

ForumIAS

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Prelims Marathon

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HISTORY
ECONOMICS
POLITY
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

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Defense and Security News-VI

1. Which of the following statements regarding the geopolitical and technical parameters of Project Nimbus are correct?

1. It is a flagship cloud-computing and AI infrastructure agreement between the government of Israel and tech corporations Google and Amazon.
2. The core framework involves transferring all state data out of the Middle East to be hosted within centralized data servers in the United States.
3. The project provides localized high-compute infrastructure, machine learning capabilities, and automated facial detection tools.
4. The agreement lacks a sovereign non-restriction clause, allowing corporate providers to shut down public sector access at their discretion during conflicts.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Project Nimbus is a USD 1.2 billion cloud-computing agreement signed in 2021 between the Israeli government, Google Cloud Platform, and Amazon Web Services.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Data processing and server administration are explicitly localized within Israel to maintain strict state data sovereignty rather than moving it to the US.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The project integrates advanced tools like facial detection, machine learning models, automated image categorization, and sentiment analysis for state processing.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Contract leaks show the agreement contains a strict Sovereign Non-Restriction Clause, which prevents the tech companies from blocking or disabling services due to corporate policy shifts or international pressure.

2. With reference to Phase II of India's Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) Programme, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is an automated, highly integrated network developed indigenously by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
2. The deployment architecture relies on endo-atmospheric interceptor missiles to engage threats inside the atmosphere.
3. The validation of this multi-layered framework marks progress toward the realization of Mission Sudarshan Chakra.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The BMD system is an automated network of radars, command units, and interceptor missiles engineered by the DRDO since its inception in 1999.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The programme features a two-tier interceptor network, using both exo-atmospheric interceptors (to hit missiles outside the atmosphere) and endo-atmospheric interceptors (inside the atmosphere).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The completion and testing of Phase II directly support Mission Sudarshan Chakra, which aims to create an integrated, multi-level defensive missile shield.

3. Which of the following statements with regard to the Naval Anti-Ship Missile–Medium Range (NASM-MR) is/are correct?

1. It is a supersonic, high-altitude ballistic missile designed to engage heavy strategic aircraft carrier groups.
2. It is powered by an indigenous Small Gas Turbine Jet Engine (SGTJE) and utilizes a sea-skimming flight profile.
3. The guidance architecture combines an active radar seeker with an imaging infrared (IR) seeker to preserve operational accuracy under electronic countermeasures.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The NASM-MR is a subsonic, sea-skimming cruise missile designed to target small-to-medium vessels like frigates, corvettes, and destroyers, rather than a supersonic ballistic missile.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It features a custom indigenous Small Gas Turbine Jet Engine (SGTJE) and skims just above the sea surface to reduce its radar cross-section.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Its advanced dual-mode terminal guidance setup pairs an active radar seeker with an imaging infrared (IR) sensor to lock onto targets despite hostile electronic jamming.

4. Consider the following statements regarding India's indigenous glide weapon system TARA:

1. It is a modular range-extension kit designed to transform conventional, unguided gravity bombs into precision-guided munitions.
2. It functions as an independent, rocket-propelled hypersonic cruise missile system that can only be launched from ground mobile launchers.

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Developed by the DRDO and the Indian Air Force, the Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA) is a glide kit added to conventional unguided warheads to give them precision flight control.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** TARA is an unpowered glide weapon kit, not a self-propelled cruise missile. It is dropped from air platforms and can be deployed from multiple fighter aircraft across the IAF's fleet.

5. Which of the following statements with regard to India's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) is/are correct?

1. INS Aridhaman is the third operational vessel of the Arihant-class developed under the Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project.
2. INS Arihant, commissioned in 2016, serves as the primary sea-based leg of India's nuclear triad network.
3. Unlike its predecessors, the larger 7,000-tonne INS Aridhaman has completely abandoned vertical launching system tubes to carry torpedoes exclusively.

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** INS Aridhaman is the third nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine in this class, following INS Arihant (2016) and INS Arighaat (2024), built under the long-running ATV project.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** INS Arihant completed its first deterrence patrol in 2018, locking in the sea leg of India's nuclear triad strategy.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** INS Aridhaman actually features an expanded missile capacity with 8 vertical launching system (VLS) tubes. This allows it to carry a larger payload of K-15 and K-4 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).

6. Consider the following strategic military capabilities:

1. Striking deep targets across neighboring regional zones from submerged oceanic platforms.
2. Utilizing a two-stage solid rocket propulsion system for mid-course and terminal transit.
3. Conducting automatic terrain evaluation using Terminal Terrain Contour Matching (TERCOM) guidance.

In how many of the above operational capabilities can the K-4 submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) be utilized?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Capability 1 is correct:** The K-4 is an intermediate-range submarine-launched ballistic missile with a range of up to 3,500 km, allowing hidden submarines to strike inland targets.
- **Capability 2 is correct:** The missile relies on a two-stage solid-fuel rocket motor to power its trajectory.
- **Capability 3 is correct:** Its guidance package features an Inertial Navigation System (INS) and multi-GNSS tracking, paired with terminal TERCOM (Terrain Contour Matching) to ensure high accuracy.

7. Which of the following statements regarding the strategic reforms outlined in the Defence Forces Vision 2047 document are correct?

1. It proposes a doctrinal shift away from net-centric warfare to data-centric warfare to secure 'decision superiority'.
2. The implementation roadmap is compressed into a single-phase transition strategy scheduled for full completion by 2030.
3. It outlines the creation of specialized structures including a Space Command, Cyber Command, Data Force, and Drone Force.
4. The plan prioritizes high-tech integration, explicitly leveraging technologies like AI, autonomous systems, and quantum sensing.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The document transitions India's defensive approach from information superiority to data-driven decision superiority on the battlefield.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The implementation uses a three-phase roadmap: the Era of Transition (up to 2030), the Era of Consolidation (2030–2040), and the Era of Excellence (2040–2047).
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The vision creates dedicated next-gen structures like the Space Command, Cyber Command, Data Force, Drone Force, and Cognitive Warfare Action Forces.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The plan prioritizes high-tech integration, explicitly leveraging technologies like AI, autonomous systems, and quantum sensing across multiple domains.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the newly commissioned frontline naval platforms:

1. INS Dunagiri is an advanced Project 17A stealth frigate equipped with BrahMos surface-to-surface missiles.
2. Sanshodhak operates as a large survey vessel configured for deep-water and coastal hydrographic surveys.
3. Agray is an aircraft carrier designed for executing long-range maritime bomber operations.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** INS Dunagiri is the fifth Project 17A stealth frigate built by GRSE, featuring advanced sensors alongside BrahMos and medium-range surface-to-air missile weapon systems.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Sanshodhak is the fourth Survey Vessel (Large) built to collect oceanographic and geophysical data using Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUVs).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Agray is the fourth of the Arnala-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) designed for littoral operations, not an aircraft carrier.

9. With reference to the Naval Anti-Ship Missile–Medium Range (NASM–MR), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is designed with different versions, including ship-launched, air-launched, and submarine-launched variants.

2. It features an operational strike range extending up to a maximum of 350 km.
3. It functions as a short-range, gravity-dropped precision glide weapon with an unpowered payload under 50 kg.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The NASM-MR architecture is built to support flexible deployment options across surface ships, fixed-wing aircraft, and submarines.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** This all-weather cruise missile provides a standalone operational strike range of up to 350 km.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The NASM-MR is a jet-powered cruise missile carrying a heavy warhead weighing more than 200 kilograms, distinct from lightweight unpowered glide weapons.

10. Consider the following operational coastal security activities:

1. Traveling across low-resistance areas like shallow mudflats and exposed river sandbars.
2. Launching high-speed amphibious operations without water friction by maintaining a pressurized air cushion.
3. Undergoing localized deep-sea submarine rescue operations at depths exceeding 500 meters.

At the present level of technology, which of the above activities can be successfully carried out by the newly inducted Air Cushion Vehicles (ACVs)?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Hovercraft are amphibious by design, allowing them to glide smoothly over varying terrain like open water, mudflats, swamps, and sandbars.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** An ACV lifts its hull entirely off the surface by trapping a high-pressure cushion of air inside a flexible rubber skirt, removing water resistance and enabling high-speed maneuvers.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** ACVs are strictly surface vessels that skim above the water or land. They cannot submerge or perform deep-sea underwater submarine rescue operations.

Fairs And Festivals in News

1. Consider the following table regarding traditional festivals and matching specifications:

Festival	Region	Key Feature
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1. Kheer Bhawani Mela	Ganderbal, Jammu & Kashmir	Built by Maharaja Pratap Singh; features a sacred spring believed to change colour.
2. Bonalu Festival	Hyderabad & Secunderabad, Telangana	Dedicated to Goddess Mahakali; features a future-forecasting ritual called 'Rangam'.
3. Poson Poya	Mihintale & Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka	Commemorates the arrival of Buddhism via Arahata Mahinda in the 3rd century BCE.
4. Ambubachi Mela	Kamakhya Temple, Guwahati, Assam	Tantric fertility festival celebrating the annual menstruation of the deity.

How many of the rows given above are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one row
(b) Only two rows
(c) Only three rows
(d) All four rows

Correct Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- **Row 1 is correctly matched:** Kheer Bhawani Mela is celebrated by Kashmiri Pandits on Jyeshtha Ashtami at a temple built in 1912 by Maharaja Pratap Singh over a color-shifting spring.
- **Row 2 is correctly matched:** Bonalu was declared a state festival of Telangana in 2014, and includes the "Rangam" forecasting ritual.
- **Row 3 is correctly matched:** Poson Poya marks the exact historical timeline when Buddhism reached Sri Lanka via Emperor Ashoka's son.
- **Row 4 is correctly matched:** Ambubachi Mela is known as the Mahakumbh of the East, celebrating regional tantric traditions and cosmic regeneration.

Q2. Which one of the following options correctly lists the elements inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in India from the earliest inclusion to the latest?

- (a) Kutiyattam — Mudi yettu — Kalbelia — Durga Puja in Kolkata
(b) Mudi yettu — Kutiyattam — Durga Puja in Kolkata — Kalbelia
(c) Kutiyattam — Kalbelia — Mudi yettu — Durga Puja in Kolkata
(d) Kalbelia — Mudi yettu — Kutiyattam — Durga Puja in Kolkata

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Kutiyattam** (Sanskrit theatre of Kerala) was among India's first elements added to the list (proclaimed 2001, formally inscribed in 2008)
- **Mudi yettu** (ritual theatre of Kerala) was inscribed later in 2010.
- **Kalbelia** (folk songs and dances of Rajasthan) was also inscribed in 2010, but chronologically listed post-Mudi yettu in UNESCO's session registry.
- **Durga Puja in Kolkata** is a recent addition, inscribed in 2021.

3. With reference to the Shirui Lily Festival, consider the following statements:

1. The event is organized at the state level by the Ministry of North-East.

2. It takes place in the Ukhrul district, which is predominantly home to the Tangkhul Naga community.
3. The rare endemic flower is known locally by the name Kashsong Timrawon'.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The festival was launched in 2017 and is executed by the state's tourism department rather than a central ministry.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It tracks the blooming season of the flower in the Ukhrul district, celebrating local ethnic Tangkhul Naga cultural roots.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Locals name the flower after Timrawon, a mythical princess or goddess protecting the hill ecosystem.

4. Which of the following statements regarding the traditional practice of Dhirio is/are correct?

1. It is a traditional form of bullfighting from Goa that traces its historical origins back to the Portuguese colonial period.
2. Unlike classical Spanish bullfighting, it excludes the involvement of a matador or the ritualistic execution of the animal.
3. The practice remains fully legalized and actively regulated across coastal villages under a 1997 High Court mandate.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Dhirio is an agrarian bullfighting custom rooted in Goa's history that dates back to the Portuguese era.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The fight involves two bulls locking horns until one retreats or is pushed out, without any ritual killing or matadors.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** A landmark 1997 High Court ruling actually banned Dhirio. It continues underground in some areas, which prompted state legislators to push for its legalization.

5. The festival of Rosh Hashanah, which was recently highlighted in national greetings, marks:

- (a) The Jewish New Year and the beginning of the Ten Days of Repentance
- (b) The day of complete fasting and ultimate absolution known as Yom Kippur
- (c) The commemoration of the liberation of Israel from Egyptian bondage
- (d) The joyful spring harvesting window celebrated by Mediterranean farmers

Correct Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- **Option (a) is correct:** Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish civil New Year, initiating a 10-day period of reflection and penitence that culminates in Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement). During this time, tradition states that the Book of Life is opened for divine judgment.

6. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the Langkhun festival?

1. It is an annual post-harvest celebration dedicated to Ramsa Devta by the Tiwa community in Arunachal Pradesh.
2. The core ritual involves specialized bamboo worship ceremonies extending over four days.
3. The community practicing it follows a matrilineal lineage system and observes the Koba Liwa marriage custom.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Langkhun is celebrated by the Tiwa (Lalung) tribesmen in regions like Karbi Anglong, Assam, to express gratitude for harvests.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The festival features sacred bamboo worship rites held between October and December.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Tiwa tribe is notable for its matrilineal lineage tracking and its unique, distinct marriage custom called Koba Liwa.

7. With reference to northeastern India, the term Mera Hou Chongba designates:

- (a) A traditional bamboo-weave musical instrument used during sowing cycles
- (b) An indigenous festival of unity bonding the hill and valley communities of Manipur
- (c) A prehistoric cave painting site located in the upper sub-Himalayan tracts
- (d) A specific dialect spoken exclusively by the trans-border migration groups

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Option (b) is correct:** Mera Hou Chongba is a historic festival celebrated on the 15th day of the Meitei lunar month of Mera. It stands out as a unique event because it unifies the valley-dwelling Meiteis with the hill-dwelling Naga and Kuki tribes, featuring symbolic gift exchanges and marches to the Kangla Fort.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the Guru Charan Yatra:

1. The procession centers around the public darshan of the Jore Sahib, which are the sacred footwears of the tenth Sikh Guru and his wife.
2. The religious journey concluded its itinerary at the Takht Sri Patna Sahib Gurudwara in Bihar.
3. Before his death, Guru Gobind Singh terminated the human lineage of Gurus and designated the Khalsa Panth as the eternal Guru.

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)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The yatra features the Jore Sahib, the personal footwear relics of Guru Gobind Singh and Mata Sahib Kaur.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The procession traveled from New Delhi down to Patna Sahib in Bihar, a key historic site in Sikhism.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Guru Gobind Singh declared the Guru Granth Sahib (the holy scripture) as the eternal living Guru, not the Khalsa Panth (which refers to the community of the pure).

9. With reference to the Hornbill Festival of Nagaland, consider the following statements:

1. It is organized annually in the first week of December by the State Tourism and Art & Culture Departments of Nagaland.
2. The event is hosted at the Naga Heritage Village, Kisama, to promote inter-tribal interaction.
3. Large metallic cymbals are the only musical instruments permitted to accompany the performances.

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: (a)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Known as the "Festival of Festivals," it was initiated in 2000 and is managed directly by Nagaland's tourism and culture departments.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It takes place at Kisama, located roughly 12 km from Kohima, and serves to unite more than 17 ethnic tribes.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The festival features a wide array of indigenous instruments alongside contemporary music setups like electric guitars.

10. With reference to the Bison Horn Maria Dance, consider the following statements:

1. It is a traditional folk dance performed by the Dandami Madia tribe of Chhattisgarh.
2. The custom requires the women performers to wear a headgear made from bamboo and decorated with wild bison horns.
3. The core choreographic movements imitate a wild bison to represent natural energy and hunting ties.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (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:** This vibrant folk dance belongs to the Dandami Madia (Maria) community, which is part of the broader Gond tribal cluster in Bastar, Chhattisgarh.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** It is the men who wear the heavy bison-horn headgear decorated with feathers. The women wear bright saris, headbands, and heavy brass or silver jewelry.

- **Statement 3 is correct:** The dance moves mimic a wild bison's behavior, reflecting the tribe's historic relationship with the forest and local deities like Danteshwari Mai.

Architecture And Sculptures in News

1. With reference to historical rock-cut architecture, consider the following statements:

1. Ellora Caves were excavated top-down on the Charanandri Hills under the patronage of the Rashtrakuta and Yadava dynasties.
2. Unlike the multi-religious nature of the Ellora Caves, Petra was established as a mono-religious Buddhist monastic site by the Nabataean Kingdom.
3. The Ellora Caves feature mural paintings and monuments representing Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions side by side.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Correct Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Ellora Caves are located in the Charanandri Hills of Maharashtra and were carved top-down directly into basalt cliffs between 600–1000 CE under the Rashtrakuta and Yadava dynasties.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Petra was the capital of the Nabataean Kingdom (established around the 4th century BCE) located in southern Jordan. It is an ancient archaeological city famous for pink sandstone architecture, not a Buddhist monastic site.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Ellora is celebrated for its religious harmony, housing 34 monasteries and temples belonging to Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain faiths adjacently, along with matching mural art.

2. Consider the following statements regarding medieval architectural gates in Delhi:

1. Turkman Gate was constructed during 17th century as part of structural layout of Shahjahanabad under Shah Jahan.
2. Unlike other historical city gates named after their geographic directions, it was named to honor a 13th-century Sufi saint whose shrine predates the walled city.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Turkman Gate was built in the 17th century when Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan established his new capital city, Shahjahanabad, which is today known as Old Delhi.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Most gates of the walled city were named after the regions they faced (e.g., Kashmiri Gate, Lahori Gate). Turkman Gate is an exception; it was named after the 13th-century Sufi

mystic Hazrat Shah Turkman Bayabani, whose dargah (tomb) sits nearby and was established long before the Mughals built the city walls.

3. Which of the following statements with regard to the historical and architectural features of the Somnath Temple is/are correct?

1. It is located at Prabhas Patan at a Triveni Sangam marking the confluence of the Kapila, Hiran, and Sarasvati rivers.
2. Current structure is built in the Maru-Gurjara architectural style and follows the Kailash Mahameru Prasad layout form.
3. The first historical raid on the temple was carried out by the Turkish ruler Mahmud of Ghazni during the reign of the Solanki monarch Bhima I.

Select the correct 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 temple is situated at Prabhas Patan near Veraval, Gujarat, directly on the holy Triveni Sangam where the Kapila, Hiran, and Sarasvati rivers meet.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The architecture is classic Maru-Gurjara (also known as Chalukya or Solanki style). It features the Kailash Mahameru Prasad design blueprint, consisting of a Garbhagriha, Sabhamandap, and Nrityamandap.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** In 1026 CE, Mahmud of Ghazni plundered the temple and broke its primary Jyotirlinga during the reign of King Bhima I. Historical records note that the temple site was looted up to 17 times across subsequent centuries.

4. Consider the following statements:

1. The Bhadrakali Inscription is a 12th-century Sanskrit epigraph discovered at Prabhas Patan that describes evolution of Somnath Temple across four sequential Yugas.
2. The inscription was composed as a prashasti for Acharya Bhavabrihaspati, the spiritual preceptor of the Kumarapala.

Which of the above statements is/are correct about Bhadrakali Inscription?

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

Correct Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The 1169 CE inscription is embedded directly in the wall of the Bhadrakali Temple in Gujarat. It chronicles the legendary history of the Somnath temple, noting its transitions from gold, silver, and wood into stone.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It functions explicitly as a prashasti (praise poem/eulogy) honoring Acharya Bhavabrihaspati, who served as the royal spiritual guide to King Kumarapala, highlighting the Solanki dynasty's active structural restoration of the sacred complex.

5. Which of the following statements with regard to the archaeological discoveries at the Zehanpora site is/are correct?

1. It is a newly discovered ancient Buddhist monastic and stupa complex located along the Jhelum River in Jammu and Kashmir.
2. Architectural layouts and artifacts unearthed at site map exclusively onto indigenous Sangam-era cultural traditions of Southern India.

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:** Drone mapping and systematically managed excavations confirmed that the man-made mounds at Zehanpora in Baramulla, J&K, contain a 2,000-year-old Buddhist complex near the Jhelum River.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The remains date directly to the Kushan period (1st–3rd centuries CE) and follow the Gandhara Buddhist architectural style, demonstrating deep cultural links with historic complexes in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

6. Which of the following statements with regard to the Devnimori archaeological finds is/are correct?

1. The site is situated near the Shamlaji pilgrimage hub in Gujarat.
2. A stone relic unearthed bears a Brahmi script inscription identifying it as an authentic repository of the Buddha's bodily relics.

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: (c)

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Devnimori site is an important early Buddhist center in western India, excavated near the Shamlaji shrine within Gujarat's Aravalli district.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The casket discovered inside the site's stupa explicitly features a Sanskrit inscription in the ancient Brahmi script stating dashabala sharira nilay, which translates to the abode of the Buddha's bodily relic. The box contained a copper container protecting organic material, ash remnants, beads, and silk cloth.

7. Consider the following matrix of archaeological findings and their properties:

Archaeological Context	State Geographic Region	Identified Description / Local Nomenclatures
1. Chokahatu Clusters	Jharkhand	A traditional Munda/Ho ancestral burial ground known locally as Hargarhi.

2. Sasandiri Structures	Jharkhand	Large table-like stone dolmens built to serve as family burial chambers.
3. Birdiri Monoliths	Andhra Pradesh	Classical rock-cut cave shrines excavated to store early Iron Age votive tools.
4. Living Megalithism	Karnataka	Completely abandoned stone circles with zero modern community interaction.

In which of the above rows is the given information correctly matched?

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

Correct Answer: (a) 1 and 2

Explanation:

- **Row 1 is correctly matched:** Megalithic layouts in the Ranchi-Khunti belt of Jharkhand (such as Chokahatu) link directly to ancient and ongoing tribal contexts called hargarhi or hargarha.
- **Row 2 is correctly matched:** In Munda and allied Adivasi traditions, the term Sasandiri specifically denotes dolmen-style family stone slab graves.
- **Row 3 is incorrectly matched:** Birdiri (or Biridiri) refers to commemorative standing menhir stones in Jharkhand, not rock-cut caves in Andhra Pradesh.
- **Row 4 is incorrectly matched:** Living megalithism is a rare ongoing cultural practice in Jharkhand where indigenous tribes continue to set up fresh ancestor stones today, meaning it is not an abandoned Karnataka tradition.

8. Which of the following statements with regard to the historical Golestan Palace complex is/are correct?

1. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site situated in Tehran.
2. The layout of the complex showcase an integration of traditional Persian architectural design with 19th-century European artistic elements.
3. The construction and entire layout of the 17 structures were commissioned during the Pahlavi Era.

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) 1 and 2 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Inscribed by UNESCO in 2013, the Golestan Palace is located in Tehran, Iran, and achieved its peak prominence as the seat of the Qajar dynasty (1794–1925).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The palace features a distinct hybrid aesthetic, combining traditional Islamic Persian styling with European decorative elements from the 19th century.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The origins of the complex trace back to the Safavid Era (16th century) and the Qajar Era, not the Pahlavi Era. The Pahlavi rulers (1925–1979) primarily used the already-completed historical structures for formal state ceremonies and coronations.

9. Based on historical and archaeological surveys conducted in the Palani Hills, which of the following statements are correct regarding the Kodaikanal dolmens?

1. They are prehistoric, box-like megalithic structures built out of stone slabs resting on vertical pillars, dating back to 1500–2000 BCE.
2. Local tribal communities, such as the Paliyans and Kurumbas, are closely associated with these ancient structures.
3. Early 20th-century documentation of these sites was carried out by Jesuit priests and published in the Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The dolmens are pre-Iron Age megalithic stone chambers built above the ground between 1500–2000 BCE, ranking them among the oldest structural remains in the Palani Hills region of Tamil Nadu.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Anthropological and historical models link these ancient stone structures to early local tribes like the Paliyans and Kurumbas.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Jesuit priests Rev. A. Anglade and Rev. L.V. Newton systematically surveyed these features, publishing their records in the 1928 Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to alert authorities to their ongoing destruction.

10. Consider the following statements regarding the archaeological excavations at Kilnamandi village in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu:

1. Excavators uncovered a terracotta coffin, known as a sarcophagus, containing grave goods like etched carnelian beads and long iron spears.
2. The graffiti symbols carved onto the burial pottery show a 90% structural similarity with Indus Valley script signs.

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) Both 1 and 2

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Excavations at Kilnamandi revealed terracotta coffin burials (sarcophagi) complete with associated grave goods, including high-tin bronze objects, large 7-to-8-foot iron spears, and etched carnelian beads sourced through trade networks from Gujarat or Maharashtra.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The pottery items inside the tombs feature specialized graffiti marks (such as fork symbols and concentric U designs) that exhibit an approximate 90% structural match with characters from the Indus Valley Civilization script, pointing to potential cultural continuities or clan markers.

Dance And Sculptures in News

1. With reference to the ancient site of Sarnath, consider the following statements:

1. It is the sacred location where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon, known as the Dhammachakkappavattana Sutta.
2. The structural remains of the Dhamek Stupa date to the early Vedic period, predating the Mauryan Empire.
3. The site received continuous architectural expansion and patronage under both the Kushana and Gupta dynasties.

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Sarnath (historically known as Mrigadava or Rishipatana) is the holy site where Gautama Buddha preached his first sermon to his first five disciples, setting the "Wheel of Dhamma" in motion.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Dhamek Stupa is a prominent Buddhist structure. Its foundations were laid during the Mauryan period by Emperor Ashoka and it was later rebuilt during the Gupta period. It has no connection to the early Vedic period.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** After the Mauryan era, Sarnath continued to grow significantly. Both the Kushana and Gupta empires actively added new monasteries, refurbished older stupas, and commissioned iconic sculptures (such as the famous seated Buddha in Dharmachakra Mudra).

2. Consider the following statements regarding the historical Ashokan Pillars:

1. These pillars were constructed primarily during the post-Mauryan era to commemorate the victory of local rulers over foreign invaders.
2. The monolithic pillars are composed of sandstone quarried predominantly from the Chunar and Mathura regions.
3. The edicts inscribed on these pillars were written mostly in Classical Sanskrit to make them accessible to the elite priestly classes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Ashokan pillars were carved in the 3rd Century BCE under the direct orders of Emperor Ashoka of the Mauryan Dynasty following his moral transformation after the Kalinga War, not during the post-Gupta era.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** These massive monolithic pillars, ranging from 40 to 50 feet in height, were carved out of single blocks of sandstone sourced from quarries in Chunar and Mathura.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** To ensure his moral messages reached the common people, Ashoka's edicts were inscribed in regional scripts and vernacular languages, including Brahmi, Kharosthi, Aramaic, and Greek, rather than being restricted to Classical Sanskrit.

3. Which of the following statements regarding the features of Gangaikonda Cholapuram are correct?

1. It was established by Rajendra Chola I to serve as the imperial capital of the Cholas following his military campaign to the Gangetic plains.
2. The central Brihadisvara Temple built here was dedicated exclusively to Lord Vishnu to commemorate the dynasty's western conquests.
3. The city featured a massive water reservoir known as Chola Gangam, which functioned as a liquid pillar of victory.
4. Archaeological and epigraphic records indicate that the site was abandoned immediately after the death of Rajendra Chola I.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** After his successful military expedition to northern India, Rajendra Chola I assumed the title 'Gangaikonda Cholan' and built this new imperial capital city to celebrate the achievement.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The grand Gangaikonda Cholisvaram (Brihadisvara) Temple built at this site is dedicated to Lord Shiva, not Lord Vishnu.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The massive Chola Gangam water reservoir was filled with water brought from the Ganga river, serving as a symbolic liquid pillar of victory (jalasthambam).
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Far from being abandoned quickly, the city served as the thriving administrative, economic, and cultural center of the Chola Empire for over two and a half centuries (from 1025 CE to 1279 CE).

4. Consider the following statements regarding the Maratha Military Landscapes of India, which was inscribed as India's 44th World Heritage Site:

1. The site comprises a strategic network of 12 forts constructed between the 17th and 19th centuries CE.
2. Geographically, all 12 of the designated forts are located within the modern boundaries of Maharashtra.
3. The network includes diverse architectural typologies such as hill forts, island forts, and plateau forts.
4. The fortification system rejected the integration of natural terrain, relying solely on imported European concrete.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The UNESCO inscription recognizes a network of 12 distinct forts built between the 17th and 19th centuries that highlight the defense strategies of the Maratha Empire.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** While 11 of the forts are situated in Maharashtra (such as Raigad, Shivneri, and Pratapgad), the 12th component is the historic Gingee Fort, located in Tamil Nadu.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The nomination showcases a diverse mix of defense styles, categorizing them into hill forts (e.g., Salher, Lohgad), island forts (e.g., Sindhudurg, Khanderi), and plateau/forest forts (Panhala and Pratapgad).
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The genius of Maratha military architecture relied almost entirely on adapting to local natural terrain, using local stone and organic design principles rather than foreign concrete.

5. With reference to the historical development of the Golden Temple (Sri Darbar Sahib) in Amritsar, consider the following statements:

1. The initial foundation of the holy city was laid in 1577 CE by Guru Ram Das Ji, the fourth Sikh Guru.
2. The architectural construction of the central shrine was completed under the guidance of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, who also appointed Baba Budha Ji as the first granthi.
3. The foundation stone of the shrine was laid by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, demonstrating early state sponsorship of the monument.

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

Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The land was acquired from local landlords, and the foundational layout of the holy settlement (initially called Ramdaspur) was established in 1577 CE by the fourth Guru, Guru Ram Das Ji.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the fifth Sikh Guru, designed and completed the temple structure in 1604 CE. He compiled the Adi Granth and installed it inside the shrine, naming Baba Budha Ji as the head reader (granthi).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** As a testament to interfaith harmony and respect, the foundation stone of the Golden Temple was laid by the famous Muslim Sufi saint from Lahore, Hazrat Mian Mir, not by Emperor Akbar.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the traditional art form of Kathputli Puppetry:

1. It is a traditional form of string puppetry that originated and is primarily practiced in the state of Rajasthan.
2. The puppets are made out of sculpted metal wire and are traditionally operated by the traveling Bhat and Nat communities.
3. The performance serves as an educational and entertainment medium, narrating folklore, stories of warriors, and moral tales.

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Kathputli is an ancient string puppet tradition native to Rajasthan, with Jaipur, Nagaur, and Sikar serving as major historic centers.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The word Kath means wood and Putli means doll. The puppets are carved out of mango wood and dressed in colorful traditional cloths, not sculpted from metal wire. They are traditionally operated using strings by the indigenous Bhat and Nat communities.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** These puppet shows have served for generations as a community tool to preserve history, share social commentary, and recount the brave deeds of legendary kings and warriors.

7. This traditional performance, rooted in Maori mythology, involves vigorous rhythmic movements such as stamping feet and chanting. It is symbolically associated with Tane-rore, the son of the sun god, whose trembling hand movements represent the shimmering air of hot summer days. Identify this performance:

- (a) Haka Dance
- (b) Kattikali Performance
- (c) Saman Dance
- (d) Kapa Haka Waiata

Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Option (a) is correct:** The Haka is an indigenous posture dance of the Maori people of New Zealand (Aotearoa). According to their mythology, the shimmering heat waves seen on hot summer days represent Tane-rore dancing for his mother, which is represented in the dance by the rapid quivering of the performers hands (wiriwiri).

8. With reference to the ancient Sanskrit treatise Natyashastra, consider the following statements:

1. It is traditionally attributed to Bharata Muni and is popularly regarded as the Fifth Veda.
2. The text is composed entirely in prose sentences, completely avoiding the use of the traditional sloka form.
3. Its core aesthetic contribution is the Rasa theory, which outlines the emotional frameworks essential to performance.

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Believed to have been compiled between 200 BCE and 200 CE, the Natyashastra is attributed to Bharata Muni. Because it combined elements of speech, song, dance, and emotion to educate society, it was elevated to the status of the Fifth Veda.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The treatise is composed primarily in poetic verse form (slokas) to help with oral transmission and memorization, with only a few prose sentences appearing in later commentary additions.

- **Statement 3 is correct:** The text introduces the foundational Rasa-Bhava framework, explaining how an audience experiences core emotional states (Rasa) through a performer's physical and emotional expressions.

9. Which of the following statements with regard to the historic Vrindavani Vastra is/are correct?

1. It is a magnificent 16th-century silk tapestry produced under the guidance of the saint-reformer Srimanta Sankardeva during Assam's Vaishnavite movement.
2. The textile was woven to depict scenes from the terrestrial military conquests of the Koch king Nara Narayan.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Vrindavani Vastra is a complex silk tapestry woven in Assam during the 16th century under the direct creative direction of Srimanta Sankardeva, the leader of the regional Bhakti movement.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Though the weaving project was supported by the Koch King Nara Narayan, the tapestry does not feature secular battle scenes. Instead, it depicts religious motifs, specifically scenes from Lord Krishna's childhood in the forests of Vrindavan.

10. Which of the following statements with regard to the traditional Sohrai Art is/are correct?

1. It is a ritual wall painting tradition traditionally practiced by tribal communities such as the Santhal, Munda, and Oraon in Jharkhand.
2. These artworks are created primarily by women on mud walls using natural pigments during harvest festivals to honor livestock and fertility.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Sohrai art is an indigenous wall painting style passed down through generations within the Santhal, Munda, Oraon, and Asur tribes of Jharkhand (especially around Hazaribagh and the Santhal Parganas).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** This art form is traditionally painted by tribal women on the mud walls of their homes using natural earth pigments, clay colors, and chewed bamboo twigs. It is done during post-harvest celebrations to show gratitude to nature, celebrate fertility, and honor their cattle.

Dance / Music / Painting / Festivals / Celebrations

1. With reference to traditional Indian tribal art, consider the following statements:

1. Sohrai is a ritual wall painting tradition practiced predominantly by the Santhal, Munda, and Oraon tribal communities of Jharkhand.
2. It is executed primarily by tribal men using imported synthetic oil paints and modern polymer brushes to ensure structural longevity.
3. The art form is painted during post-harvest festivals to express gratitude, honor livestock, and celebrate agrarian life.

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

Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Sohrai is a prominent ritualistic mud-wall painting style belonging to the Santhal, Munda, Oraon, and Asur tribes residing in the Hazaribagh and Santhal Parganas regions of Jharkhand.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Sohrai is entirely a women-led art form. Instead of synthetic paints or commercial brushes, it is created using natural earth pigments (such as red ochre, white kaolin, and black manganese) and applied using basic tools like bamboo twigs, chewed sticks, or cloth rags.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The paintings are created during crucial harvest intervals (coinciding with Diwali) as a thanksgiving ritual dedicated to cattle wealth, crop fertility, and nature.

2. Consider the following statements regarding North Indian classical music structures:

1. Chautal is a traditional rhythmic cycle consisting of a 12-beat structure deeply associated with the Dhrupad genre.
2. The primary percussion instrument used to accompany and improvise within Chautal compositions is the Tabla.
3. It features an fluid, non-fixed structural pattern called thapi that allows extensive rhythmic freedom.

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

Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Chautal is an ancient 12-beat rhythmic framework foundational to the performance of Dhrupad, the oldest surviving grand vocal style of Hindustani classical music.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The primary percussion counterweight for Chautal is the **Pakhawaj** (a two-headed barrel drum), not the Tabla. The deep, heavy resonance of the Pakhawaj is vital for executing the powerful strokes required by the 12-beat dhrupad cycle.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Unlike modern styles that stick to a rigid theka (fixed repeated drum phase), Chautal compositions often leverage thapi, a fluid, improvisational pattern giving artists greater freedom.

3. Which of the following statements with regard to the traditional musical instrument Ghumot is/are correct?

1. It is a mud-based membranophone percussion instrument from Goa, designed as a baked earthen pot with an animal skin covering.
2. To strictly comply with wildlife protection regulations, the traditional use of monitor lizard skin has been replaced by goat or buffalo hide.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Ghumot is a classic heritage percussion instrument of Goa. It is structured as a pumpkin-shaped clay pot, sun-dried, kiln-fired, and covered on one open side with a taut membrane.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Historically, the skin of the endangered monitor lizard was preferred for maximum acoustic resonance. Following wildlife protection bans, artisans shifted to using legal substitutes like goat, buffalo skin, or synthetic materials, protecting biodiversity while preserving Goan musical traditions.

4. Which of the following statements with regard to Gond Art is/are correct?

1. It is a globally recognized tribal art form practiced primarily by the Pardhan Gond community across the state of Madhya Pradesh.
2. The style is instantly identifiable by its geometric patterns where the main motifs are filled entirely with dense parallel fields of fine dots and lines.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Gond art originates from the decorative and storytelling practices of the Pardhan Gond sub-tribe located in the central Indian plateau, specifically across Madhya Pradesh.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The signature technique of Gond art involves using elaborate, repetitive line-work, decorative dashes, and precise dots to fill in the inner silhouettes of animals, deities, and trees. This gives the artwork a sense of movement and texture.

5. With reference to traditional Indian sports, consider the following statements:

1. Mallakhamb is an ancient aerial gymnastic and martial art form performed on a vertical wooden pole or a hanging rope.
2. The earliest recorded literary description of this sport is found within the 12th-century text Manasollasa, authored by King Someshvara III.
3. Mallakhamb was officially recognized as an Olympic medal event during the recent Berlin Games.

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

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Mallakhamb involves athletes performing high-intensity core balancing acts, yoga postures, and wrestling maneuvers on a vertical pole (usually Sheesham wood) or a suspended rope.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** While archaeological evidence pushes its roots further back, the definitive, oldest surviving written record detailing Mallakhamb appears in the Chalukyan encyclopedia Manasollasa (1129 CE).
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Mallakhamb was only featured as a demonstration sport at the Berlin Olympics in 1936 to showcase India's traditional culture, but it was never included as an official competitive Olympic medal event.

6. Which of the following statements with regard to the Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara is/are correct?

1. It is a massive biennial tribal festival celebrated at Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary of Telangana.
2. The historical origin of the festival commemorates the armed resistance of ancestral Koya tribal women against the tax oppression of Kakatiya rulers.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Jatara is celebrated every two years at Medaram, located in the Mulugu district of Telangana. Situated deep inside the Eturnagaram Wildlife Sanctuary, it attracts millions of pilgrims, making it one of the largest human gatherings in Asia.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The festival honors the courage of a mother-daughter duo (Sammakka and Saralamma) from the Koya tribe. According to local lore, they chose martyrdom over bowing down to unfair tax collection systems imposed by the Kakatiya dynasty during a severe drought.

7. With reference to the cultural heritage of North-East India, consider the following statements:

1. Lankhong Puja is an essential socio-religious community festival celebrated by the Tiwa (Lalung) tribe.
2. The primary objective of the festival is to perform community rituals to secure blessings for a prosperous Rabi crop season.
3. The Tiwa community belongs linguistically to the Tibeto-Burman language family and resides across parts of Assam and Meghalaya.

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Lankhong Puja is a traditional agricultural and spiritual festival belonging to the Tiwa community (historically called the Lalung).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The festival is timed around farming cycles, where community prayers and offerings are made to local deities to protect their winter fields and ensure a bountiful Rabi harvest.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Tiwas belong to the Tibeto-Burman ethnolinguistic family. They live mainly in the plains and hills of Assam (such as Morigaon and Nagaon) as well as adjoining areas of Meghalaya. All three statements are accurate.

8. Consider the following statements regarding the annual Ambubachi Mela:

1. It is an annual post-monsoon festival held at the historic Kamakhya Temple on the Nilachal Hills in Assam.
2. The celebration centers around the natural phenomenon of earth's fertility, during which no physical idol is worshipped inside the sanctum sanctorum.
3. The present structure of the Kamakhya Temple was reconstructed in the 16th century by Chilarai, a king of the regional Koch dynasty.

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Ambubachi Mela takes place every year at the Kamakhya Temple in Guwahati, positioned atop the sacred Nilachal Hills along the Brahmaputra River.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The festival is unique because it celebrates the menstruation cycle of the Goddess, symbolizing the creative power of the earth. During these three days, regular temple activities pause, and no physical idol worship takes place. Instead, a natural stone fissure is revered.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** After the original temple structure was heavily damaged by Kala Pahar, it was rebuilt in 1565 CE under the patronage of King Chilarai of the Koch kingdom, combining indigenous and early styles.

9. Which of the following statements with regard to the first-ever BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival are correct?

1. It was hosted at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi under the core theme of SaptaSur: Seven Nations, One Melody.
2. The event was organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations under the administrative aegis of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The inaugural BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival brought together classical and folk musicians from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, under the unifying theme SaptaSur.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The event was organized by the ICCR under India's Ministry of External Affairs. It fulfilled a diplomatic commitment made during the 2025 regional summit, using cultural exchange as a soft-power tool to strengthen ties among the bay-of-bengal nations.

10. With reference to the Shirui Lily Festival, consider the following statements:

1. The festival is organized annually by the Manipur Tourism Department to encourage eco-tourism and protect an endangered endemic flora species.
2. The festival is hosted in the Ukhrul district, which is the traditional homeland of the Tangkhul Naga tribe.
3. The Shirui Lily is recognized as the official State Flower of Manipur and grows naturally in high-altitude environments.

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** First celebrated in 2017, this festival is run by the state's tourism arm each May to showcase local culture and raise awareness about saving the delicate Lily habitat.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The venue is the Ukhrul district, where the Tangkhul Naga community manages the local ecosystem. The community protects the flower as a cultural symbol linked to their traditional folklore.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The flower (*Lilium mackliniae*) is endemic to the upper slopes of the Shirui Hill range (at an altitude of around 2,673 meters) and serves as the official State Flower of Manipur. All statements are true.

Personalities in News

1. With reference to the classical Tamil poet-philosopher Thiruvalluvar and his work, the Tirukkural, consider the following statements:

1. The text is structurally categorized into three distinct books: Aram, Porul, and Inbam.
2. The Tirukkural is composed in a lengthy, narrative epic style that avoids short aphorisms or couplets.
3. The philosophical scope of the work addresses practical statecraft, judicial ideals, and universal secular humanism.

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Tirukkural is divided cleanly into three sections or books: Aram (dealing with moral virtue), Porul (dealing with socio-economic matters, wealth, and governance), and Inbam (dealing with love and domestic life).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The text is characterized by its remarkably concise poetic structure. It consists of 1,330 short couplets (kurals) using brief, memorable aphorisms, rather than a lengthy or narrative epic style.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Thiruvalluvar's philosophy is celebrated for its secular and universal humanism. It goes beyond sectarian identities to provide clear guidance on administrative ethics, public welfare, and daily personal conduct.

2. Which of the following statements with regard to Savitribai Phule is/are correct?

1. She co-founded India's first modern girls' school at Bhidewada, Pune, in 1848 alongside Jyotirao Phule.
2. She actively managed and popularized the Satyashodhak Samaj, which championed egalitarian marriages conducted without priests or dowry.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Savitribai Phule is recognized as the first female teacher of modern India. In 1848, she pioneered institutional education for girls and marginalized communities by establishing the landmark school at Bhidewada in Pune.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** She played a central role in organizing and sustaining the Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth Seekers Society). She was instrumental in standardizing alternative Satyashodhak wedding rites that deliberately excluded Brahmin priests and rejected the custom of dowries to promote social equality.

3. Consider the following statements regarding the initiatives and institutional contributions of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose:

1. He presided over the National Planning Committee in 1938, which advocated state-led industrialization and economic self-reliance.
2. He was elected as the President of the INC at both the Haripura and Tripuri sessions.
3. Following his resignation from the Congress presidency, he immediately joined the Hindu Mahasabha to mobilize right-wing youth.
4. He established the Azad Hind Government in 1943 as a sovereign government-in-exile with its own currency and diplomatic recognition.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** In 1938, Bose set up the National Planning Committee, which laid the groundwork for state-driven economic planning and industrialization in independent India.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Bose achieved significant mass popularity within the left wing of the Congress, leading to his election as Congress President at Haripura in 1938 and his re-election at Tripuri in 1939.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** After resigning due to ideological differences with the Gandhian faction during the Tripuri crisis, he founded the All India Forward Bloc in 1939 to unite leftist groups within the nationalist movement, not the Hindu Mahasabha.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** In 1943, Bose proclaimed the formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) in Singapore. This administrative body issued its own currency, set up civil courts, and received formal diplomatic backing from several global powers.

4. Which of the following statements with regard to Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati is/are correct?

1. He established the Arya Samaj in 1875 to revive original Vedic learning and challenge birth-based caste discrimination.
2. His landmark ideological and philosophical views were compiled and published in his most influential work, titled Satyarth Prakash.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj in Bombay in 1875. The movement advocated a return to the Vedas, promoted merit-based social structures, opposed idol worship, and championed women's education.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** His core philosophies, critiques of non-Vedic rituals, and socio-religious reform ideas are preserved in his primary literary work, Satyarth Prakash (The Light of Truth).

5. With reference to the revolutionary nationalist movement in India, consider the following statements regarding Chandrashekhar Azad:

1. He participated in the Kakori Train Conspiracy of 1925 but managed to evade arrest by the colonial police.
2. Following a crackdown on early revolutionary leaders, he reorganized the HRA into the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).
3. To safely direct underground operations in Jhansi, he adopted the secret pseudonym Balraj and disguised himself as a local teacher.

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

Answer: (d)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Azad was a key planner in the Kakori train robbery of 1925. While prominent co-conspirators were captured and prosecuted, Azad slipped through the police dragnet and moved his base of operations.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** After the HRA was dismantled by colonial arrests, Azad worked alongside revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh to reorganize the group into the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) in 1928, steering its ideology toward socialism.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Azad used the alias Balraj to sign off on official HSRA manifestos. While hiding near Jhansi, he lived under the alias Harishankar and posed as a village teacher to avoid detection.

6. Consider the following statements regarding the medieval philosopher-saint Madhvacharya:

1. He was the foundational proponent of the Dvaita (dualism) school of Vedanta philosophy.
2. His philosophical framework rejected dualism, arguing that the human soul and God are completely identical.
3. He introduced the doctrine of Pancha-Bheda, which outlines five real and eternal distinctions between God, souls, and matter.
4. He established the Krishna Mutt at Udupi and initiated the enduring Ashta Mathas monastic tradition.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Madhvacharya (13th century CE) founded the Dvaita (dualist) school of Vedanta, which offered a distinct alternative to Shankara's Advaita and Ramanuja's Vishishtadvaita.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** His philosophy, Tattvavada, is built on realist dualism. It asserts that God (Vishnu) is the sole independent reality, while individual souls and material objects are separate, dependent realities. It rejects monism.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** He formulated the Pancha-Bheda doctrine, which identifies five eternal distinctions: God and Soul, God and Matter, Soul and Matter, Soul and Soul, and Matter and Matter.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Madhvacharya set up the historic Krishna Mutt in Udupi, Karnataka, and placed it under the care of eight distinct monasteries (Ashta Mathas) to ensure the continuity of his devotional system.

7. Consider the following statements regarding the life and contributions of the ninth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur:

1. He was originally named Tyag Mal and was awarded the title Tegh Bahadur for his valor in the Battle of Kartarpur.
2. He founded the historic settlement of Chakk Nanaki, which later grew into the major Sikh center of Anandpur Sahib.
3. His spiritual hymns and compositions were excluded from the final compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib.
4. He traveled extensively across regions outside Punjab, including Bihar, Bengal, and Assam, to establish community kitchens.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Born as Tyag Mal to Guru Hargobind Sahib, his display of swordsmanship at the Battle of Kartarpur (1634) led his father to bestow upon him the name Tegh Bahadur.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** He purchased a plot of land from the ruler of Bilaspur and established Chakk Nanaki between 1665 and 1672. This settlement later became the historic town of Anandpur Sahib.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** His literary and spiritual contributions are preserved in the Sikh scripture. His son, Guru Gobind Singh, incorporated 59 shabads and 57 shaloks composed by Guru Tegh Bahadur into the final canon of the Guru Granth Sahib.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Guru Tegh Bahadur traveled well beyond Punjab into northern and eastern India to spread his teachings, dig community wells, and set up langars for local populations.

8. With reference to the tribal leader and freedom fighter Birsa Munda, consider the following statements:

1. He launched the historic Ulgulan rebellion to protest the colonial disruption of the traditional Khuntkatti land tenure system.
2. He founded the distinct, reformist Birsait sect, which blended tribal traditions with elements of Vaishnavism.
3. Following his martyrdom in 1900, the colonial government passed the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act of 1908 to safeguard tribal land rights.

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

Answer: (d)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Birsa Munda led the Ulgulan movement (1895–1900) across the Chotanagpur region to resist British policies and contractors (dikus) who had undermined the Khuntkatti system (customary joint tribal land ownership).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** He established the Birsait sect to encourage spiritual and social reform. The movement urged tribal communities to abandon superstitions, stop alcohol consumption, and return to an egalitarian lifestyle influenced by Vaishnavism.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Although the rebellion was suppressed and Birsa Munda died in Ranchi Jail in 1900, the movement compelled the British administration to pass the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act of 1908. This legislation prohibited the sale of tribal lands to non-tribal buyers, offering legal protection to indigenous communities.

9. Which of the following statements with regard to Lokmata Devi Ahilyabai Holkar is/are correct?

1. She governed the Malwa kingdom during the 18th century from her royal capital located at Maheshwar.
2. She actively patronized and founded the famous Maheshwari saree handloom industry.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (c)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Ahilyabai Holkar assumed the governance of the Malwa region in 1767. She moved her administrative capital to Maheshwar on the banks of the Narmada River, where she established a peaceful and prosperous rule.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** She did not ban local textiles; rather, she actively patronized and founded the famous Maheshwari saree handloom industry. She invited master weavers to her capital and provided them with financial support, establishing a traditional textile craft that remains economically viable today.

10. Identify the 13th-century saint-scholar based on the following historical clues:

1. He was a direct disciple of Madhvacharya and wrote authoritative commentaries on Dvaita Vedanta.
 2. He served as an influential minister in the administration of the Kalinga Kingdom.
 3. He is traditionally celebrated as the pioneering progenitor of the Haridasa musical and devotional movement.
- (a) Raghavendra Tirtha
(b) Narahari Tirtha
(c) Jayatirtha
(d) Vyasatirtha

Answer: (b)

Detailed Explanation:

- **Option (b) is correct:** Saint Narahari Tirtha (13th century) was a prominent philosopher and scholar within the dualist school of Vedanta. Before committing himself fully to monastic life under Madhvacharya, he held an administrative post as a high-ranking minister in the Kalinga Kingdom (covering parts of modern Odisha and Andhra Pradesh). He is recognized as the founder of the Haridasa movement, which used devotional music and Kannada literature to share philosophical ideas with the public.