycle with its inaugural competitive football league hosted in Jalgaon, Maharashtra. It explicitly incorporates affirmative action to build an inclusive sports network, targeting underserved communities such as tribal, rural, and minority populations to address historical gender imbalances in athletics.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The initiative is administered under the nodal jurisdiction of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, with active operational support from the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and respective national sports federations.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The scheme does not target elite senior international competitors. Instead, its specific mandate is focused on grassroots talent development, explicitly targeting young girls aged 13 and under, including first-time and hidden regional players.

2. Consider the following statements regarding the UMEED platform:

1. It is a centralized digital repository introduced by the Ministry of Minority Affairs to manage, verify, and regulate Waqf properties across India.
2. Any unregistered properties remaining after a mandatory 6-month deadline are automatically transferred to the Ministry of Culture for commercial auction.
3. The newly integrated digital application module for the Waqf-alal-aulad endowment relies on biometric verification to manage DBT to beneficiaries.

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) 1, 2 and 3

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 3 are correct:** The UMEED portal is a centralized digital solution managed by the Ministry of Minority Affairs alongside State Waqf Boards. To streamline the special category of Waqf-alal-aulad endowments—which support widows, divorced women, and orphans—the platform integrates a tracking module featuring secure beneficiary authentication and an online approval framework to enable seamless Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) into checked bank accounts.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** If a Waqf property remains unregistered after the mandatory 6-month window, the statutory guidelines state that the property is declared a disputed asset and referred directly to the designated Waqf Tribunal for judicial resolution, rather than being routed to the Ministry of Culture for asset auctions.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the Panchayat Assistance and Messaging Chatbot (PANCHAM):

1. It is a WhatsApp-based AI digital companion developed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in collaboration with UNICEF.
2. The operational framework requires users to download a mobile application to access information.
3. Backed by the AI-powered BHASHINI translation engine, the tool possesses a multilingual communication capability across 22 official Indian languages.
4. The system relies entirely on text-based queries, prohibiting any voice-note interactions due to audio security restrictions.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 3 are correct:** PANCHAM is an AI tool launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in knowledge partnership with UNICEF. It links village decision-makers directly with central databases. By using the national AI-powered BHASHINI translation engine, it supports real-time interaction across 22 official regional languages to promote information access at the grassroots level.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** PANCHAM integrates directly into the existing WhatsApp platform. Village representatives simply scan a QR code or save the official number to operate the tool, eliminating the need to install standalone, high-storage mobile applications.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** To bridge literacy barriers, the tool supports voice-based inputs and outputs. Users can submit verbal voice notes in their regional dialects, and the chatbot processes the query to return an acoustic response alongside small educational video modules.

4. Consider the following statements with regard to the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA):

1. It is a targeted, nationwide substance-demand reduction campaign administered under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
2. The institutional rollout focuses on high-risk zones, utilizing an index of 272 vulnerable districts mapped through national surveys and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) data.

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)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The NMBA campaign focuses its mass mobilization strategies on 272 high-risk vulnerable districts across India, identified via data-driven metrics compiled through nationwide drug mapping and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) analytics.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The NMBA initiative is administered under the nodal oversight of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE), which manages demand reduction, public sensitization, and rehabilitation, while collaborating with the Ministry of Home Affairs (NCB) for supply reduction and the Health Department for clinical detoxification treatments.

5. Consider the following statements with regard to the features of the Sanchar Saathi application ecosystem:

1. It is an integrated citizen-centric telecom security platform developed by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
2. The platform features the Chakshu module, which enables real-time reporting of fraudulent connections, fake KYC alerts, and suspicious communication links.

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)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 2 are correct:** Sanchar Saathi is a digital citizen protection ecosystem launched by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT). Its tools allow mobile users to audit the number of active connections tied to their identities, report unauthorized connections, block lost or stolen mobile equipment using IMEI locks, and track international spoofing calls masked as domestic lines. Its specialized Chakshu sub-tool acts as a reporting gateway for users to flag incoming phishing attempts, false KYC updation threats, and malicious application download files.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Haat on Wheels initiative:

1. It is a mobile, retail direct-to-consumer platform introduced to promote indigenous handloom heritage across urban zones.
2. The administrative execution of the campaign is overseen by the Ministry of MSME in collaboration with the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).

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)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Haat on Wheels initiative is an urban-facing mobile commerce platform built around the theme "My Handloom, My Pride; My Product, My Pride". It utilizes a direct-to-consumer fleet of customized mobile vans traveling through commercial corridors to showcase and market over 116 regional weaves from different parts of India, linking weavers directly with customers.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The initiative is administered under the Ministry of Textiles, and implemented in institutional partnership with the National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC), not the Ministry of MSME or KVIC.

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY):

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme designed to establish all-weather road connectivity to eligible unconnected rural habitations.
2. The initiative completed 25 years of operational deployment in December 2025.
3. The latest iteration, PMGSY-IV (2024–29), focuses on providing road access to 25,000 eligible habitations via 62,500 km of new or upgraded links.
4. The program's quality verification model relies on a strict, internal single-tier departmental check to prevent third-party independent audits.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 2 and 3 are correct:** PMGSY reached its 25-year milestone in December 2025, since its launch on December 25, 2000. The updated PMGSY-IV block (2024–29) plans to extend road layouts by 62,500 km to connect approximately 25,000 remote rural habitations. The scheme incorporates green building technologies, including the use of fly ash, waste plastic geotextiles, and bio-bitumen.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** PMGSY is structurally configured as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, where project construction costs are shared between the Central Government and State Governments, rather than being an entirely funded Central Sector Scheme.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** To ensure long-term durability and structural standards, the program features an institutionalized three-tier quality monitoring architecture. This setup combines regular checks by local executing agencies, secondary audits by State Quality Monitors (SQM), and independent field validations by National Quality Monitors (NQM).

8. Consider the following statements regarding the Prime Minister's Scheme for Empowerment through Technology Upgradation (PM-SETU):

1. It is a flagship initiative managed by the Ministry of MSDE to modernize Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).
2. The financial layout of the scheme requires the Central Government to bear 100% of the expenditure, with state budgets completely exempt from any funding liabilities.
3. The operational infrastructure uses a Hub-and-Spoke framework, configuring 200 hub ITIs that are each interlinked to four designated spoke ITIs.

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) 1, 2 and 3

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 3 are correct:** The PM-SETU scheme under MSDE seeks to modernize vocational training into a Government-owned, Industry-managed model. It implements a network model where 200 upgraded ITIs serve as regional hubs for advanced training, R&D, and start-up incubation, with each hub supporting four spoke ITIs across a total network of 1,000 institutions. Industry groups (like CII and FICCI) anchor these clusters to align student skills with job placements.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** PM-SETU is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme utilizing a ₹60,000 crore total budget outlay spanning 2025–28. The financial requirements are jointly shared between the Central and State Governments based on standard fiscal allocation formulas, rather than being 100% centrally funded.

9. Consider the following statements regarding the features of the DRAVYA Portal:

1. It is an open-access, AI-ready digital knowledge repository developed by the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) under the Ministry of Ayush.
2. The platform is designed to store classical textbook materials, while blocking modern pharmacological or botanical research data.
3. The system integrates standard QR code features to facilitate real-time retrieval of verified data across plant gardens and drug repositories.
4. To maintain data privacy, the portal is kept isolated from external health databases, preventing any integration with the broader Ayush Grid.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation

- **Statements 1 and 3 are correct:** The DRAVYA portal is an AI-ready digital platform built by CCRAS under the Ministry of Ayush. It categorizes complex data covering aspects like pharmacotherapeutics, botany, chemical structures, and safety guidelines. It features QR code labels for use in research nurseries and medicinal plant gardens, enabling users to scan and retrieve verified botanical profiles directly on-site.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Far from blocking research data, the platform's core purpose is to bridge traditional classical Ayurvedic texts with modern empirical research, allowing data comparison across botany, chemistry, and clinical pharmacology.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The architecture is designed to interlink with the Ayush Grid, ensuring data interoperability across central health tools and research databases to support cross-disciplinary innovation.

10. Consider the following statements regarding the Shilp Didi Programme:

1. It is an economic empowerment initiative implemented by the Ministry of Textiles through the Office of the Development Commissioner.

- The program relies on physical brick-and-mortar village marketplaces, without reliance on digital onboarding or e-commerce training.
- The foundational pilot phase of the initiative targeted a group of 100 women artisans representing diverse handicraft sectors across multiple states.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation

- Statements 1 and 3 are correct:** The Shilp Didi program is a targeted women-centric entrepreneurship campaign under the Ministry of Textiles. Its baseline implementation began with a 100-day pilot focusing on 100 women artisans from 72 districts across 23 states, spanning 30 craft types (including pottery, metal carvings, and traditional embroidery). Capacity building is supported through National Handicrafts Development Programme (NHDP) regional clusters.
- Statement 2 is incorrect:** The initiative focuses on digital skills and e-commerce training. It provides e-learning modules on regulatory compliance, digital payments, and social media marketing to help women artisans secure online onboarding on global e-commerce platforms alongside access to physical exhibitions like Dilli Haat.

Schemes in News - III

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Aabhar online store:

- The store is hosted by the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) and showcases items manufactured under the ODOP and Geographical Indication (GI) categories.
- The promotional hampers and gift articles sourced through this platform are specifically designated for use in official events and ceremonies of the Indian Railways.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct:** The 'Aabhar' online store is explicitly hosted on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal. It acts as a dedicated marketplace for handlooms, crafts, and tribal artisan goods under the ODOP and GI tags, promoting the national Vocal for Local initiative.
- Statement 2 is correct:** As per the official guidelines, the specific commercial objective of this integration is to provide reliable market access to rural entrepreneurs, indigenous tribes, and women-led enterprises by utilizing these curated gift articles exclusively during official functions, events, and ceremonies of the Indian Railways.

2. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar' (MGMD) Initiative:

1. It is a nationwide cultural mapping project launched in June 2023 under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.
2. The operational execution of the project is managed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as the core implementing agency.
3. The National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM), which supervises this initiative, was established under the administrative control of the Ministry of Tourism.
4. The web portal developed under MGD functions as the National Cultural Workplace (NCWP), featuring 360-degree video documentations and user-editable data.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (d)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The MGD initiative was officially introduced in June 2023 as a nationwide comprehensive cultural mapping project to document the intangible cultural heritage across 6.5 lakh Indian villages.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The scheme is implemented by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The National Mission on Cultural Mapping (NMCM) is a flagship mission under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, rather than the Ministry of Tourism.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The MGD portal functions as the National Cultural Workplace (NCWP). It hosts a massive cultural database, provides virtual living museums, issues unique artist registrations, and features 360° video profiles of selected villages.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the regulatory framework of Inland Waterway Transport in India:

1. The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is a statutory body established in 1986 under the nodal jurisdiction of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
2. The National Waterways Act of 2016 legally designated exactly 52 inland waterways as National Waterways (NWs) for integrated development.
3. The newly introduced Jalvahak Cargo Promotion Scheme provides financial incentives by reimbursing up to 35% of operating costs to cargo movers using inland waterways.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The IWAI is a statutory organization set up in 1986 under the Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985. It is headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, and functions under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW).

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The National Waterways Act, 2016 declared 111 waterways as National Waterways (NWs) across the country to scale up eco-friendly logistics, not 52.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Jalvahak Cargo Promotion Scheme (introduced to boost domestic bulk transport) provides a targeted operational cost reimbursement of up to 35% for cargo movers deploying ships, barges, or vessels across these designated networks.

4. Consider the following statements regarding the SHAKTI Scholars Research Fellowship:

1. The initiative is structured as a six-month, grant-based multidisciplinary fellowship launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
2. The program is strictly restricted to Indian citizens falling within the designated age bracket of 21 to 30 years.
3. Candidates must hold a minimum qualification of a graduation degree from a recognized university to be eligible to apply for the fellowship.
4. The fellowship provides a defined research grant of ₹1 lakh disbursed in a progressive, phased manner linked to research milestones.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The SHAKTI Scholars Young Research Fellowship is launched and administered directly by the National Commission for Women (NCW).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The eligibility guidelines explicitly restrict access to Indian citizens aged between 21 and 30 years at the time of application.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The mandatory minimum educational benchmark is Graduation from a recognized institution. While preference is given to individuals pursuing or holding Post-Graduation, M.Phil., or PhD degrees in social sciences, public policy, or law.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The selected independent researchers receive a total grant of ₹1 lakh to offset costs related to data collection, field verification, and analysis, with funds released in distinct, progress-linked phases to guarantee accountability.

5. Consider the following statements regarding the scheme to promote manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM):

1. It is a first-of-its-kind national program under the primary nodal administration of the Ministry of Heavy Industries.
2. The strategic framework aims to select exactly 5 manufacturing beneficiaries through a process of global competitive bidding.
3. Out of the total financial outlay of ₹7,280 crore, a major component of ₹6,450 crore is allocated strictly toward sales-linked incentives over a 5-year production cycle.
4. The layout provides a 5-year initial gestation period specifically to construct the integrated processing plants before production metrics are audited.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

(d) 2 and 4 only

Correct Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The scheme is administered under the nodal jurisdiction of the Ministry of Mines, working with policy oversight from the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and NITI Aayog.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The project targets the selection of 5 enterprise beneficiaries via global competitive bidding, with each setup targeted to achieve up to 1,200 Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA) to construct an integrated domestic supply chain.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The total fiscal package is ₹7,280 crore. This includes ₹6,450 crore earmarked for output-linked/sales-linked monetary incentives over 5 years, and ₹750 crore allocated as a direct capital subsidy for setting up metallurgical plants.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The implementation timeline permits a 2-year gestation window for plant construction, equipment setup, and processing line stabilization, followed by a 5-year incentive payout phase within a total scheme duration of 7 years.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights (PPV&FRA) Act-2001:

1. It provides India's first *sui generis* legal framework enacted under the primary administrative oversight of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
2. Section 39 of the Act legally empowers farmers to save, use, sow, resow, exchange, and share seeds of any registered plant varieties protected under the law.
3. The registration of new plant varieties under this framework requires compliance with the standardized DUS criteria, representing Distinctness, Uniformity, and Stability.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The PPV&FRA Act of 2001 operates under the administrative authority of the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, with the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority fully operational since 2005.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Section 39 of the Act contains landmark provisions for seed sovereignty, granting Indian farmers the explicit legal right to store, cultivate, re-cultivate, barter, or distribute seeds of protected, registered variations, ensuring they are not penalized by corporate breeders' patents.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To be certified and entered into the National Register of Plant Varieties, a new plant type must satisfy the globally recognized DUS parameters: Distinctness (clear differentiation from existing varieties), Uniformity (consistent scale of expression), and Stability (unchanged traits across generations).

7. Consider the following statements regarding the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance 2.0 (NAP-AMR 2.0):

1. It serves as an updated five-year strategic framework covering the 2025–29 cycle, succeeding the initial national action plan framework.

2. The updated blueprint drops the multi-sectoral One Health methodology to concentrate exclusively on human clinical diagnostic networks.
3. The institutional rollout incorporates decentralized governance, requiring each of the 20+ participating ministries to deploy independent budgets and action plans.
4. Under the regulatory measures of this framework, all States and Union Territories have passed mandatory legislative bans prohibiting any over-the-counter (OTC) sales of general antibiotics.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** NAP-AMR 2.0 is the official five-year strategy spanning 2025–29, designed by the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to remedy systemic gaps found in the initial 2017–21 deployment block.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** It expands on the 'One Health' architecture, intentionally merging human medicine, animal husbandry, crop cultivation, food processing safety, and environmental effluent systems under a singular framework.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** It features ministry-specific integration where more than 20 distinct ministries (such as Ministry of Jal Shakti, DST, MoEFCC, and Ministry of Chemicals) develop their own internal targets, timelines, and budgets.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** While the policy strongly advocates for antibiotic stewardship and medical prescription auditing, only specific pioneer states (such as Kerala and Gujarat) have actively executed formal bans on the over-the-counter sale of non-prescribed antibiotics. It is not an across-the-board mandatory state legislative ban.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the PM E-Drive Subsidy Scheme:

1. The program was officially launched on 1 October 2024 by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).
2. The demand incentive architecture provides a flat rate of ₹5,000 per kWh for electric two-wheelers in FY25, with the maximum cap per vehicle set at ₹10,000.
3. The deployment parameters for electric public transport buses prioritize heavy urban concentration, restricting deployment specifically to 9 cities with populations exceeding 40 lakhs.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The PM E-Drive Scheme is launched and monitored under the administrative jurisdiction of the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI), replacing the previous Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme (EMPS-2024).

- **Statement 2 is correct:** The subsidy structure for FY25 sets demand incentives for electric two-wheelers at ₹5,000 per kWh, limiting the maximum absolute incentive to ₹10,000 per vehicle. This subsidy rate is scheduled to be reduced by half in FY26.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To maximize carbon reduction in heavy urban commuter segments, the procurement and deployment subsidies for zero-emission e-buses are targeted at 9 mega-cities with populations recorded over the 40-lakh threshold.

9. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY):

1. It is a free foodgrain distribution scheme operated under the statutory mandates of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013.
2. The administrative execution of the food distribution network is managed by the Ministry of Rural Development.
3. Under its standard entitlement criteria, Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households receive 35 kg of foodgrains per family per month, while Priority Households (PHH) receive 5 kg per person per month.
4. The scope of coverage is designed to assist 100% of the rural population and up to 75% of the urban population across India.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** PMGKAY is a welfare program linked to the legal mechanisms of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013, to provide free foodgrains via the targeted Public Distribution System.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The scheme is administered and implemented by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The monthly food allocation divides beneficiaries into two categories: poorest-of-the-poor Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families receive a fixed 35 kg of grains per family, whereas Priority Households (PHH) are allocated a person-weighted 5 kg of rice/wheat per individual. Since January 2023, these allocations have been made completely free of cost.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The statutory coverage ratios under the NFSA match a specific demographic split: helping up to 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population.

10. Consider the following statements regarding the National Improvised Explosive Device Data Management System (NIDMS):

1. It is a secure national digital platform that compiles, standardizes, and cross-references historical IED and bomb-blast data under the policy oversight of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. The primary operational hosting and custodian responsibilities of this data repository are assigned to the National Security Guard (NSG).
3. The platform serves as a closed-loop internal storage center that is completely isolated from outside networks like the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS).
4. The system contains a comprehensive historical archive cataloging domestic blast incidents dating back to the year 1947.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3

- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 4
- (d) 2 and 4 only

Correct Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** NIDMS is a secure centralized application platform setup under the policy direction of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to improve data tracking and analysis for bomb investigators.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The National Security Guard (NSG)—specifically via its specialized National Bomb Data Centre (NBDC)—serves as the formal institutional host and operational custodian of the platform.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** NIDMS is built to be highly interoperable. It is configured to integrate with external national law enforcement databases, including CCTNS, the Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS-2), NAFIS (fingerprints), and e-Prisons to help identify matching signatures across different attacks.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The digital archive does not go back to 1947. The platform records all detailed technical parameters, circuit designs, and explosive device components for blast incidents documented since 1999.

Schemes in News - III

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Scheme for Promotion of Registration of Employers and Employees (SPREE) 2025:

1. It is a social security formalization initiative launched by the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) under the Ministry of Finance.
2. The scheme functions as a mandatory enrollment drive that imposes financial contributions and penalties on employers for past unregistered contractual workers.

Select the 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:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** SPREE 2025 is a dedicated voluntary formalization scheme launched by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, to bring unregistered entities into the formal social security framework.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The primary feature of SPREE 2025 is that it operates as a one-time amnesty scheme with zero retrospective penalties. It specifically mandates that no contribution, inspection, or legal demand will be raised for the pre-registration period, clearing legal hurdles and fear of litigation for employers who voluntarily register their contractual, temporary, and informal workforces.

2. Consider the following statements regarding the Chips to Start-up (C2S) Programme:

1. The initiative was launched in 2022 under the administrative and implementation framework of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

2. The target metrics focus on developing specialized human resources across various tiers, including PhD, M.Tech, and B.Tech academic levels over a 5-year project cycle.
3. The operational infrastructure for chip design enablement and hardware prototyping is coordinated by the National ChipIN Centre based at C-DAC, Bengaluru.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The C2S Programme is a national capacity-building and innovation blueprint initiated in 2022 by MeitY to strengthen India's indigenous semiconductor design ecosystem and establish technological self-reliance.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The scheme features precise, non-generic human resource targets over 5 years, aiming to build a talent pipeline consisting of 200 PhDs, 7,000 M.Tech (VLSI), 8,800 M.Tech (related streams), and 69,000 B.Tech students.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** C-DAC Bengaluru operates the National ChipIN Centre under this program, which serves as the centralized node providing centralized access to design tools, shared Electronic Design Automation (EDA) software, and multiproject wafer fabrication facilities via the Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL) at Mohali.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the structural features of the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC):

1. It was launched in April 2022 by the DPIIT under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
2. ONDC functions as an open, interoperable, decentralized digital network that does not own product listings, control sellers, or directly process consumer orders.
3. The operational model replaces traditional independent buyer applications with a single, government-owned central e-commerce platform.
4. The transaction framework relies on standardized APIs and open protocols, allowing independent third-party logistics providers to plug directly into the network.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** ONDC was initiated in April 2022 by the DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, to democratize digital retail and break down existing platform monopolies.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** ONDC is not a central marketplace or a monolithic platform. It is a decentralized network architecture that provides open protocols and standardized infrastructure for independent actors to interact freely without siloed platform intermediaries.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** ONDC does not employ a single, mandatory government platform. Instead, it unbundles e-commerce components so that any independent buyer application, seller application, and service provider can use common rules to discover and transact with each other.

- **Statement 4 is correct:** Because the network is open and built on standardized APIs, specialized entities such as individual logistics providers, hyper-local transport systems, and technology enablers can dynamically plug in to handle delivery, fulfillment, and tracking.

4. Consider the following statements regarding the MY Bharat institutional architecture:

1. MY Bharat is established as an autonomous body under the regulatory oversight of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
2. The platform was officially launched on October 31, 2023, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Subhas Chandra Bose.

Select the 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:** MY Bharat functions as an autonomous body under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, providing a technology-driven institutional interface for youth-led transformation and experiential learning.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While the launch date of October 31, 2023, is correct, it was launched on the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (National Unity Day), not Subhas Chandra Bose.

5. Consider the following statements regarding the features of the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme:

1. It is a Central Sponsored Scheme administered by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for marginalized community students.
2. The eligibility criteria stipulate a strict annual family income ceiling that must not exceed ₹5-lakh.
3. The geographical distribution of seats is regulated by imposing a strict state-wise cap, ensuring no single state receives more than 10% of the total annual slots.
4. The financial funding parameters feature a mandatory gender-based reservation, allocating 30% of the total annual scholarship awards exclusively for women candidates.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The scheme is a fully funded Central Sector Scheme under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, targeting low-income students from Scheduled Castes, Denotified/Nomadic Tribes, and landless agricultural households to pursue Master's and PhD programs abroad.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The annual family income eligibility threshold is strictly capped at ₹8 lakh.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To prevent geographic concentration and ensure equitable pan-India selection, the scheme mandates that no single state can claim more than 10% of the total available slots (125 slots per year) in a given selection block.

- **Statement 4 is correct:** The scheme provides an internal quota mechanism where a minimum of 30% of the total cleared annual scholarship allocations are legally reserved for eligible female candidates.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI):

1. It is a national public Wi-Fi infrastructure architecture approved by the Union Cabinet and implemented by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).
2. The system requires small shops and local businesses operating as Public Data Offices (PDOs) to obtain a formal commercial telecom operating license and pay registration fees.

Select the 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:** PM-WANI is a public Wi-Fi framework launched by the Department of Telecommunications under the Ministry of Communications to democratize broadband access and accelerate rural-urban digital inclusion.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The hallmark design of PM-WANI is that no license, registration, or formal fee is required for small local businesses or Mom-and-Pop stores acting as Public Data Offices (PDOs). This unbundling lowers entry barriers and allows them to purchase bandwidth and retail it directly to the public without regulatory overhead.

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM):

1. The mission represents a flagship poverty alleviation and gender empowerment initiative implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice.
2. The financial architecture provides a robust system of delivering collateral-free credit lines to registered Self-Help Groups (SHGs).
3. The institutional delivery framework relies on specialized Community Resource Persons, known as Bank Sakhis, Krishi Sakhis, and Pashu Sakhis, to provide last-mile technical and financial services.
4. The program is fully funded by the Central Government as a 100% Central Sector Scheme.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** DAY-NRLM operates exclusively under the administrative command of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), focusing on poor rural households, whereas urban areas are covered under a separate sister mission (DAY-NULM).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The financial inclusion component has successfully enabled massive disbursements of collateral-free institutional credit to community-led SHGs with exceptional repayment records.

- **Statement 3 is correct:** The operational model is driven by trained women community leaders deployed as functional sector specialists (Bank Sakhis for credit linkages, Krishi Sakhis for agro-ecology, and Pashu Sakhis for livestock management).
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** DAY-NRLM is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, meaning it is jointly funded through a cost-sharing formula divided between the Center and the States, rather than being financed exclusively as a Central Sector Scheme.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the SOAR Program launched under the Skill India Mission:

1. It is implemented by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in structured coordination with the Ministry of Education.
2. The target demographic of the program is designed to deliver fundamental artificial intelligence (AI) literacy modules specifically to school students from Classes 6 to 12 and educators.
3. The program includes a capital funding allocation in the Union Budget 2025–26 to establish a dedicated Centre of Excellence in AI for Education.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The SOAR initiative is an advanced literacy program spearheaded by the MSDE and closely integrated with the Ministry of Education to systematically update digital and technological competencies.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The curriculum focuses on building foundational AI capability early in education, using standardized 15-hour modules for school pupils in Classes 6 through 12, complemented by an advanced 45-hour development framework for teachers.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To support long-term institutional research and ensure equal digital access between urban and rural centers, a fiscal outlay of ₹500 crore was allocated in the Union Budget 2025–26 to construct a dedicated national Centre of Excellence in AI for Education.

9. Consider the following statements regarding the Studentship Program for Ayurveda Research Ken (SPARK-4.0):

1. It is a flagship research studentship scheme launched and monitored by the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) under the Ministry of Ayush.
2. The financial grants under this program are explicitly for post-graduate (MD/MS) and doctoral research scholars specializing in classical pharmacology.

Select the 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:

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- **Statement 1 is correct:** SPARK-4.0 is the fourth iteration of the competitive studentship program developed by CCRAS, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Ayush, to embed scientific and evidentiary methodology into the traditional medicine framework.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The program is specifically designed for undergraduate (BAMS) students, not post-graduates or PhD scholars. It selects 300 undergraduate Ayurvedic students to complete short-term, faculty-guided independent research projects backed by a financial stipend of ₹50,000.

10. Match the newly launched digital initiatives of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) with their respective core operational objectives:

Digital Initiative	Primary Operational Purpose
1. Digital Centre of Excellence (DCoE)	P. Real-time KPI monitoring system to track Maritime India Vision 2030 projects.
2. SAGAR SETU Platform	Q. Standardized, transparent tariff application template to boost major port investor confidence.
3. DRISHTI Framework	R. Collaborative institutional hub with C-DAC to deploy AI, IoT, and Blockchain for smart ports.
4. Scale of Rates (SOR) Template	S. Unified national EXIM digital interface connecting ports and stakeholders to eliminate physical paperwork.

Select the correct structural alignment from the codes given below:

- (a) 1-R, 2-S, 3-P, 4-Q
- (b) 1-S, 2-R, 3-Q, 4-P
- (c) 1-R, 2-P, 3-S, 4-Q
- (d) 1-P, 2-S, 3-R, 4-Q

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **1 matches with R:** The Digital Centre of Excellence (DCoE) is established as a joint venture between MoPSW and C-DAC to deploy technology (AI, IoT, and Blockchain) to build automated smart ports and support green logistics operations.
- **2 matches with S:** The SAGAR SETU platform functions as a single-window unified National Logistics Portal (Marine), linking over 80 ports and 40+ maritime stakeholders to streamline B2G and B2B EXIM procedures and reduce transaction processing bottlenecks.
- **3 matches with P:** The DRISHTI Framework is an internal dashboard system (Data-driven Review Institutional System for Tracking Implementation) developed to provide objective, real-time tracking of targets outlined under the Maritime India Vision 2030 using data analytics.
- **4 matches with Q:** The Scale of Rates (SOR) Template provides a standardized tariff application format across India's major corporate and trust ports, providing clear digital comparisons, reducing administrative ambiguity, and improving the ease of doing business.

Schemes in News - IV

1. Consider the following statements regarding the 'PANKHUDI' portal:

1. It is a single-window, integrated digital interface launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to facilitate CSR and voluntary investments.
2. To maintain absolute transaction auditability and financial tracking, the platform allows direct fiscal fund transfers.

Select the 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 PANKHUDI portal is an institutional single-window platform launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to aggregate, track, and optimize CSR funds and voluntary civil partnerships targeting nutrition, early childhood care, and women's empowerment.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** A defining operational design trap of the PANKHUDI portal is that it accepts non-cash contributions only. By restricting access solely to material goods and services, the architecture guarantees direct, visible supply-chain traceability down to individual Anganwadis and Child Care Institutions, preventing the financial leakages often tied to direct cash donations.

2. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY):

1. It is implemented as a comprehensive Central Sponsored Scheme under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
2. The operational layout is restricted exclusively to 100 underperforming districts identified by NITI Aayog based on poor credit access and low crop productivity.
3. The fiscal architecture is structured around a multi-year budget allocation of ₹1.44 lakh crore operating across a 6-year program timeline from 2025 to 2031.
4. The mission unifies agricultural administrative delivery by merging 36 existing individual central schemes under a single digital tracking framework.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Pradhan Mantri Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) is a Central Sector Scheme that aims to transform Indian agriculture by boosting productivity and sustainability in 100 underperforming districts.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The eligibility criteria enforce a strict geographic footprint, locking implementation exclusively inside 100 underperforming districts mapped out by NITI Aayog due to low baseline crop productivity and lagging agricultural parameters.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The fiscal layout dictates a structured, predictable multi-year investment window totaling ₹1.44 lakh crore, distributed linearly at ₹24,000 crore annually over the 2025–2031 timeline.

- **Statement 4 is correct:** To curb administrative fragmentation, PMDDKY drives massive convergence by combining 36 pre-existing distinct agricultural support lines into a unified digital framework monitored across 117 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

3. Consider the following statements regarding the We Rise Initiative:

1. The initiative is established as a public-private partnership between NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and the global logistics leader DP World.
2. The core objective is to identify, incubate, and upgrade high-potential women-led micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) into export-ready organizations.
3. The program offers direct financial subsidies to cover 20% of the international shipping freight costs for all registered members of the WEP network.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The 'We Rise' program is a public-private ecosystem initiative under WEP's Award to Reward (ATR) framework, matching NITI Aayog's infrastructure with DP World's global supply chain network.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Its core objective is to scale domestic women-led MSMEs internationally by teaching global trade compliance, improving capacity building, and integrating them into global value chains.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The initiative does not provide direct shipping freight subsidies to the entire WEP database. Instead, it offers a targeted trade market access route, selecting 100 specific women entrepreneurs to directly display and market their physical products at Bharat Mart in Dubai.

4. Consider the following statements regarding the National Technology Readiness Assessment Framework (NTRAF):

1. It is a standardized assessment architecture developed and implemented by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (OPSA) to the Government of India.
2. The framework relies on a narrative-based qualitative review system to evaluate the early lab-stage potential of research innovations.
3. A primary economic target of the NTRAF model is to bridge and de-risk the research transition gap known as the Valley of Death between Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 4 and 7.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** NTRAF is managed by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (OPSA) to the Government of India, built in technical coordination with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** NTRAF explicitly rejects subjective narrative assessments. It enforces an objective, check-list-driven metric system across 9 explicit Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) to accurately calculate technology development milestones.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The framework focuses its de-risking mechanisms precisely on the TRL 4 to TRL 7 bandwidth. This phase represents the dangerous Valley of Death where promising laboratory prototypes routinely fail due to a lack of structured funding and verification before commercial scaling.

5. Consider the following statements regarding the One Nation, One Subscription (ONOS) Scheme:

1. It is a central initiative designed to provide unified, country-wide access to top international scientific journals and research databases for all recognized Indian academic and R&D institutions.
2. The nodal execution and implementation framework for negotiating, purchasing, and managing these national institutional journal licenses is handled directly by DST.
3. The platform replaces individual institutional journal subscriptions with a centrally funded model to optimize public spending and broaden access to scholarly literature.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The ONOS scheme establishes a unified, state-backed gateway that enables all recognized higher education colleges, universities, and public R&D facilities across India to access premier international scientific journals through a national license.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The nodal implementation, international publisher negotiations, and payment consolidation are managed by the Ministry of Education and its technical consortia (like the Information and Library Network - INFLIBNET).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** By shifting from fragmented, high-cost individual university subscriptions to a consolidated, centrally funded national subscription model, ONOS lowers costs through bulk purchasing while opening access to tier-2 and tier-3 institutions.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY):

1. It provides a non-contributory, cashless annual health assurance cover of ₹5 lakh per eligible family, completely free of restrictions regarding size, age, or gender configurations.
2. The targeted identification of beneficiary families under the core architecture relies on real-time registrations via the PM Viksit Bharat portal.

Select the 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:** PM-JAY delivers an absolute family-floater medical coverage pool of ₹5 lakh per annum for secondary and tertiary inpatient care, with no caps on family size, age distributions, or gender, ensuring comprehensive social protection.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Baseline eligibility for PM-JAY is determined by the Socio-Economic Caste Census of 2011 (SECC-2011) data, which was recently expanded through policy adjustments to include all senior citizens aged 70 years and above, regardless of their original SECC listing.

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Depot Darpan Portal:

1. It is a real-time digital infrastructure monitoring system launched by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution.
2. The auditing verification layer requires warehouse depot managers to upload geo-tagged infrastructure datasets that are validated by third-party audits.
3. The analytical engine uses automated AI tools to run real-time bag counting and Face Recognition Systems (FRS) across all private and state corporate agricultural warehouses.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Depot Darpan Portal and mobile app were built by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution to track, audit, and modernize India's massive food grain storage footprint.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** To prevent falsification, depot managers must submit geo-tagged field infrastructure data directly through the platform. These inputs are cross-checked via multi-tier supervisory structures and regular independent third-party audits.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While the platform covers a broad network of 2,278 warehouses (including FCI and CWC facilities), advanced AI tools such as automated bag counting, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), and Face Recognition Systems (FRS)—are currently deployed as targeted pilot programs, rather than running live across all nationwide warehouses.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY):

1. The scheme is a national employment-linked incentive program administered under the administrative guidance of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. Under Part A, eligible first-time employees receive an incentive equal to a one-month EPF wage up to ₹15,000, which is paid immediately upon initial registration.
3. The employer financial incentives under Part B are structured as wage-based monthly payments ranging from ₹1,000 to ₹3,000 depending on the salary brackets of the newly hired staff.
4. The financial tenure for employer wage incentives is standard across all commercial sectors, capped at a maximum period of 2 years.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** PM-VBRY is a massive national formal job creation incentive program administered directly by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, carrying a fiscal allocation of ₹99,446 crore from 2025 to 2027.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The first-time employee incentive is not paid immediately upon registration. It is split into two installments: the first half drops after 6 months of active service, and the second half is paid only after 12 months and the completion of mandatory financial literacy training.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Part B details fixed employer incentives based on wage tiers: ₹1,000 for wages ≤ ₹10,000; ₹2,000 for wages between ₹10,001–₹20,000; and ₹3,000 for wages between ₹20,001–₹1,00,000.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The incentive tenure is not uniform. While most sectors have a standard 2-year benefit window, the government extends this to 4 years for manufacturing units to drive structural industrial hiring.

9. Consider the following statements regarding the Internet Governance Internship & Capacity Building Scheme (IGICBS):

1. It is a strategic capacity-building internship layout administratively anchored under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
2. The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) serves as the designated nodal implementing body for the scheme.
3. The operational design targets engineering graduates exclusively, focusing solely on core routing protocols and domain name system (DNS) hardware configurations.
4. The program includes an institutional pathway called the NIXI Internet Influencer track to certify high-performing interns for global policy engagement.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** IGICBS is an institutional capacity-building framework under MeitY designed to train young professionals to represent India in international internet governance forums.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** NIXI is the active nodal implementation organization handling the application, placement, and training mechanics of the interns.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The scheme features an interdisciplinary model rather than an exclusive engineering focus. It explicitly integrates technology with law, public policy, cybersecurity, digital identity, and Universal Acceptance (UA) to build well-rounded policy experts.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The NIXI Internet Influencer pathway provides a long-term professional development track, certifying top-performing interns to serve as digital ambassadors in global internet architecture decisions.

10. Consider the following statements regarding the Seva Se Seekhen Campaign:

1. The initiative is a coordinated multi-ministerial campaign launched jointly by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
2. The target implementation model deploys 50 youth volunteers per district across all Indian states to manage regional drug logistics hubs.

3. The deployment structure relies on a short-term, 15-day structured internship framework to teach generic medicine literacy and inventory management.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The campaign represents a joint public service initiative co-managed by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports alongside the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The campaign does not deploy 50 volunteers per district. The precise metrics mandate five youth volunteers per district, who are split up and embedded across five individual regional Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (JAKs).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The program uses a highly compact 15-day structured internship window. This setup allows volunteers from platforms like MY Bharat and pharmacy colleges to gain hands-on experience in public healthcare, generic medicine literacy, and basic stock logistics.

Schemes in News – V

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address (DHRUVA) initiative:

1. It is a national DPI launched as a mandatory regulatory framework for all domestic e-commerce transactions by NITI Aayog.
2. The operational backbone relies on the DIGIPIN system, which uses a 10-character alphanumeric geocode capable of mapping grid patches across Indian territory.
3. To maintain strict data privacy, the framework permits third-party commercial platforms to hold, unrestricted structural access to verified textual addresses once authorized.
4. The structural management of the ecosystem is designed to be administered by an independent, not-for-profit Section 8 institutional entity.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** DHRUVA is a voluntary Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), not a mandatory regulatory framework. Furthermore, it was introduced via a draft policy by the **Department of Posts** in 2025 for public consultation, not NITI Aayog.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The architecture leverages DIGIPIN as its core backbone. DIGIPIN is an open-source, 10-character alphanumeric geocoding system that divides the entire Indian geographical territory into highly precise 14 square meter patches (~228 billion unique pins) based on latitude and longitude coordinates.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** A key feature of DHRUVA is its consent-based, time-bound access mechanism. Private entities cannot retain permanent or unrestricted access; Address Information Agents (AIAs) strictly manage consent workflows to guarantee user-controlled privacy.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** To ensure institutional scalability and interoperability similar to the UPI network, the framework mandates that a Section 8 not-for-profit corporate body (functioning much like the National Payments Corporation of India - NPCI) will administer the digital ecosystem.

2. Which of the following statements with regard to the NAKSHA Capacity Building Programme is/are correct?

1. It is a technology-driven initiative developed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to replace rural cadastral records with satellite maps.
2. The framework utilizes Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) tech alongside orthorectified drone surveys to modernize urban land records.

Select the 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:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The NAKSHA (National Geospatial Knowledge-Based Land Survey of Urban Habitations) programme is developed by the Department of Land Resources (DoLR) under the Ministry of Rural Development, not the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. Furthermore, its focus is explicitly directed at mapping and modernizing urban and semi-urban habitations across Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), rather than replacing rural cadastral records.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** To achieve legal and geographic precision, the program utilizes high-tech survey instrumentation including the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), Electronic Total Station (ETS), and high-resolution aerial imagery generated through orthorectified drone surveys executed by third-party technical vendors.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the SOAR Program:

1. The initiative is a flagship capacity-building rollout implemented under the Skill India Mission targeting school students from Classes 6 to 12 as well as educators.
2. The operational structure delivers learning modules through the completely decentralized offline network of state-level polytechnic institutes.
3. The fiscal framework includes a dedicated Union Budget allocation of ₹500 crore to set up an institutional Centre of Excellence for AI in Education.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The SOAR program is a core initiative under the Skill India Mission designed to embed Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy, tech competencies, and ethical tech principles into school

education, covering students in Classes 6–12 alongside their teachers. It is co-managed by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and the Ministry of Education.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The learning modules are not deployed exclusively through offline state polytechnics. Instead, the architecture relies heavily on cross-platform digital access by integrating directly with the Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH) to balance the skill gap separating rural and urban cohorts.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** To provide continuous academic support, the Union Budget 2025–26 explicitly designated a ₹500 crore financial envelope to construct a dedicated, specialized Centre of Excellence for AI in Education.

4. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):

1. It is a flagship central sector skill certification scheme launched under the administrative umbrella of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) component provides formal assessment and certification to informal sector workers such as traditional artisans and craftsmen.
3. The current iteration (PMKVY 4.0) incorporates emerging future-ready technologies including the Internet of Things (IoT), mechatronics, drones, and AI-based analytics.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** PMKVY is administered and executed under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) under the broader Skill India Mission, not the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) parameter of PMKVY serves as an essential regulatory bridging tool that formally assesses, validates, and certifies the preexisting competencies of informal labor market participants (such as weavers, artisans, and craftsmen), thereby integrating them into the formal economic landscape.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Under PMKVY 4.0, the training framework has been updated to cover advanced technology sectors such as AI, robotics, mechatronics, IoT, and drone engineering, while simultaneously aligning with the Academic Bank of Credits and the unified Skill India Digital Hub.

5. Consider the following statements regarding the Ayush Nivesh Saarthi Portal:

1. It is a specialized, interactive single-window investment facilitation platform built by the Ministry of Ayush in strategic partnership with Invest India.
2. The core objective is to centralize policy documentation, fiscal incentives, and project dashboards to boost Private Capital and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in traditional medicine systems.
3. The platform's regulatory model is aligned with India's current FDI threshold, which caps foreign equity investments at a maximum of 49% under the government approval route for the Ayush manufacturing sector.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Ayush Nivesh Saarthi Portal is an advanced digital environment engineered jointly by the Ministry of Ayush and Invest India to create an un-fragmented interface for prospective national and international market participants.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The portal aims to improve the ease of doing business by offering real-time facilitation via dynamic dashboards, consolidating cross-cutting industrial incentives, and matching investors with investment-ready projects in traditional health fields.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The platform is structurally engineered to leverage India's highly liberalized investment framework, which permits 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) under the automatic route within the Ayush sector, making any claim of a 49% government-route restriction factually incorrect.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the District-Led Textiles Transformation (DLTT) Plan:

1. It introduces a data-driven district scoring matrix managed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to regulate clothing retail prices.
2. The strategic framework divides target districts into two specialized operational bands: Champion Districts focused on Scale/Industry 4.0 and Aspirational Districts focused on Foundation/Formalization.
3. The plan includes a targeted geographic sub-component called the Purvodaya convergence designed to scale tribal handloom clusters and achieve GI-tagging for regional handicrafts.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The DLTT Plan is an intrinsic sectoral modernization strategy developed and managed by the Ministry of Textiles, not the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Its purpose is to evaluate and map localized textile ecosystems—judging export metrics, MSME health, and artisan density—rather than fixing or regulating clothing retail market pricing.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The plan avoids a one-size-fits-all approach by categorizing districts into two distinct development streams: Champion Districts (receiving Mega Common Facility Centres, advanced logistics setups, and direct export linkages) and Aspirational Districts (focusing on fundamental vocational training, Raw Material Banks, and formalizing Self-Help Groups/cooperatives).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Purvodaya convergence framework redirects specialized policy attention toward Eastern and North-Eastern India to protect and commercialize unique regional tribal craft identities through Geographical Indication (GI) verification and infrastructural connectivity upgrades.

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Central Excise (Amendment) Act, 2025 and the GST Compensation Cess:

1. The Act updates central excise duties on tobacco products to increase the overall tax burden following the scheduled winding down of the GST compensation cess.

2. Under the adjusted tax rates, the statutory excise duty on unmanufactured tobacco has been reduced from 74% to a baseline of 25%.
3. Traditional hand-rolled beedis have been officially brought under a revised 40% GST rate bracket alongside all other premium tobacco formulations.
4. The long-standing GST compensation cess, originally rolled out in July 2017 to protect state revenues, is scheduled to be phased out completely in early 2026.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Because tobacco and its derivatives continue to sit outside the full, singular GST net, the Central Excise (Amendment) Act, 2025 explicitly raises excise duties to sustain high overall revenue flows and meet public health objectives after the expiration of the GST compensation cess.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The statutory adjustment **increased** excise margins rather than reducing them. For unmanufactured tobacco, rates climbed from 64% to 70%, while smoking mixtures scaled all the way up to 325%.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The statutory tax restructuring divides the categories: traditional beedis are moved into the 18% GST bracket, whereas all other high-margin tobacco product formulations are placed inside the top 40% GST tier.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The GST compensation cess, which entered active service alongside the GST launch in July 2017 (and was extended due to pandemic fiscal gaps), concludes its structural lifetime on March 31, 2026, with a complete phase-out from February 1, 2026.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) platform:

1. It functions as a centralized, multi-tier ICT platform under the direct operational leadership of the Prime Minister to handle high-level monitoring and project tracking.
2. The institutional architecture features a unique three-tier interface that links the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Union Secretaries, and State Chief Secretaries simultaneously.
3. The platform operates on an independent data ecosystem, intentionally blocking external national data systems like CPGRAMS to prevent data congestion.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** PRAGATI was launched on March 25, 2015, as an advanced interactive portal spearheaded by the Prime Minister to drive e-transparency, enforce accountability, and speed up the execution of mega infrastructure initiatives of national importance.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** A major structural innovation of PRAGATI is its three-tier architecture. By bringing the PMO, central administrative heads (Union Secretaries), and state execution heads (State Chief Secretaries) onto a single video-conferencing and data screen, it breaks down institutional silos and speeds up inter-state resolutions.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** PRAGATI does not isolate itself from other data systems. Rather, it thrives on unified data sourcing, combining feeds from the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), Project Monitoring Group (PMG), and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) into a centralized analytics dashboard.

9. Consider the following statements regarding the ARISE Program and the Climate Investment Funds (CIF):

1. It was introduced at the COP30 in Brazil as a next-generation resilience framework to embed climate adaptation into the national economic architectures of developing nations.
2. The CIF functions as a multilateral finance mechanism established under the institutional housing of the World Bank Group and is executed through multiple Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).
3. The structural portfolio of the CIF is organized around two primary operational windows: the Clean Technology Fund (CTF) and the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF).

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The ARISE (Accelerating Resilience Investments and Innovations for Sustainable Economies) program was officially launched at the COP30 Climate Summit in Belém, Brazil, backed by an initial \$100 million anchor funding commitment from Germany and Spain. Its purpose is to mainstream climate resilience directly into macroeconomic planning and mobilize catalytic adaptation finance.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Established in 2008, the CIF is a prominent multilateral climate finance window hosted by the World Bank. Instead of operating in isolation, its projects are implemented through six collaborative Multilateral Development Banks (including the IFC, ADB, AfDB, and EBRD) to ensure country-led development.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The CIF architecture splits its targeted interventions into two core funding lines: the Clean Technology Fund (CTF), which concentrates on low-carbon transitions like renewable energy and clean transit, and the Strategic Climate Fund (SCF), which pilots resilience models, forestry protection, and smart urban ecosystems. Since all three statements are factually and analytically accurate, option (d) is the correct choice.

10. Which of the following statements with regard to the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Rules, 2025 is/are correct?

1. The amendments introduce a mandatory requirement for all localized eye banks to install clinical specular microscopes before performing basic tissue collection.
2. The statutory framework transfers the regulatory oversight of the National Organ Transplant Programme (NOTP) to private medical councils in rural areas.

Select the 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:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The 2025 rules removed the mandatory requirement for clinical specular microscopes (previously used to assess endothelial cell layers). This policy shift lowers equipment costs and administrative burdens, helping smaller, non-metro eye care clinics perform corneal operations.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The statutory revisions are designed to strengthen the National Organ Transplant Programme (NOTP) by improving public-led integration among hospitals, public tissue banks, and sovereign health regulators. It does not hand over regulatory oversight of this national public program to private medical councils.

Schemes in News - VI

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) for Delhi-NCR:

1. It is a statutory framework operating under the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
2. The implementation framework relies strictly on a reactive model, where restrictions can only be triggered after real-time ground monitors record pollution peaks.
3. The operational logic is cumulative, meaning each higher emergency stage automatically carries forward all mitigation measures from the lower stages.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** GRAP is a statutory, stage-wise emergency framework enforced under the directives of the Supreme Court and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, and is actively managed by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Following revisions by the CAQM, GRAP utilizes a predictive, preemptive enforcement framework based on advanced meteorological and pollution dispersion forecasts provided by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). This allows authorities to invoke restrictive actions before air quality drops into a higher hazard bracket.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** GRAP uses a cumulative implementation mechanism. When a severe or severe+ pollution stage is declared (e.g., Stage III or IV), all foundational measures belonging to the lower stages (Stages I and II) remain active and are progressively tightened.

2. Which of the following statements with regard to the MAHA-MedTech Mission is/are correct?

1. It is a national technology commercialization initiative launched jointly by the ANRF, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

2. The financial assistance framework is limited to central government PSUs engaged in vaccine production.

Select the 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 Mission for Advancement in High-Impact Areas (MAHA)–MedTech is a targeted public-philanthropic partnership linking the apex research funding body ANRF, the medical research council ICMR, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to advance local biomedical engineering.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The funding architecture is broad and competitive, offering ₹5–25 crore (and up to ₹50 crore in exceptional circumstances) to startups, MSMEs, academic institutions, clinical networks, and industrial collaborations to reduce high-cost import dependencies. It is not restricted to public sector undertakings or vaccine production lines.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the national Cyber Suraksha initiative:

1. It is a multi-phased national security cyber defense exercise organized and conducted by the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).
2. The operational execution includes table-top exercises, leadership capsules, and a specialized Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) Conclave.
3. The organizing node, Defence Cyber Agency (DCyA), is an integrated tri-service formation functioning directly under the administrative oversight of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
4. The operational architecture of DCyA serves as a centralized military cyber war command reporting to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Cyber Suraksha exercise is organized and executed by the Defence Cyber Agency (DCyA), the specialized cyber operations arm of the Indian Armed Forces, not the civilian NSCS.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The drill uses a gamified environment featuring table-top crisis drills, technical skill evaluation paths, and a dedicated CISO Conclave to align military-technical workflows with national strategic policy.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** DCyA is a tri-service military formation operating under the Ministry of Defence, not the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** DCyA serves as the unified military center for cyber operations, cyber warfare strategies, and emergency cyber responses across the Army, Navy, and Air Force. It reports directly to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) through the Integrated Defence Staff (IDS).

4. Consider the following statements regarding the legal Safe Harbour protection for digital intermediaries in India:

1. Safe harbour status acts as a conditional immunity shielding online intermediaries from legal liability arising from user-generated content.
2. The statutory foundation for this legal shield is codified under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000.
3. Intermediaries maintain absolute, protection against third-party content regardless of state notifications or data removal orders.
4. Under the regulatory architecture, digital intermediaries are required to appoint a Grievance Officer and a Nodal Contact Person who must be located in India.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Safe harbour is a foundational legal doctrine that protects internet intermediaries (social networks, search engines, ISPs) from being treated as publishers or primary legal targets for unauthorized materials uploaded by external users.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** In India, this structural defense is granted under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000, which functions as the domestic equivalent to global internet standards like Section 230 of the US Communications Act.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The immunity is strictly conditional. Intermediaries can forfeit this shield if they fail to act upon receiving actual knowledge of unlawful acts through court mandates or government takedown orders, or if they violate content moderation standards on cyber frauds, deepfakes, and misinformation.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** As mandated by the IT Rules, 2021, platforms must maintain continuous compliance infrastructure, which includes appointing a dedicated Grievance Officer and a Nodal Contact Person physically based in India, alongside publishing monthly transparency and compliance metrics.

5. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM):

1. It is a comprehensive pan-India program focused on long-term epidemic preparedness, disease surveillance networks, and expanding primary-to-tertiary health facilities.
2. The fiscal layout is constructed as a hybrid model containing both Centrally Sponsored Scheme and Central Sector Scheme financing components.
3. The mission's architecture operates independently from older national frameworks, avoiding overlap with the National Health Policy 2017 or the National Health Mission (NHM).

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** PM-ABHIM is an integrated public health delivery framework designed to systematically strengthen institutional response capabilities against future biological shocks, pandemic spikes, and healthcare gaps.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The mission utilizes a total financial outlay of ₹64,180 crore via a hybrid financing architecture, breaking its individual development goals into either Central Sector or Centrally Sponsored funding brackets to share administrative costs with state health departments.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** PM-ABHIM does not operate in isolation. It is engineered to build upon and merge with preexisting healthcare architectures, including the National Health Policy 2017, the National Health Mission (NHM), and the core Ayushman Bharat ecosystems to create a unified public healthcare model.

6. Which of the following statements with regard to the National Polio Surveillance Network (NPSN) is/are correct?

1. It was established in 1997 as a collaborative public health initiative between the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
2. The administrative mandate of the network remains locked to tracking wild poliovirus strains, without authority to support other immunization lines.

Select the 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 NPSN (originally functioning as the National Polio Surveillance Project - NPSP) was stood up in 1997 through a joint partnership linking the WHO and India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to provide field-level tracking of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The functional footprint of the NPSN has evolved beyond its original single-disease tracking mission. While it continues to safeguard India's polio-free status, its decentralized field units and Surveillance Medical Officers (SMOs) have been integrated into broader health campaigns, including Measles-Rubella elimination and other routine Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (VPDs) surveillance under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP).

7. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) and its extended parameters:

1. The core PMSMA program delivers a free, standard package of advanced antenatal care (ANC) diagnostic services on the 9th day of every month at government health facilities.
2. The clinical risk stratification system uses a color-coded tagging method on medical cards, applying green stickers for high-risk pregnancies and red stickers for normal cases.
3. The Extended PMSMA (e-PMSMA) framework expands the health tracking window to provide continuous monitoring for high-risk conditions up to 45 days post-delivery.
4. Under the e-PMSMA guidelines, financial incentives are provided to Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), while pregnant women receive no direct cash support.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4

- (c) 1, 2 and 3
(d) 1, 3 and 4 only

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** PMSMA provides fixed-day, specialist-driven antenatal care services on the 9th of every month, ensuring that pregnant women in their second or third trimesters receive a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation from OB-GYNs or medical officers.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The risk-tagging color scheme is inverted: red stickers are applied to identify High-Risk Pregnancies (HRP) for continuous monitoring, while green stickers indicate normal, low-risk cases.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Rolled out to expand maternal care, e-PMSMA extends tracking past the delivery phase, maintaining diagnostic check-ups for high-risk patients up to 45 days post-partum.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The financial incentive system under e-PMSMA is dual-targeted. To encourage adherence to medical protocols, cash benefits are paid to both the pregnant women and their corresponding ASHA workers upon the successful completion of three additional, structured post-delivery check-ups.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the National Medical Register (NMR):

1. It is a centralized digital database established under Section 31 of the National Medical Commission (NMC) Act, 2019.
2. Registration and enrollment within the NMR are voluntary for practicing allopathic doctors holding an MBBS degree.
3. The data verification architecture uses a collaborative model where State Medical Councils (SMCs) are responsible for verifying academic credentials.

Select the answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The NMR is an official national digital database built under the statutory authority of Section 31 of the National Medical Commission (NMC) Act, 2019, under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Enrollment within the NMR is mandatory, not voluntary, for all Registered Medical Practitioners (RMPs) practicing allopathic medicine across India.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The registry uses a collaborative structure. While the final database is maintained centrally, individual State Medical Councils (SMCs) serve as the primary verification layer responsible for reviewing medical qualifications and validating practitioner credentials.

9. Which of the following statements with regard to the YUVA AI for ALL Initiative is/are correct?

1. It is a free, self-paced 4.5-hour online literacy course launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) under the IndiaAI Mission.
2. The program is restricted to software development professionals and requires an advanced background in Python programming.

Select the 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 YUVA AI for ALL program is a free, modular, 4.5-hour self-paced introductory course launched by MeitY via the IndiaAI Mission to foster basic AI understanding and promote responsible digital usage using real-world Indian case studies.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The initiative is designed for a general audience, aiming to democratize basic AI concepts for 1 crore (10 million) citizens. It is built to be accessible to students, rural learners, and professionals without any prior coding or technical prerequisites.

10. Consider the following statements regarding the Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA):

1. It is a specialized research and development collaboration program launched by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).
2. The framework focuses on co-developing technological defenses to protect biometric authentication systems against deepfakes and presentation attacks.
3. The operational layout includes specific innovation tracks for Face Liveness Detection and Presentation Attack Detection (PAD).
4. The initiative is executed inside closed UIDAI defense laboratories by linking UIDAI with MeitY Startup Hub and NASSCOM as executing authority.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** SITAA is an innovation-driven acceleration framework created by the UIDAI to build advanced, secure identity verification systems.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The core mission is to safeguard India's digital public infrastructure by developing advanced cryptographic, software, and AI defenses against emerging digital threats like AI-generated deepfakes and biometric spoofing.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The program is divided into three key innovation challenges: Face Liveness Detection (using AI to spot video/photo replays), Presentation Attack Detection (PAD tools to identify fake biometric inputs), and Contactless Fingerprint Authentication.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Builds a national innovation ecosystem by linking UIDAI with MeitY Startup Hub and NASSCOM for mentorship, funding, and global outreach. SITAA is a highly collaborative, ecosystem-wide initiative.