



# INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION

- I A S   S E L F   S T U D Y   G U I D E -

# Insights QUIZ

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# I. ECONOMY

**(Q)** The term Regulatory Forbearance, sometimes seen in the news, is often associated with

- a) Initial Public Offerings
- b) Startups
- c) Ease of doing business
- d) Restructured loans

**Solution: d.**

**TH:** The Reserve Bank of India has refused to provide any leeway to stressed borrowers or give in to the demand of higher dividend by the government, which issued three letters to the central bank in the last one month for consultation under Section 7 of the RBI Act. Section 7 of the RBI Act empowers the central government to issue directions to the RBI in public interest. This section has, however, never been invoked by the government so far. Section 7 has two parts — consultation and then issuing a direction to the RBI for taking some action in public interest.

According to central banking sources, one letter pertained to exemption for power companies from new stressed asset norms, while another one was to dilute capital threshold norms of the prompt corrective action framework. Yet another one communication was pertaining to more capital to the government from the reserves of the central bank.

**(Q)** The Generalised System of Preferences, the largest and oldest U.S. trade preference programme, is designed to promote economic development by allowing duty-free entry for thousands of products from designated beneficiary countries. The country recently revoked duty-free concessions on import of at least 50 Indian products, mostly from the

- a) Refined petroleum and pharmaceutical sector
- b) Pharmaceutical sector
- c) Agriculture and handloom sector
- d) Renewable energy and agriculture sector

**Solution: c.**

**TH:** The U.S. on Thursday revoked duty-free concessions on import of at least 50 Indian products, mostly from handloom and agriculture sectors, reflecting the Trump administration's tough stand on trade-related issues with New Delhi. The federal register issued a notification, listing out 90 products which were so far subject to duty-free provisions under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). U.S. President Donald Trump issued a presidential proclamation on Tuesday, leading to the removal of these products from the privilege beginning November 1.

As of November 1, these products "will no longer qualify for duty-free preferences under the GSP programme but may continue to be imported subject to regular Most Favored Nation duty-rates," an official of U.S. Trade Representative told PTI. A review of the products indicates that the presidential proclamation is not country specific, but product specific. With India being the largest beneficiary of the GSP, it has been hit the most by the latest decision of the Trump administration.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements in the context of Capital Adequacy Ratio, a term sometimes seen in the news:

1. Basel norms are applicable to NBFCs in India.
2. The CAR norms for Indian banks is 9 per cent.
3. Indian banks with foreign presence must maintain a CAR of 8 per cent.

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

**Solution: a.**

The RBI guidelines regarding the CAR norms in India:

- Basel-I norm of the CAR was to be achieved by the Indian banks by
- The CAR norm was raised to 9 percent with effect from 2000 (Narasimham Committee-II had recommended to raise it to 10 per cent).
- Foreign banks as well as Indian banks with foreign presence as well as other Scheduled Commercial Banks to follow Basel- II norms, e.f. 2008/2009. The Basel-II norm for the CAR is 12 per cent.

Banking in India, Indian Economy by Ramesh Singh; In the news: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about the Central Board of RBI:

1. Its non-official directors constitute the majority.
2. No member on the board is a government official.
3. Members are appointed for a period of four years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Solution: b.**

The Reserve Bank's affairs are governed by a [central board of directors](#). The board is appointed by the Government of India in keeping with the Reserve Bank of India Act.

- Appointed/nominated for a period of four years
- Constitution:
  - Official Directors
    - Full-time : Governor and not more than four Deputy Governors
  - Non-Official Directors
    - Nominated by Government: ten Directors from various fields and two government Official
    - Others: four Directors – one each from four local boards
- Functions : General superintendence and direction of the Bank's affairs.

In the news: the tussle between the government and RBI, plus Section 7 of RBI Act.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements in the context of the demonetisation exercise, undertaken two years ago:

1. Currency in circulation today is more than what it was just before demonetisation.
2. The value of mobile banking transactions today have nearly doubled in comparison to the period just before demonetisation.

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

**Solution: c.**

- Currency in circulation increased to ₹19.6 lakh crore as on Oct. 26, 2018, from ₹17.9 lakh crore on Nov.4, 2016.
- Cash withdrawals from ATMs in Oct. 2016 were ₹2.54 lakh crore, while the number for August 2018 was ₹2.75 lakh crore – a growth of 8%.
- ATM withdrawals had crashed to ₹1.06 lakh crore in December 2016.
- Mobile banking transactions rose to ₹2.06 lakh crore in Aug. 2018 from ₹1.13 lakh crore in October 2016.

**TH;**

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI was constituted by the Central Government for the first time in 2016.
2. The implementation of a flexible inflation targeting framework by the MPC has a statutory basis.

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

**Solution: c.**

**PIB:** As per the provisions of the RBI Act, out of the six Members of Monetary Policy Committee, three Members will be from the RBI and the other three Members of MPC will be appointed by the Central Government. In exercise of the powers conferred by section 45ZB of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Central Government accordingly constituted, through a Gazette Notification dated 29th Sept 2016, the Monetary Policy Committee of RBI.

**TH (2015):** The Centre and the Reserve Bank of India signed an agreement last month under which the central bank will prioritise controlling price rise above the other objectives of the monetary policy — interest rates and the foreign exchange rate.. In [May 2016](#), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934 was amended to provide a statutory basis for the implementation of the flexible inflation targeting framework.

In the news: [TH](#); [Livemint](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Treasury Bills (TBs) are used by the Central Government to fulfil its short-term liquidity requirement up to the period of three years.
2. TBs function as requirements of the Cash Reserve Ratio and Statutory Liquidity Ratio of the banking institutions.

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

**Solution: b.**

CH-Indian Financial Market, Indian Economy by Ramesh Singh:

**Treasury Bills** are used by the Central Government to fulfil its **short-term liquidity requirement** upto the period of **364 days**. At present, three types of TBs are issued – the **91-day** TBs, **182-day** TBs and the **364-day** TBs. The TBs other than providing short-term cushion to the government, also function as short-term investment avenues for the banks and financial institutions, besides functioning as requirements of the CRR and SLR of the banking institutions.

In the news ([TH](#)): The National Stock Exchange (NSE) has launched an app and web-based platform, 'NSE goBID', for retail investors to buy government securities. The new app would allow investors to invest in treasury bills (T-Bills) of 91 days, 182 days and 364 days and various government bonds from one year to almost 40 years, said a statement by the exchange. The retail investors would be able to make payment directly from their bank accounts using Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Internet banking, the statement added.

## II. GEOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT

(Q) Recently in the news, Cerrado is where soybeans is being grown on commercial scale. Cerrado is

- a) A deciduous forest
- b) A tropical rainforest
- c) A temperate grassland
- d) A parkland or bush-veld

**Solution: d.**

In the news ([BBC](#)): The Cerrado savanna is an area in Brazil the same size as Western Europe. It's one of the most biodiverse places in world – 40% of animal and plant species there can be found nowhere else on the planet. A report by the WWF says it is being burned and cleared at speed, with the deforestation largely driven by demand for land to grow soybeans. These are mainly exported to feed livestock, such as pigs and chickens, for consumption around the world. The Cerrado is one of the most endangered ecosystems on the planet.

GC Leong: The type of vegetation in Savannah regions is best described as “parkland” or “bush-veld”, rather than “tropical grassland”.

(Q) As an ecological phenomenon, a trophic cascade is definitely caused when

- a) Secondary succession immediately follows primary succession.
- b) Top predators are removed from an ecosystem.
- c) Human demand on resources exceeds what earth can regenerate each year.
- d) Energy flowing through the food chain is a constant.

**Solution: b.**

[Britannica](#): **Trophic cascade**, an ecological phenomenon triggered by the addition or removal of top predators and involving reciprocal changes in the relative populations of predator and prey through a food chain, which often results in dramatic changes in ecosystem structure and nutrient cycling. In a three-level food chain, an increase (or decrease) in carnivores causes a decrease (or increase) in herbivores and an increase (or decrease) in primary producers such as plants and phytoplankton.

[TH](#);

(Q) Which among the following Critically Endangered species can you find in the Arctic region as well as in some parts of India ?

- a) Spoonbill sandpiper
- b) Pink-headed duck
- c) Himalayan quail
- d) Jerdon's courser

**Solution: a.**

[BBC](#): The Arctic is no longer the safe haven it once was for nesting birds, a new scientific report warns. Having nests raided by predators is a bigger threat for birds flocking to breed than in the past, it shows. This raises

the risk of extinction for birds on Arctic shores, say researchers. For critically endangered species such as the spoonbill sandpiper, this could be “the last nail in the coffin”.

[IUCN:](#)      [MOEF booklet;](#)

**(Q)** The recently instituted Global Cooling Prize, led by the Rocky Mountain Institute, is a competition to develop

- a) Cheap and efficient technologies that can capture CO<sub>2</sub> directly from the air.
- b) Affordable cooling solutions that can provide access to cooling to people around the world without warming the planet.
- c) Breakthrough technologies that will convert CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from power plants and industrial facilities into valuable products like building materials, alternative fuels.
- d) None of the above

**Solution: b.**

**TH:** By 2022, India is expected to have a fourth of the world’s air conditioning units, and the risks to climate from this could be immense, according to a report... Several Departments in India, including the Department of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Power, on Monday announced a partnership with the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), a U.S.-based institute, and Conservation X Labs, a technology solutions company, to institute a Global Cooling Prize to motivate research laboratories across the world to develop highly efficient cooling technologies.

A technology solution that could help to reduce the impact by one-fifth and ensure that air conditioning units use 75% less electricity would be needed, says Solving the Global Cooling Challenge, a report written by the Rocky Mountain Institute. A technology solution would not only significantly reduce the burden on electricity grids but also save ₹109 trillion (\$ 1.5 trillion).

**(Q)** With reference to the 2016 amendment to the Montreal Protocol at Kigali, Rwanda, consider the following statements:

1. Developed countries will start to phase down Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) by 2020.
2. Some developing countries will freeze HFCs consumption levels in 2025.
3. Some countries such as India will begin reduction of its usage of HFCs only in 2030.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: d.**

**TH:** In 2016, India was a signatory to a compact of 107 countries to “substantially phase” out the potent greenhouse gas, called hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), by 2045 and move to prevent a potential 0.5 C rise in global temperature by 2050. HFCs are a family of gases that are largely used in refrigerants at home and in car air-conditioners. However, they substantially worsen global warming. India, China, the United States and Europe have committed themselves to reducing the use of HFC by 85% by 2045.

- Under the compromise stitched up, developed countries will start to phase down the climate impacting family of refrigerant gases called HFCs by 2019.



- Most developing countries, including China, will subsequently follow with a freeze of HFCs consumption levels in 2024 and subsequently reduce the usage.
- Some countries, including India, bargained to get the peak consumption year pegged to 2028, gaining an four extra years.
- India was not able to bargain for the 2030 as the freeze year and had to settle for 2028. The consequence, in terms of costs to the Indian industry and economy, would be much higher than what the two year difference suggests.
- “By 2028, many of the patents on costly alternatives are to expire. So, we wanted 2030 to be the freeze year. The two years in between would have given us the chance to figure out cheaper new technological options rather than their patented technologies that would have taken root by 2028”.

[BS](#); [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about the the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES):

1. It was established in 2017.
2. All states members of the UN are eligible for IPBES membership.
3. IPBES does for biodiversity what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change does for climate change.

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

**Solution: b.**

**What is IPBES ?**

- The IPBES is an independent intergovernmental body, established by member States in 2012.
- It provides policymakers with objective scientific assessments about the state of knowledge regarding the planet’s biodiversity, ecosystems and the benefits they provide to people, as well as the tools and methods to protect and sustainably use these vital natural assets.
- Its mission is to strengthen knowledge foundations for better policy through science, for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development.
- To some extent IPBES does for biodiversity what the IPCC does for climate change.

In the news: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements with reference to the geography of California, which is recently witnessed some of the deadliest fires ever to have hit the state:

1. The planetary winds in this region are onshore South-Westerlies.
2. California is a coastal state which has a border with Mexico.

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

**Solution: b.**

The planetary winds in this region are offshore Trade Winds.



Improvisation: California fires;

Ch-18, GC Leong's Certificate Physical and Human Geography;

**(Q)** A 'flyway' is a geographical region within which a single or a group of migratory species completes its annual cycle – breeding, moulting, staging and non-breeding. Consider the following statements in this context:

1. There are nineteen flyways in the world.
2. Including the Central Asian Flyway, parts of India are visited by migratory birds belonging to three flyways.
3. Most of the species of migratory birds that visit the Indian sub-continent use wetlands as habitats.

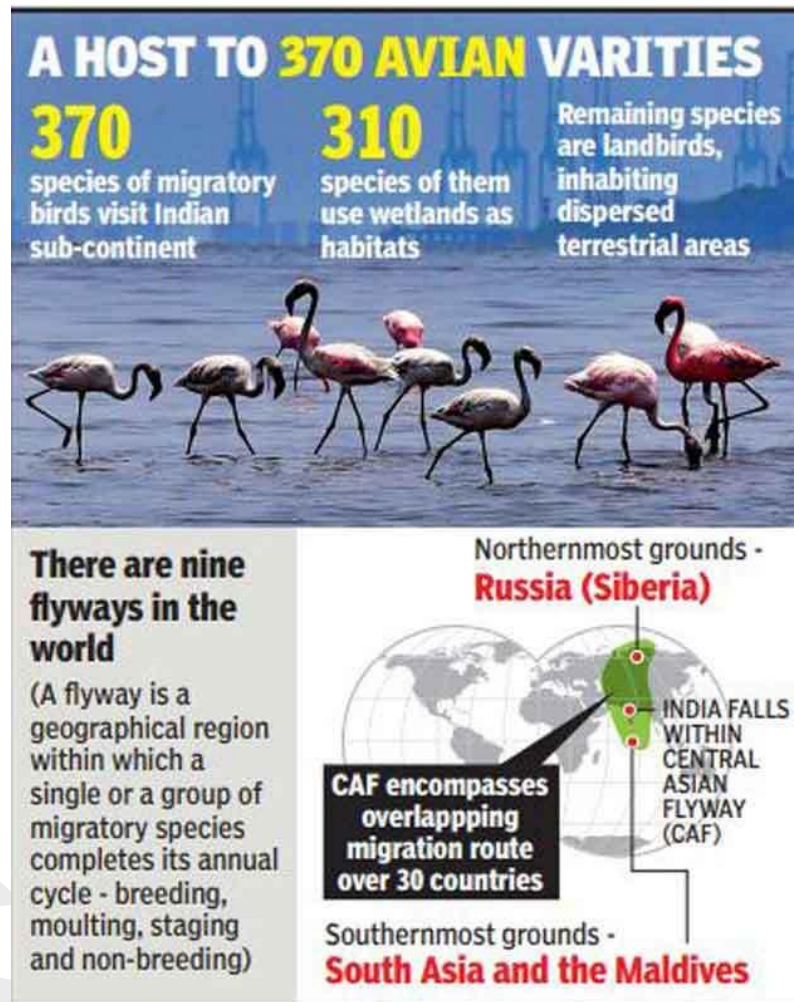
Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: b.**

**ToI:** The Central Asian Flyway encompasses overlapping migration routes over 30 countries for different water-birds linking their northernmost breeding ground in Siberia to the southernmost non-breeding grounds in west and south Asia, the Maldives and the British Indian Ocean territory. “India has a strategic role in the flyway as it provides critical stopover sites to over 90% of the bird species known to use this migratory route,” says the India’s National Action Plan (NAP) for Conservation of Migratory Birds and their Habitats.

According to the NAP, at least 370 species of migratory birds from three flyways (CAF, East Asian Australasian Flyway covering parts of eastern India and Asian East African Flyway covering parts of western India) are reported to visit Indian sub-continent during their annual cycle.



Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** National Highway 4, numbered earlier as NH 223, recently in the news, is about 331 kilometers in length. It passes through

- Andaman Islands
- Walong in Arunachal Pradesh
- Dera Baba Nanak in Punjab
- Moreh in Manipur

**Solution: a.**

- NH 4 (Old NH 223) is the Andaman Trunk Road which passes through the Jarawa reserve.

[TH](#);

[TH1](#);

[NHAI PDF1](#);

[NHAI PDF2](#);

**(Q)** Thunderstorm, Lesknow, and Birbil are all terms sometimes seen in the news. These are associated with/related to

- a) Atmosphere and climate research
- b) International military exercises
- c) Combating malaria
- d) Wildlife crime control

**Solution: d.**

**PIB:** United Nation Environment has awarded Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India with Asia Environment Enforcement Awards, 2018 for excellent work done by the Bureau in combating transboundary environmental crime.

- WCCB has been conferred this award in Innovation category. WCCB has adopted innovative enforcement techniques that have dramatically increased enforcement of transboundary environmental crimes in India. Notably it has developed an online Wildlife Crime Database Management System to get real time data in order to help analyze trends in crime and devise effective measures to prevent and detect wildlife crimes across India.
- This system has been successfully used to analyse trends, helping put in preventive measures as well as for successfully carrying out operations such as Operation SAVE KURMA, THUNDERBIRD, WILDNET, LESKNOW, BIRBIL, THUNDERSTORM, LESKNOW-II along with other enforcement agencies.

**(Q)** The phenomenon of beaching, sometimes in the news, is associated with which among the following groups ?

- a) Whales
- b) Crabs
- c) Octopuses
- d) Turtles

**Solution: a.**

**BBC:** A group of up to 145 pilot whales have died after becoming stranded on a beach on Stewart Island in New Zealand... It's not fully known why whales or dolphins strand. Possible reasons might be sickness, navigational errors, falling tides or being chased by a predator.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Thorium is more abundant in the earth's crust than uranium.
2. All the thorium that is mined can be used in a reactor, in comparison to less than 1% of natural uranium that may be used.
3. While thorium is also located in India's Eastern coastal states, the largest reserves are in the western coastal states.
4. KAMINI is the only reactor in the world operating with Uranium-233 fuel.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

### Solution a.

Thorium has several advantages over Uranium as a nuclear power source.

- Thorium is three times more abundant in the Earth's crust than Uranium, and
- many Thorium deposits contain other mineral resources of value (rare earths elements in particular).
- All the Thorium that is mined can be used in a reactor, in comparison to less than 1% of natural Uranium that may be used.
- Th-232 possesses a 14 billion year half-life, rendering it safer than Uranium and Plutonium.

Significant Thorium deposits exist in the **United States, Brazil, India, and Australia**; the total resource of monazite in India is 12.5 million tonne, which contains approximately 1 million tonne thorium metal.

Imported fuel (natural uranium) contains fissile isotope (Uranium-235), which undergoes nuclear fission in a reactor to produce energy. It is not possible to build a nuclear reactor using thorium (Thorium-232) alone due to its physics characteristics. Thorium has to be converted to Uranium-233 in a reactor before it can be used as fuel.

The Kalpakkam Mini Reactor (KAMINI), which is in operation at Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) at Kalpakkam, is the only reactor in the world operating with Uranium-233 fuel.

For statement 3 explanation, refer solution to next question.

[DAE](#); [Stanford](#); Improvisation: [BBC](#);

**(Q)** The largest reserves of thorium in India is located in

- a) Gujarat
- b) Kerala
- c) Andhra Pradesh
- d) Odisha

### Solution: c.

Thorium-bearing mineral monazite occurs in association with other Beach Sand Minerals (BSM) such as ilmenite, rutile, zircon, garnet and sillimanite in unconsolidated form along the coastal and inland placer sands of the country. Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has identified and evaluated 128 BSM deposits in the coastal beach placer sands in parts of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat and in the inland riverine placer sands in parts of Jharkhand and West Bengal. State-wise details of in situ monazite resource established by AMD (as on June, 2018):

State	No. of deposits	Resource (Million tonne)
Odisha	10	3.06
Andhra Pradesh	26	3.69
Tamil Nadu	51	2.46
Kerala	35	1.84
West Bengal	1	1.20
Jharkhand	1	0.21
Maharashtra	3	0.004
Gujarat	1	0.003
Total	128	12.467

[DAE](#); Improvisation: [BBC](#);



(Q) Consider the following statements about flammable ice:

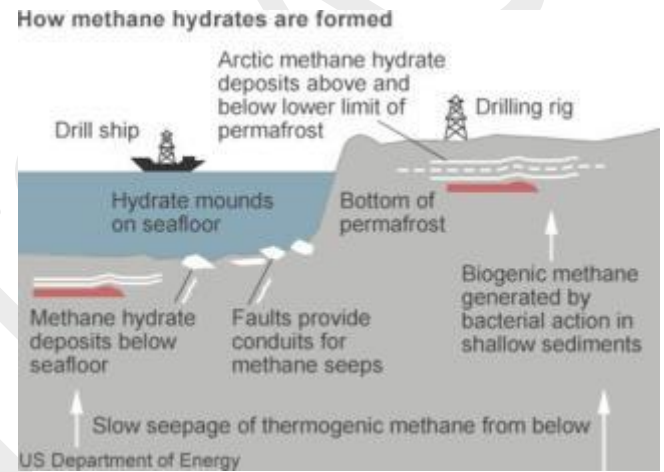
1. These are methane molecules that are encapsulated by water molecules.
2. They can only be found in sediments under the ocean floor.
3. Countries such as India, Japan and South Korea – that are largely oil-import dependent – are among the leading countries in research and exploration of it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: d.**

- **Flammable Ice** describes a frozen mixture of water and gas. It looks like ice crystals but if you zoom in to a molecular level, you see that the methane molecules are caged in by the water molecules.
- Officially known as methane clathrates or hydrates, they are formed at very low temperatures and under high pressure. They can be found in sediments under the ocean floor as well as underneath permafrost on land. One cubic metre of the compound releases about 160 cubic metres of gas, making it a highly energy-intensive fuel.
- As a country lacking any natural energy resources, Japan has been a pioneer in the field. Other leading countries are India or South Korea – who also don't have their own oil reserves. While the US and Canada are also active in the field, they have been focussing on hydrates under permafrost in the far north of Alaska and Canada.



From 2017: [BBC](#);

Improvisation: [BBC](#);

# III. GOVERNMENT SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES

(Q) In the Indian context, the terms 'IR8', 'IR36', 'Sonora 64' and 'Lerma Rojo' are all associated with

- a) Sustainable agriculture
- b) Food security
- c) Nutrition security
- d) a and b only

**Solution: b.**

**IE:** In the early 1960s, India imported 18,000 tonnes of the semi-dwarf high yielding (HY) wheat variety, Lerma Rojo and Sonora 64. Developed by Borlaug and his team at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), Mexico, these wheat varieties proved to be the harbinger of the Green Revolution. Indian scientists adapted the imported germplasm to create indigenous varieties: Kalyan developed by D S Athwal and Sona created by M S Swaminathan. Around the same time, the HY miracle rice, IR8 — developed by Peter Jennings and Henry M Beachell of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) — was imported. About a decade later, an improved variety, IR36 — developed by IRRI's Gurdev Khush — made its presence felt in the country's fields. The breeding programme under the All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) produced Padma and Jaya, the first indigenous HY rice varieties. These became the centrepiece of India's rice revolution.

(Q) Consider the following statements about India's National IPR Policy:

1. The nodal agency to coordinate, guide and oversee implementation of IPRs is the Human Resource Development Ministry.
2. It commits India to reconciling its patent laws in accordance with such current international benchmarks that enable it to participate in several on-going multilateral trade negotiations.
3. The policy will be reviewed every five years.

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

**Solution: c.**

**TH, Insights** (From 2016): The nodal agency to coordinate, guide and oversee implementation of IPRs is the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry... The government has indicated that there is no urgent need to change patent laws that are already fully World Trade Organization-compliant. So India has resisted pressure from the US and other Western countries to amend its patent laws.

In the news: [TH](#);

- (Q)** PESO, or the Petroleum Explosives and Safety Organisation, functions under the aegis of
- a) Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
  - b) Ministry of Mines
  - c) Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers
  - d) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

**Solution: d.**

**DIPP:** As a statutory authority, PESO is entrusted with the responsibilities under the

- Explosives Act, 1884;
- Petroleum Act, 1934,
- Inflammable Substances Act, 1952, and
- Environment (Protection Act), 1986.

<http://peso.gov.in/index.aspx>; In the news due to firecrackers-related orders from the Supreme Court.

**(Q)** The e-Incremental Learning Approach is an online system where programme functionaries will become more effective by learning to plan and execute each task correctly and consistently through methodical and ongoing capacity building. Which one of the following programmes is e-ILA a component of ?

- a) Universal Immunisation Programme
- b) Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana
- c) POSHAN Abhiyaan
- d) SWADHAR Greh

**Solution: c.**

It is a component of POSHAN Abhiyaan.

**PIB1;** In the news: **PIB2;**

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about Invest India:

1. It is India's national investment promotion and facilitation agency.
2. It is a non-profit venture under the Ministry of Finance.
3. It focuses on promoting investing in sustainable development.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: c.**

**InvestIndia:** It is a non-profit venture under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.



It was recently awarded the **UN Award for excellence** in promoting investments in sustainable development. Invest India also partners with substantial investment promotion agencies and multilateral organizations. Invest India also actively works with several Indian states to build capacity as well as bring in global best practices in investment targeting, promotion and facilitation areas.

[Vikaspedia National Current Affairs October 2018](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY), is a Maternity Benefit Programme:

1. It is being implemented in all districts where more than 50 per cent of the population is recognised as being multidimensionally deprived through the Socio Economic Caste Census.
2. A conditional cash incentive of 5,000 rupees in three instalments is provided to a pregnant woman.
3. In case of miscarriage or still birth, the beneficiary would be eligible to claim only the remaining instalments in the event of any future pregnancy.

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

**Solution: b.**

[Vikaspedia](#): PMMVY is being implemented in all districts of the country in accordance with provisions of the NFSA, 2013. Statements 2 and 3 are correct.

A beneficiary is eligible to receive benefits under the scheme **only once**. In case of miscarriage/still birth, the beneficiary would be eligible to claim the remaining instalment(s) in event of any future pregnancy. Thus, after receiving the 1st instalment, if the beneficiary has a miscarriage, she would only be eligible for receiving 2nd and 3rd instalment in event of future pregnancy subject to fulfilment of eligibility criterion and conditionalities of the scheme.

[TH](#);

## IV. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(Q) Recently in the news, the NASA's Orion is

- a) A human spacecraft designed for deep space exploration.
- b) A dwarf planet explorer.
- c) A composition identifier instrument aboard the Parker Solar Probe.
- d) None of the above.

**Solution: a.**

**NASA:** For the first time in a generation, NASA is building a *human spacecraft* for deep-space missions that will usher in a new era of space exploration. A series of increasingly challenging missions awaits, and this new spacecraft will take us farther than we've gone before, including to the vicinity of the Moon and Mars.

In the news: [BBC](#);

(Q) 'Seven minutes of terror', a phrase only sometimes seen in the news, is endured by

- a) Martian landers
- b) The International Space Station
- c) Astronauts returning to earth
- d) None of the above

**Solution: a.**

**BBC:** NASA has released a video describing the perilous journey its *InSight probe* will make to the surface of Mars later this month. Fronted by Rob Manning, the chief engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the film describes the various stages of what is termed "*entry, descent and landing*", or EDL. It is a sequence of high jeopardy... The agency produced a similar video for its Curiosity Mars lander in 2012 called The 7 Minutes of Terror.

(Q) Recently in the news, 'Oumuamua' is a/an

- a) Interstellar asteroid
- b) Break-away rectangular Antarctic Ice shelf
- c) Goldilocks planetary system
- d) None of the above

**Solution: a.**

**TH:** Oumuamua is the first known interstellar object to enter our solar system. To read more about this object discovered in 2017, click [HERE](#).

(Q) Consider the following statements:

1. The main aim of the LIGO Scientific Collaboration is to detect gravitational waves.
2. Gravitational waves are caused only due to the merger or collision of large structures in space such as black holes and neutron stars.

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

**Solution: a.**

Watch this [YouTube](#) Video to understand why statement 2 is incorrect.

The [LIGO Scientific Collaboration \(LSC\)](#) is a group of scientists focused on the direct detection of gravitational waves, using them to explore the fundamental physics of gravity, and developing the emerging field of gravitational wave science as a tool of astronomical discovery. Several institutions/universities from India are participants in the LSC.

In the news: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The GSLV MkII is a two-stage heavy lift launch vehicle developed by ISRO.
2. The GSLV MkIII has four solid strap-ons, a core liquid booster and a cryogenic upper stage.
3. The GSLV MkIII will launch GSAT-29, a communication satellite for high-quality internet services.

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

**Solution: c.**

[GSLV MkIII](#) is a three-stage heavy lift launch vehicle developed by ISRO. The vehicle has two solid strap-ons, a core liquid booster and a cryogenic upper stage. It is designed to carry 4 ton class of satellites into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) or about 10 tons to Low Earth Orbit (LEO), which is about twice the capability of GSLV Mk II.

[GSLV MkII](#) is a three stage vehicle with four liquid strap-ons. The second stage is a liquid fueled stage. The indigenously developed cryogenic Upper Stage (CUS), which is flight proven, forms the third stage of GSLV Mk II.

## Sky is the limit

### The Satellite

- GSAT-29 is a 3,500 kg communication satellite for high quality Internet services

- It was built at an estimated cost of ₹360 crore with a lifespan of 10 years

- Will provide or augment digital communication in remote Village Resource Centres



A portion of the GSLV-MkIII-D2 being transported. ■ PHOTO: ISRO

### The Launcher

- GSLV-MkIII-D2 is the second test flight of the heavy lift vehicle carrying the satellite

- D2's success will regularise the launch vehicle's services & ease dependence on foreign service providers

(Q) Forty-four years ago today, a group of scientists gathered at the Arecibo Observatory to attempt humankind's first communication with intelligent life beyond our own planet. Their three-minute radio message—the Arecibo message—was aimed at a cluster of stars 25,000 light years away from earth. The Arecibo Observatory is located amidst the tropical forests of

- a) Canary Islands
- b) Chile
- c) Puerto Rico
- d) Galápagos Islands

**Solution: c.**

The Arecibo Observatory is located in Puerto Rico.



Google Doodle: Image source: [Britannica](#);

(Q) Consider the following pairs:

**GSLV MkIII engine/boosters** – *State of matter of fuel*

- 1. S200 – Liquid
- 2. L110 – Solid
- 3. Cryogenic Upper Stage – Liquid

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?

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



**Solution: c.**

**Core Stage : L110 Liquid Stage**

- The L110 liquid stage is powered by two **Vikas engines** designed and developed at the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre.

**Solid Rocket Boosters : S200**

- GSLV Mk III uses two S200 solid rocket boosters to provide the huge amount of thrust required for lift off. The S200 was developed at Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre. They use a solid rocket fuel called hydroxyl-terminated polybutadiene (HTPB) propellant. HTPB is a hard rubbery material that binds together the fuel and oxidizer.

**Cryogenic Upper Stage : C25**

- The C25 is powered by CE-20, India's largest cryogenic engine, designed and developed by the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre. The fuel used is Liquid Oxygen and Liquid Hydrogen.

[ISRO GSLV MkIII](#)

In the news: GSAT-29 launch.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Launched by the GSLV MkIII, GSAT29 was placed in a geosynchronous transfer orbit (GSTO).
2. The first operational mission of the GSLV MkIII will be the Chandrayaan-II in 2019.
3. GSLV MkIV will be the launch vehicle for the Gaganyaan mission.
4. The spacecraft in the Gaganyaan mission will be placed in a GSTO.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: c.**

**ET:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced in his Independence Day address that India will attempt to send an astronaut to space by 2022 on board 'Gaganyaan'. ISRO has hopes to achieve the feat by 2021, with the first unmanned programme of 'Gaganyaan' planned for December 2020. GSLV-MkIII-D2 will be the launch vehicle that will carry an Indian astronaut to space (Low Earth Orbit and not GSTO).

**TH:** The first successful experimental flight of the GSLV MkIII was in 2014 when it carried a dummy crew module as a payload. This proved its capacity in the atmospheric flight regime. Its first developmental flight was on June 5, 2017, when it launched GSAT19, weighing 3,136 kg. The present launch marked the second developmental flight of the MkIII. With these two successes, the launcher is declared 'operational' and joins the ranks of the working vehicles, the PSLV and the GSLV. The launcher can carry payloads up to 4 tonnes to the geosynchronous transfer orbit and up to 10 tonnes to a low-earth orbit.

The present launch marked the second developmental flight of the MkIII. With these two successes, the launcher is declared 'operational' and joins the ranks of the working vehicles, the PSLV and the GSLV. The launcher can carry payloads up to 4 tonnes to the geosynchronous transfer orbit and up to 10 tonnes to a low-earth orbit.

Image Source: [TH](#);

**2022: India's space odyssey**

What is the Human Space Flight Project all about?

- In 2022, 3 Indian astronauts, mostly flight test pilots from the IAF, will circle earth for seven days from a distance of 300-400 km
- They will travel in a 7,000-kg crew capsule. A GSLV-MkIII launch vehicle will lift them to their orbit
- The flight will take off from a refurbished launchpad at Sriharikota
- The entire project could cost roughly between ₹7,000 to 9,000 crore



**ALSO PROPOSED**

- Food, suits and other life systems for crew
- Astronaut selection & training
- Two unmanned trials, the first in two years
- A new command & tracking centre at ISTRAC, Bengaluru
- Improved launchpad at SDSC, Sriharikota

(Q) The Kibble balance, recently in the news, is associated with the accurate measurement of which one of the following International System of Units ?

- a) Kilogram
- b) Second
- c) Kelvin
- d) Ampere

**Solution: a.**

- Scientists have changed the way the kilogram is defined. Currently, it is defined by the weight of a platinum-based ingot called “Le Grand K”. Le Grand K has been at the forefront of the international system of measuring weights since 1889. Several close replicas were made and distributed around the globe. But the master kilogram and its copies were seen to change – ever so slightly – as they deteriorated.
- In a world where accurate measurement is now critical in many areas, such as in drug development, nanotechnology and precision engineering – those responsible for maintaining the international system had no option but to move beyond Le Grand K to a more robust definition.
- There is a quantity that relates weight to electrical current, called Planck’s constant – named after the German physicist Max Planck and denoted by the symbol  $h$ . But  $h$  is an incredibly small number and to measure it, the research scientist Dr Bryan Kibble built a super-accurate set of scales, known now as the Kibble balance. It enables the calculation of  $h$  to an accuracy of 0.000001%. This breakthrough has paved the way for Le Grand K to be deposed.

[BBC](#);

(Q) What is ‘Tokamak’, a term sometimes seen in the news ?

- a) A device that enables the use of thorium in place of uranium for power generation.
- b) It is the world’s first and fully autonomous robot farm.
- c) A new method of space travel that utilises solar sails.
- d) A magnetic fusion device.

**Solution: d.**

- The **Tokamak** is a device used in nuclear-fusion research for magnetic confinement of plasma. It consists of a complex system of magnetic fields that confine the plasma of reactive charged particles in a hollow, doughnut-shaped container. The tokamak (an acronym from the Russian words for toroidal magnetic confinement) was developed in the mid-1960s by Soviet plasma physicists. It produces the highest plasma temperatures, densities, and confinement durations of any confinement device.
- **Plasma**, in physics, is an electrically conducting medium in which there are roughly equal numbers of positively and negatively charged particles, produced when the atoms in a gas become ionized. It is sometimes referred to as the fourth state of matter, distinct from the solid, liquid, and gaseous states. A plasma may be produced in the laboratory by heating a gas to an extremely high temperature, which causes such vigorous collisions between its atoms and molecules that electrons are ripped free, yielding the requisite electrons and ions. A similar process occurs inside stars.

In the news: [BBC](#)

**(Q)** The Global Relay of Observatories Watching Transients Happen will focus on three scientific themes associated with astronomy. This does **not** include

- a) Heliopause
- b) Supernovae
- c) Near-earth asteroids
- d) Gravitational Wave sources

**Solution: a.**

The **GROWTH project** will focus on three scientific themes in the field of time-domain astronomy. These are cosmic explosions (supernovae), small near-earth asteroids and the electromagnetic identification of gravitational wave sources. We seek answers to the following scientific questions:

- Where and how are heavy elements synthesised?
- What are the final fates of stars?
- Where are the small near-earth asteroids and what are their orbits?

**GROWTH** is led by Caltech and has partnered with thirteen universities and research institutions – five in the USA and eight spread across the world in India, Sweden, Taiwan, Japan, Israel, Germany and the UK.

Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about additive manufacturing:

1. It began as a quick and cheap way of developing prototypes.
2. Changing features of a physical object to be built is a simple software change that can be effected quickly.
3. 3D printing is a form of additive manufacturing.
4. It is possible to use different substances for layering material, including metal powder, thermoplastics, glass and even edibles like chocolate.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: a.**

**Additive Manufacturing (GE):** Although the terms “3D printing” and “rapid prototyping” are casually used to discuss additive manufacturing, each process is actually a subset of additive manufacturing. While additive manufacturing seems new to many, it has actually been around for several decades.

**How does AM work?**

- The term “additive manufacturing” references technologies that grow three-dimensional objects one superfine layer at a time. Each successive layer bonds to the preceding layer of melted or partially melted material. It is possible to use different substances for layering material, including metal powder, thermoplastics, ceramics, composites, glass and even edibles like chocolate.
- Objects are digitally defined by computer-aided-design (CAD) software that is used to create .stl files that essentially “slice” the object into ultra-thin layers. This information guides the path of a nozzle or print head as it precisely deposits material upon the preceding layer. The journey from .stl file to 3D object is revolutionizing manufacturing. Gone are the intermediary steps, like the creation of molds or dies, that cost time and money.

**TH:** In additive manufacturing, changing features or tweaking shapes is a simple software change effected in minutes. Retooling of machines is not required and each unit can be customised. By eliminating the need to hold a large inventory of parts, set up an assembly line and purchase costly machines, adaptive manufacturing reduces capital and space requirements as well as the carbon footprint... Although it began as a quick and cheap way of developing prototypes, additive manufacturing has now gone mainstream in developed countries and is beginning to replace traditional manufacturing for many different applications.

**(Q)** Elysium Planitia is a flat plain in Mars, where NASA's InSight lander was successfully positioned. This place is close to the planet's

- a) North Pole
- b) Equator
- c) Temperate latitudes
- d) South Pole

**Solution: b.**

**BBC:** The US space agency Nasa has landed a new robot on Mars after a dramatic seven-minute plunge to the surface of the Red Planet. The InSight probe aims to study the world's deep interior, and make it the only planet – apart from Earth – that has been examined in this way. InSight is now sitting on a vast, flat plain known as Elysium Planitia, close to the Red Planet's equator. Before landing, Nasa had dubbed it the "biggest parking lot on Mars".

**(Q)** Consider the following statements with reference to 'Hyper-spectral Imaging':

1. It can be used to analyse soil health without requiring physical collection of soil samples
2. HysIS will be ISRO's first full-scale working satellite with this capability.

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

**Solution: c.**

From 2017 **(TH):** Hyperspectral imaging involves analysing extremely detailed images of an object — frequently to the scale of nanometres — and then reconstructing its constituent elements. Using custom-developed algorithms, satellite-images, or those taken from low flying planes or drones, can be used to calculate the proportion of nitrogen, potassium and phosphorous — the three most vital nutrients — as well as other minerals in the soil and be used to gauge its health.

From 2017 **(TH):** Hyperspectral or hypspx imaging is said to be an EO trend that is being experimented globally. Adding a new dimension to plain-vanilla optical imagers, it can be used for a range of activities from monitoring the environment, crops, looking for oil and minerals all the way up to military surveillance — all of which need images that show a high level of differentiation of the object or scene.

In the news **(TH):** ISRO all set for HysIS launch.



# V. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

(Q) In which of the following countries will you find national war memorials for Indian soldiers of the First World War ?

1. United Kingdom    2. Belgium    3. France    4. Netherlands

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

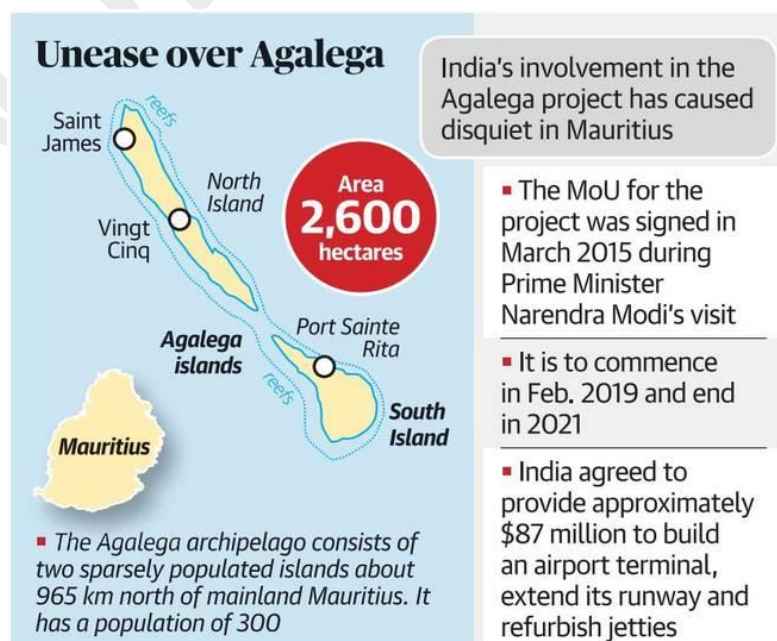
**Solution: c.**

TH: One hundred years after the end of World War I, the immense sacrifice and contributions of well over a million soldiers of undivided India are being incrementally recognised and memorialised the world over. In France, the centenary celebrations of Armistice Day on November 11 will include the unveiling of the second overseas national war memorial for Indian soldiers, by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu. The first such memorial abroad, formalised in 2002, is the Menin Gate in Ypres, Belgium.

(Q) The Agalega Islands is under the sovereign control of

- a) Maldives  
b) France  
c) Mauritius  
d) Seychelles

**Solution: c.**



**TH:** After facing resistance over placing its helicopters in the Maldives' Addu atoll and the virtual cancellation of its project to develop the Assumption Island in the Seychelles earlier this year, New Delhi is moving swiftly but quietly to ensure its project in the Mauritius — to construct a jetty, rebuild and extend the runway, and build an airport terminal on the Agalega Islands — does not run into trouble.

- (Q)** With its present membership, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership comprises
1. Nearly half of the world's population.
  2. Around a quarter of global GDP.

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

**Solution: c.**

**TH:** The RCEP is a proposed trade agreement between the 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries and their six free trade agreement partners, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea, and New Zealand. The grouping would comprise 25% of global GDP, 30% of global trade, 26% of FDI flows, and 45% of the population.

**(Q)** The top suppliers of crude oil to India include

1. Iraq
2. Venezuela
3. Nigeria
4. UAE
5. Russia

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Solution: b.**

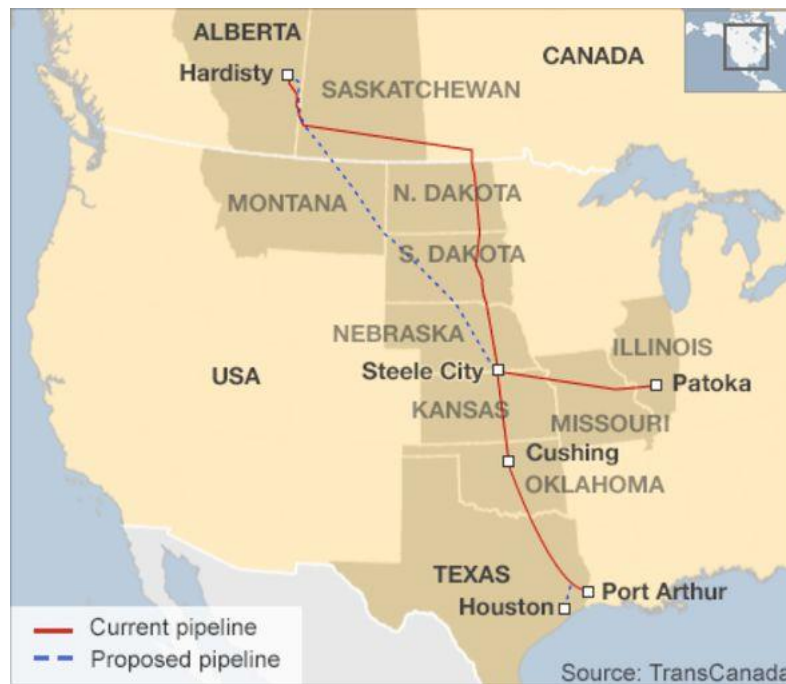
**India's crude oil imports, Region-wise share (%)**

REGION	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Middle East	61.25	58	59.73	64.42	63.79
Africa	16	17.42	19.12	14.44	15
South America	16.75	18.21	15.03	12.45	10.27

**ET;** Improvisation: US grants India sanctions relief for oil imports from Iran.

- (Q)** Sometimes in the news, the 'Keystone XL Pipeline' will boost the flow of oil from
- a) Canada to USA
  - b) Kazakhstan to China
  - c) Turkmenistan to India
  - d) None of the above

**Solution: a.**



**BBC:** The **Keystone XL Pipeline** is a planned 1,897km pipeline running from the oil sands of Alberta, Canada, to Steele City, Nebraska, where it would join an existing pipe. It could carry 830,000 barrels of oil each day. It would mirror an operational pipe, also called Keystone, but would take a more direct route, boosting the flow of oil from Canada.

**(Q)** In what way(s) will India joining as member of Advanced Motor Fuels Technology Collaboration Programme of the International Energy Agency benefit the country?

1. Reduction of energy import bill by at least 10% by 2022.
2. Deployment of advanced biofuels in transport sector in near future.
3. Avoidance of duplication of research and development efforts among member countries.

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

**Solution: d.**

All statements are correct.

**PIB:** The primary goal of joining AMF TCP by Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoP&NG) is to facilitate the market introduction of Advanced motor fuels/ Alternate fuels with an aim to bring down emissions and achieve higher fuel efficiency in transport sector.

The R&D work in AMF TCP is carried out within individual projects called “Annex”. Over the years, more than 50 Annexes have been initiated in AMF TCP and a number of fuels have been covered in previous Annexes such as reformulated fuels (gasoline & diesel), biofuels (ethanol, biodiesel etc.), synthetic fuels (methanol, Fischer- Tropsch, DME etc.) and gaseous fuels.

**(Q)** Which one of the following events led eventually to the formation of what today is sometimes referred to as the 'Quad' grouping ?

- a) Establishment of China's first overseas naval base.
- b) Rejection by China of the Permanent Court of Arbitration's ruling on the South China Sea.
- c) China's announcement of its 'One Belt, One Road' initiative.
- d) The 2004 tsunami

**Solution: d.**

**TH:** "... despite the potential for cooperation, the Quad remains a mechanism without a defined strategic mission. In 2007, when the grouping was first formed following cooperation after the 2004 tsunami, the idea was to better coordinate maritime capabilities for disaster situations.."

For additional reading: [Insights](#);

**(Q)** Since the beginning of commercial oil extraction, which one of the following countries has held pricing power over oil for the longest period ?

- a) Russia
- b) Saudi Arabia
- c) USA
- d) Venezuela

**Solution: c.**

**Investopedia:** Since the 1860s, until the middle of the 20th century, the United States was the largest producer of oil and controlled oil prices.. American reliance on imported oil began during the Vietnam war and the economic boom period of the 1950s and 1960s. In turn, this provided Arab countries and OPEC (which had been formed in 1960 to counter the hegemony of Western oil companies) with increased leverage to influence oil prices. The 1973 oil shock swung the pendulum in OPEC's favor. That year, in response to U.S. support for Israel during the Yom Kippur War, OPEC and Iran stopped oil supplies to the United States. The crisis had far-reaching effects on oil prices. They have remained at high levels since.

Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Which one of the following countries is a NATO member ?

- a) Switzerland
- b) Austria
- c) Sweden
- d) Turkey

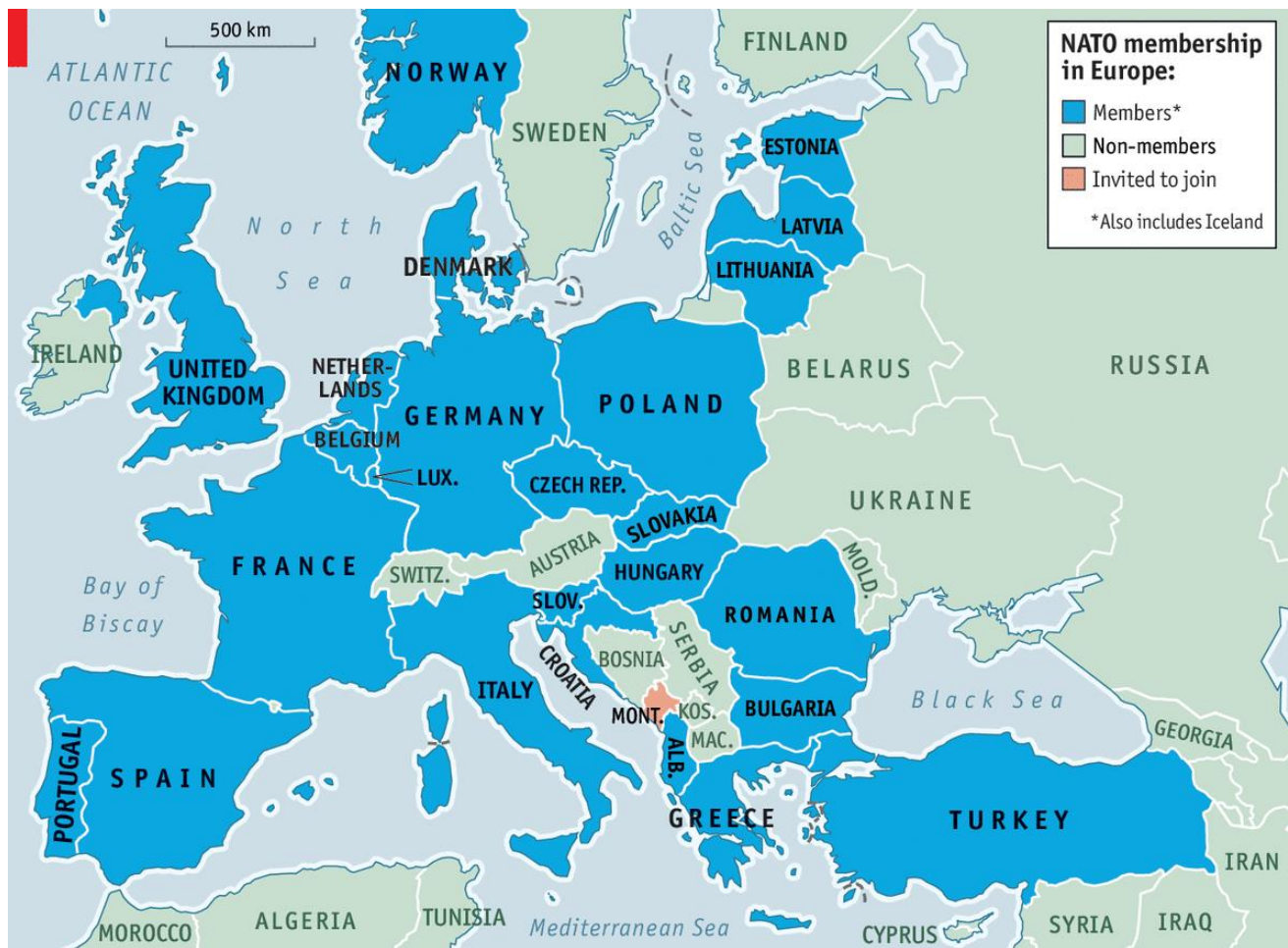
**Solution: d.**

Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova are **not** members of NATO.

**Map:** [NATO Members and Partners](#);

NATO frequently in the news: [TH1](#); [TH2](#);

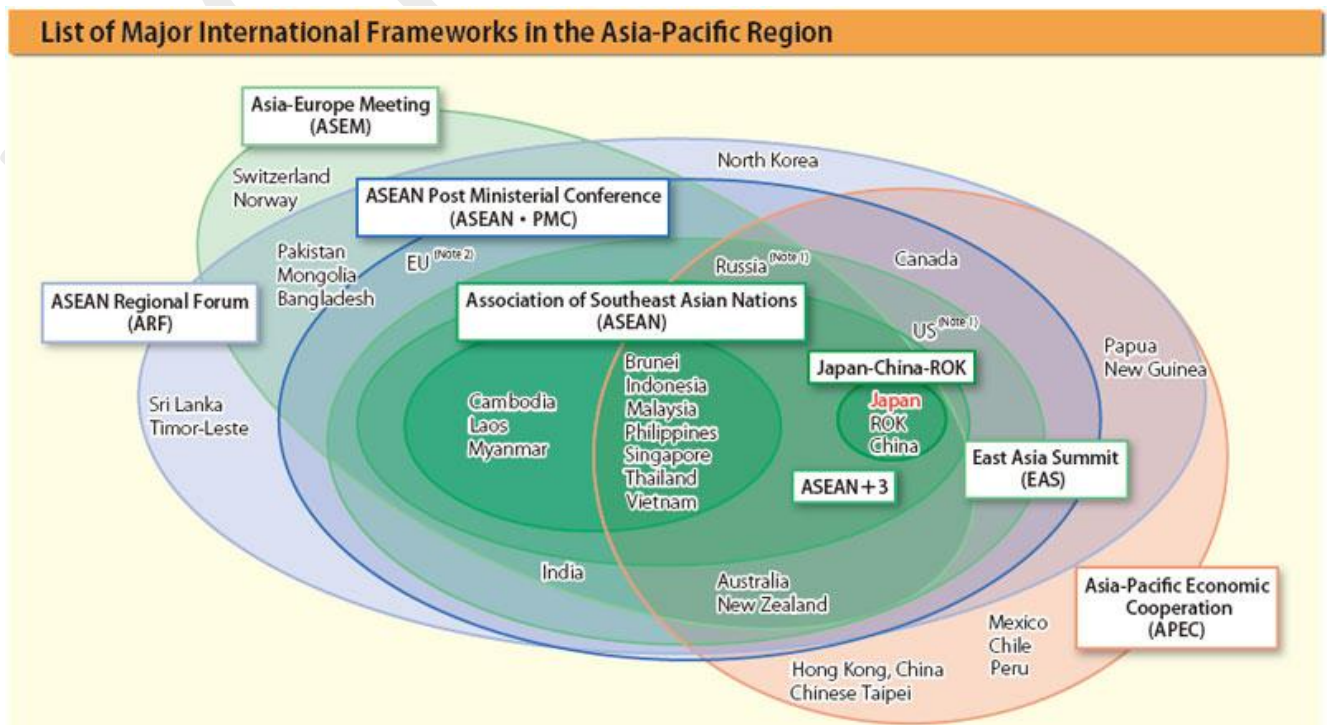




(Q) Which of the following countries participate in the East Asia Summit as members but are not participants in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership negotiations?

- a) China, Russia and Japan only
- b) South Korea and New Zealand only
- c) USA and Russia only
- d) Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka

**Solution: c.**



[Wikipedia](#); [TH](#);

The EAS consists of 10 ASEAN nations (Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, Brunei and Laos), Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia and the U.S. It was formed to further the objectives of regional peace, security and prosperity. RCEP is EAS minus USA and Russia.

- (Q) The Great March of Return protests are associated with certain events that have occurred in
- West Asia
  - North America
  - The Balkans
  - South Asia

**Solution: a.**

**TH:** In March, thousands of Palestinians marched towards the border, demanding their right to return to the homes and lands their families were expelled from in the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948, immediately after the creation of the state of Israel. About 750,000 Palestinians were estimated to have been forced out of their homes during the war. The March of Return protests continued on the border since then, and have often been met with live bullets fired by Israeli soldiers.

- (Q) The Quadrilateral Coordination Group that was launched in 2016 involved
- India, USA, Australia and Japan
  - Afghanistan, USA, Pakistan and China
  - Iran, Pakistan, China and Afghanistan
  - India, Germany, Brazil and Japan

**Solution: b.**

**TH:** A new initiative (Quadrilateral Coordination Group) involving the **U.S., China, Pakistan and Afghanistan** was launched in January 2016. After a couple of meetings, there was a roadmap; Pakistan was to use its influence to get the Taliban to the negotiating table. Hopes were dashed when the Taliban demanded exit of foreign troops, release of detainees from Guantanamo, and removal of its leaders from international blacklists. Frustrated with Pakistan's inability to get Mullah Mansour to fall in line, the U.S. eliminated him in a drone strike in May 2016 in Balochistan.

(Q) Consider the following statements about the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor:

- The tokamak being constructed will be the largest in the world.
- It is being constructed in Italy.
- 35 nations are engaged in a 35-year collaboration to build and operate the ITER.

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

**Solution: c.**

[ITER](#) (“The Way” in Latin) is one of the most ambitious energy projects in the world today. In southern France, 35 nations are collaborating to build the world’s largest tokamak, a magnetic fusion device that has been designed to prove the feasibility of fusion as a large-scale and carbon-free source of energy based on the same principle that powers our Sun and stars.

The ITER Members—China, the European Union, India, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States—are now engaged in a 35-year collaboration (since 2006) to build and operate the ITER experimental device, and together bring fusion to the point where a demonstration fusion reactor can be designed.

Improvisation: [BBC](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum:

1. More than twenty nations are its members.
2. The forum was established more than twenty years ago.
3. Its permanent secretariat is based in Japan.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Solution: c.**

The **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation** ([APEC](#)) is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific. APEC’s 21 members aim to create greater prosperity for the people of the region by promoting balanced, inclusive, sustainable, innovative and secure growth and by accelerating regional economic integration. The APEC process is supported by a permanent secretariat based in Singapore.

India has an observer status in the forum. Click [HERE](#) to read why APEC is not granting India membership.

Improvisation: [TH](#) ;

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about The Energy and Resources Institute:

1. It was founded in 1974.
2. The World Sustainable Development Conference is its flagship event.
3. It conducts the annual Green Olympiad in participating schools from India and abroad.

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

**Solution: d.**

[TERI](#): Founded in 1974, TERI began as a knowledge centre to cultivate action-oriented research in areas of climate change, environment, energy, and sustainable development. Over the last 40 years, the organization has worked with the government to create policies for energy conservation. On the other hand, it has worked at the grassroots, developing energy efficiency solutions for India’s small and medium businesses. It is globally

distinguished for hosting the World Sustainable Development Conference, one of the largest international summits dedicated to accelerating the pursuit of sustainable development.

GREEN Olympiad is an annual written examination on environment initiated by TERI in 1999. The exam attracts participation from school students across India and abroad.

Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Which one of the following countries is *not* a member of the BASIC grouping ?

- a) Brazil
- b) Argentina
- c) South Africa
- d) China

**Solution: b.**

In the news ([TH](#)): Ahead of the United Nations Conference of Parties (COP) in December, Environment Ministers and top climate change negotiators from Brazil, South Africa, China and India (BASIC) convened in Delhi recently and said the countries — as a group — would continue to push for developed countries on their earlier commitment to providing \$100 billion annually from 2020.

**(Q)** The United Nations warned recently that up to 14 million people in this country are on the brink of famine. The civil war has left 22 million people in need of humanitarian aid, created the world's largest food security emergency, and led to a cholera outbreak that has affected 1.2 million people. Dubbed by some as the forgotten war of our time, this war has been on-going for the past few years in

- a) Syria
- b) Yemen
- c) South Sudan
- d) Somalia

**Solution: b.**

**BBC:** The UN says **Yemen** is on the brink of the world's worst famine in 100 years if the war continues. Just last month, it warned that half the population of the war-torn country was facing "pre-famine conditions". A country has to meet the following criteria to be declared in famine:

- At least one in five households faces an extreme lack of food
- More than 30% of children under five are suffering from acute malnutrition
- At least two people out of every 10,000 are dying every day

The UN said – based on assessments from a year ago – the first two thresholds had either been exceeded or was dangerously close in 107 of Yemen's 333 districts. But the third threshold about numbers of deaths was more difficult to confirm. The organisation is currently repeating the assessments.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration:

1. It will be the first-ever UN global agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions.
2. It is the result of the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.



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

**Solution: c.**

- The [global compact for migration](#) is the first, intergovernmentally negotiated agreement, prepared under the auspices of the United Nations, to cover all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It won't be legally binding.
- In September 2016 the General Assembly decided, through the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration... The Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration will be held on 10 – 11 December (2018) in Marrakech, Morocco.

Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** In the context of affairs related to India, why was the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights recently in the news ?

- a) Their flagship publication calls for the repeal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act.
- b) They have been appointed to suggest reforms to strengthen democratic political institutions and processes in Left Wing Extremism affected regions.
- c) They have initiated a dialogue with separatists in Jammu and Kashmir.
- d) They will be responsible for managing election monitoring in India for elections to the 17th Lok Sabha.

**Solution: c.**

[Oslo Centre](#): The Oslo Center is an independent, non-partisan democracy center that assists the strengthening of democratic political institutions and processes. Their main approach is democracy assistance implemented through dialogue.

[TH](#): The Art of Living (AOL) Foundation mediated a meeting of former Prime Minister of Norway Kjell Magne Bondevik with hardline separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani in Srinagar recently. The meeting was sought by former Norwegian PM Bondevik's Oslo Center.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements with reference to the India-China mechanism of Special Representatives on the Boundary Question:

1. It was established in 1997.
2. Twenty one rounds of talks have been held between Indian and China under this mechanism.

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

**Solution: b.**

The mechanism of Special Representatives on the Boundary Question was established in 2003. The 21st round of talks was held recently in Chengdu, China.

[India-China Brief](#); In the news: [TH1](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The International Labour Organisation Conventions 107 and 169 were ratified by India recently.
2. ILO Conventions 107 and 169 are associate with gender equality.

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

**Solution: d.**

- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1957 ([107](#));
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 ([169](#));

[TH](#): "International policy has changed over the decades. While the Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957, of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) insisted on an integrationist approach towards tribal communities, the 1989 convention insisted on a policy of non-intervention, "recognising the aspirations of these peoples to exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development." India ratified the 1957 convention but has not ratified the 1989 convention. However, despite not signing it, India tried to tread the path of non-interference. Therefore it is puzzling that in August the government relaxed the restricted area permit (RAP) for 29 islands in the Andaman and Nicobar, including North Sentinel Island."

**(Q)** The Minsk Agreements, recently in the news, are related to

- a) Refugees and irregular migrants must be handled by the European Union.
- b) The conflict in eastern Ukraine.
- c) The International protocol for Protection of Industrial Property.
- d) The Digital Geneva Convention

**Solution: b.**

[TH](#): "...The protracted conflict has so far claimed about 10,000 lives and displaced millions, and no lasting resolution is in sight. The 2014-15 Minsk peace accords prohibited air strikes and heavy artillery firing. But the dispute has dragged on into a smouldering low-intensity combat..."

[EMP](#);

## VI. POLITY

(Q) Who among the following is **not** a member of the Financial Stability and Development Council?

- a) Vice-Chairperson, NITI Aayog
- b) Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- c) Chairperson, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India
- d) Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs

**Solution: a.**

[Gazette Notification, May 2018](#)      Improvisation: [TH](#);

'2(b)(i) "Minister of State, in-charge of Department of Economic Affairs",  
2(b)(ii) "Governor, Reserve Bank of India (RBI)",  
2(b)(iii) "Finance Secretary and/ or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs",  
2(b)(iv) "Secretary, Department of Revenue",  
2(b)(v) "Secretary, Department of Financial Services",  
2(b)(vi) "Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs",  
2(b)(vii) "Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology",  
2(b)(viii) "Chief Economic Adviser, Ministry of Finance",  
2(b)(ix) "Chairperson, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)",  
2(b)(x) "Chairperson, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)",  
2(b)(xi) "Chairperson, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)",  
2(b)(xii) "Chairperson, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)".'

(Q) The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 was legislated in pursuance of the Supreme Court's

- a) Joseph Shine judgment
- b) Vishaka judgment
- c) Haji Ali case
- d) Prakash Singh case

**Solution: b.**

- The Vishakha guidelines introduced by the apex court in 1997 were evolved into a parliamentary law called the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013.

Often in the news; [TH](#);

(Q) Consider the following statements about Section 7 of the RBI Act, 1934 that was recently in the news:

1. It requires the Central Government to hold consultations with the Governor prior to giving directions to the RBI to take certain actions in public interest.
2. A similar provision has been built into the laws that govern regulatory bodies in other sectors.

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

**Solution: c.**

**IE:** Amid tensions between the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the former has reportedly initiated steps towards invoking its powers under Section 7 of the RBI Act of 1934. It is a provision under which the government can give directions to the RBI to take certain actions “in the public interest”. This provision has been built into the law governing not just the RBI but also regulatory bodies in other sectors.

Under Section 7, “The Central Government may from time to time give such directions to the Bank as it may, after consultation with the Governor of the Bank, consider necessary in the public interest. Subject to any such directions, the general superintendence and direction of the affairs and business of the Bank shall be entrusted to a Central Board of Directors which may exercise all powers and do all acts and things which may be exercised or done by the Bank.”

**TH:** Section 7 has never been invoked by the government so far.

**Livemint:** The government has only initiated consultations with RBI on different issues under Section 7 (1) and not invoked it.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements with reference to Subordinate Courts in India:

1. Appointment, posting and promotion of district judges in a state are made by the governor of the state in consultation with the high court.
2. Appointment of persons other than district judges to the judicial service of a state are made by the governor of the state after consultation with the State Public Service Commission and the high court.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: c.**

- Both statements are correct.

With reference to statement 2: In practice, the State Public Service Commission conducts a competitive examination for recruitment to the judicial service of the state.

Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about the provisions in the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016:

1. The bill amends the Citizenship Act of 1955 to exclude some sections of people from being treated as illegal migrants.
2. It dilutes the qualifications for being able to apply for citizenship by naturalisation for certain sections of people.

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

**Solution: c.**

**Definition of illegal migrants:**

- The Citizenship Act of 1955 prohibits illegal migrants from acquiring Indian citizenship. It defines an illegal migrant as a foreigner: (i) who enters India without a valid passport or travel documents, or (ii) stays beyond the permitted time.
- The amendment Bill amends the Act to provide that that the following groups of persons will not be treated as illegal migrants: (i) Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, (ii) who have been exempted from provisions of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, and the Foreigners Act, 1946 by the central government. The 1920 Act mandates foreigners to carry passport, while the 1946 Act regulates the entry and departure of foreigners in India.

**Citizenship by naturalisation:**

- The Act allows a person to apply for citizenship by naturalisation, if the person meets certain qualifications. One of the qualifications is that the person must have resided in India or been in service of the central government for at least 11 years before applying for citizenship.
- The Bill creates an exception for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, with regard to this qualification. For these groups of persons, the 11 years' requirement will be reduced to six years.

[PRS Bill Summary:](#)      [TH;](#)

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about ordinances:

1. Both Houses of Parliament can pass resolutions disapproving an ordinance.
2. Six weeks is the maximum life of an ordinance upon the reassembly of both Houses of Parliament.

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

**Solution: c.**

Chapter 'President', Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth:

Every ordinance issued by the President during the recess of Parliament must be laid before both the Houses of Parliament when it reassembles. If the ordinance is approved by both the Houses, it becomes an act. If Parliament takes no action at all, the ordinance ceases to operate on the expiry of six weeks from the reassembly of Parliament. The ordinance may also cease to operate even earlier than the prescribed six weeks, if both the Houses of Parliament pass resolutions disapproving it. If the Houses of Parliament are summoned to reassemble on different dates, the period of six weeks is calculated from the later of those

dates. This means that the maximum life of an ordinance can be six months and six weeks, in case of non-approval by the Parliament (six months being the maximum gap between the two sessions of Parliament).

Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Which of the following provisions in laws/penal codes have been struck down – in whole or in part – by the Supreme Court?

1. Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000
2. Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code
3. Section 153A of the IPC
4. Section 303 of the IPC
5. Section 295A of the IPC

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Solution: c.**

- Sections 153A, 295A of IPC and 69A of IT Act are valid and legal still. Sections 497 and 303 of the IPC have been struck down by the SC.

Source/Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Like the Rajya Sabha, the US Senate consists of representatives of each state who have staggered six-year terms.
2. Like the Lok Sabha, the US House of Representatives consists of members elected directly by the people for a term of five years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Solution: a.**

In the United States Senate all states are represented equally. Regardless of size or population, each state has two senators, who serve six-year terms. Unlike the House of Representatives, where all members must stand for election every two years, only one-third of the Senate's seats are filled with each general election.

In the news: US mid-term elections. [US Senate](#); [US Senate2](#); [US House of Representatives](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The territorial extent of states and union territories are mentioned in the first Schedule of the Constitution.
2. Altering the name of a state by the Parliament requires the prior recommendation of the President.

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

**Solution: c.**

- The names of states and union territories and their territorial extent are mentioned in the first schedule of the
- Article 3 authorises the Parliament to, among other things, alter the name of any state. However, Article 3 lays down two conditions in this regard: one, a bill contemplating the above changes can be introduced in the Parliament only with the prior recommendation of the President; and two, before recommending the bill, the President has to refer the same to the state legislature concerned for expressing its views within a specified period.

Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth; Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) will adjudicate grievances related to insolvency, bankruptcy and liquidation of different entities.

1. The NCLT will have jurisdiction over companies and partnership firms.
2. Appeals against orders of NCLT can be challenged before the Supreme Court.

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

**Solution: d.**

**Bankruptcy and Insolvency Adjudicators (IBC 2016):** The Code proposes two separate tribunals to adjudicate grievances related to insolvency, bankruptcy and liquidation of different entities under the law: (i) the National Company Law Tribunal will have jurisdiction over companies and limited liability partnerships, and (ii) the Debt Recovery Tribunal will have jurisdiction over individuals and partnership firms. Appeals against orders of these tribunals may be challenged before their respective Appellate Tribunals (in case of NCLT, it will be the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal or NCLAT), and further before the Supreme Court.

Improvisation: [TH1](#); [TH2](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. As per Article 15 of the Constitution, the state is permitted to make any special provision for the advancement of any educationally backward classes of citizens.
2. As per Article 16 of the Constitution, the state can provide for reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class that is not adequately represented in the state services.



Which of the following statements is/are correct?

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

**Solution: b.**

Statement 2 is correct.

As per Article 15 of the Constitution, the state is permitted to make any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

**TH:** The Maharashtra Cabinet recently cleared the decision to extend reservation to the Maratha community by creating a new category called Socially and Educationally Backward Class (SEBC) on the recommendations of the State Backward Class Commission.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements with reference to the applicability of the emergency provisions of the Indian Constitution to the State of Jammu and Kashmir:

1. Unlike in other states, a proclamation of emergency can be made in the state on the ground of internal disturbance.
2. The President has no power to declare a financial emergency in relation to the state.
3. President's rule can be imposed in the state on the ground of failure of the constitutional machinery under provisions of the state constitution and not the Indian Constitution.

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

**Solution: d.**

- A National Emergency ("proclamation of emergency") declared on the ground of internal disturbance will not have effect in the state except with the concurrence of the state government. Unlike in other states, a proclamation of emergency can be made in J&K on the ground of internal disturbance also. An emergency declared on the ground of war or external aggression is directly (i.e., without the concurrence of the state government, as in the case of other states) applicable to J&K.
- The President has no power to declare a financial emergency in relation to the state.
- The President has no power to suspend the Constitution of the state on the ground of failure to comply with the directions given by him.
- The State Emergency (President's Rule) is applicable to the state. However, this emergency can be imposed in the state on the ground of failure of the constitutional machinery under the provisions of state Constitution and not Indian Constitution. In fact, two types of Emergencies can be declared in the state, namely, President's Rule under the Indian Constitution and Governor's Rule under the state Constitution.

Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth; Improvisation: **TH**;



**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Each House of Parliament can punish its members as well as outsiders for breach of its privileges by reprimand, admonition or imprisonment.
2. The Houses of Parliament as well as State legislatures have collective privileges.

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

**Solution: c.**

Both statements are correct. In the news: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Though some members of the Constituent Assembly had advocated the system of proportional representation for the election of members to the Lok Sabha, the Constitution has not adopted the system due to two reasons. Specifically, these two reasons are

1. It eliminates intimate contacts between voters and representatives.
2. It does not give any scope for organising by-elections.
3. It promotes minority thinking and group interests.
4. It increases the significance of party system and decreases that of voter.
5. It is highly expensive.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- a) 1, 3 and 4 only
- b) 3 and 5 only
- c) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- d) None of the above

**Solution: d.**

Following are the two reasons why the Constitution has not adopted the Proportional Representation system for election of members to the Lok Sabha:

- Difficulty for the voters to understand the system (which is complicated) due to low literacy scale in the country.
- Unsuitability to the parliamentary government due to the tendency of the system to multiply political parties leading to instability in government.

The other reasons mentioned in the options are some of the general demerits of the PR system.

Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth; Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Under the seventh schedule, 'Public order' is a subject on the state list.
2. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is governed by the NIA Act, 2008 that makes consent of a state government mandatory for conducting investigation in that state.

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

**Solution: a.**

Unlike the National Investigation Agency (NIA), which is governed by its own NIA Act and has jurisdiction across the country, the CBI is governed by the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act that makes consent of a state government mandatory for conducting investigation in that state.

There are two kinds of consent: case-specific and general.

- Given that the CBI has jurisdiction only over central government departments and employees, it can investigate a case involving state government employees or a violent crime in a given state only after that state government gives its consent.
- “General consent” is normally given to help the CBI seamlessly conduct its investigation into cases of corruption against central government employees in the concerned state. Almost all states have given such consent. Otherwise, the CBI would require consent in every case. For example, if it wanted to investigate a bribery charge against a Western Railway clerk in Mumbai, it would have to apply for consent with the Maharashtra government before registering a case against him.

IE;

**(Q)** The Constitution debars certain retiring constitutional functionaries from reappointment or any further appointment by the government. Who of the following are among them?

1. Election Commissioners
2. A member of the Union Public Service Commission
3. Chairman of Finance Commission
4. Comptroller and Auditor General

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Solution: d.**

- The Constitution has not debarred the retiring election commissioners from any further appointment by the government.
- The chairman of UPSC (on ceasing to hold office) is not eligible for further employment in the Government of India or a state. A member of UPSC (on ceasing to hold office) is eligible for appointment as the chairman of UPSC or a State Public Service Commission (SPSC), but not for any other employment in the Government of India or a state.
- The Finance Commission members including the chairman are eligible for reappointment.
- The CAG is not eligible for further office, either under the Government of India or of any state, after he ceases to hold his office.

Refer Indian Polity by M. Laxmikanth; Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The present judge-population ratio in India, stands at nearly twenty per ten lakh.
2. Under-trial prisoners account for nearly two-thirds of India's prison population.
3. The largest number of judicial vacancies in subordinate judiciary are in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: d.**

**IE:** the ratio stands at 19.66 judges per million (10 lakh) people. The ratio was 17.48 judges per million in 2014, according to law ministry figures put in public domain.

**TH:** A Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, had taken *suo motu* cognisance of more than 5,000 vacancies for subordinate judicial posts even as pendency touched crores. The court found there were more than 1,000 vacancies in Uttar Pradesh alone.

**TH:** Undertrial prisoners accounted for 62% of India's prison population, against the world average of 18-20%, the court said. The statistic raised questions about the humaneness of our system, it said.

**(Q)** Which of the following events had taken place before the enforcement of the Constitution ?

1. Enactment of the Preamble to the Constitution.
2. Adoption of the national flag.
3. Election of Dr. Rajendra Prasad as the first President of India.
4. Ratification of India's membership of the Commonwealth.
5. Adoption of the national anthem.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Solution: a.**

- The motion on Draft Constitution was declared as passed on November 26, 1949, and received the signatures of the members present and the president. The Preamble was enacted after the entire Constitution was already enacted. This is also the date mentioned in the Preamble as the date on which the people of India in the Constituent Assembly adopted, enacted and gave to themselves this Constitution.
- Some provisions of the Constitution pertaining to citizenship, elections, provisional parliament, temporary and transitional provisions, and short title contained in Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 60, 324, 366, 367, 379, 380, 388, 391, 392 and 393 came into force on November 26, 1949 itself. The remaining provisions (the major part) of the Constitution came into force on January 26, 1950. This day is referred to in the Constitution as the 'date of its commencement', and celebrated as the Republic Day.

In addition to the making of the Constitution and enacting of ordinary laws, the Constituent Assembly also performed the following functions:

1. It ratified the India's membership of the Commonwealth in May 1949.
2. (Rest are mentioned in the options to this question).

Indian Polity by M Laxmikant; Improvisation: Constitution Day celebrations.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements about Child Care Institutions:

1. These have been established under the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Act, 2015.
2. 'Hausla' provides a platform to children from CCIs across India where they can showcase their talent.

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

**Solution: b.**

**Vikaspedia:** A child care institution as defined under the JJ Act, 2015, means Children Home, Open Shelter, Observation Home, Special Home, Place of Safety, Specialised Adoption Agency and a Fit Facility recognized under the Act for providing care and protection to children (who are in conflict with the law), who are in need of such services.

**PIB:**

**(Q)** Sometimes in the news, Jawaharlal Nehru's tribal Panchsheel does **not** call for

- a) People should develop along lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them.
- b) Tribal right in forests should be respected.
- c) We should avoid introducing outsiders into tribal territory.
- d) We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with multiplicity of schemes.

**Solution: c.**

The goal of tribal development in India were best summarised in Nehru's

forward to Verrier Elwin's Book on NEFA . It is otherwise known as "Tribal Panchsheel." The Nehru's Panchsheel (five point) are:

- People should develop along lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every - way their own traditional art and culture.
- Tribal right in land and forests should be respected.
- We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical people from outside will no doubt be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.

- We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through and not in rivalry to their own social and cultural instructions, and
- We should guide results not by statistics or the amount of money spend but by the quality of human character that is involved.

Improvisation: [TH](#); [Shodhganga](#);

## VII. HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

**(Q)** Consider the following statements in the context of the Indian National Movement during the First World War:

1. There was no group in India that took advantage of Britain's difficulty by initiating struggles for freedom.
2. The moderates supported the British empire in the war as a matter of duty.

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

**Solution: b.**

In the First World War (1914-1919), Britain allied with France, Russia, USA, Italy and Japan against Germany Austria and Hungary. This period saw the maturing of Indian nationalism. The nationalist response to British participation in the War was three-fold:

1. the Moderates supported the empire in the War as a matter of duty;
2. the Extremists, including Tilak (who was released in June 1914), supported the war efforts in the mistaken belief that Britain would repay India's loyalty with gratitude in the form of self-government;
3. the Revolutionaries decided to utilise the opportunity to wage a war and liberate the country.

Spectrum's Modern Indian History. Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** The world's first discovery of rock paintings was made in India in 1867–68 by an archaeologist, Archibald Carlyle in the present-day state of

- a) Uttarakhand
- b) Maharashtra
- c) Karnataka
- d) Uttar Pradesh

**Solution: d.**

*India*

It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that India was placed on the rock art map, in particular by one astonishing and farsighted pioneer, Archibald Carlyle (or Carlleyle), first assistant to the Archaeological Survey of India. In the 1860s, Carlyle discovered rock paintings in shelters at Morhana Pahar, above the Ganga Valley – for example, in 1867–68 at Sohagighat in the Mirzapur district (south of Benares) of Uttar Pradesh. He wrote in his notebooks:

Ch-1, An Introduction to Indian Art, NCERT; [Googlebooks](#); Improvisation: [BBC](#);



(Q) Consider the following pairs:

<i>Colour/material of Poppy badges associated with Remembrance Day, World War I</i>	<i>Significance</i>
---	---------------------

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Red                | : Remembrance of British soldiers who died                 |
| 2. White              | : A lasting commitment to peace                            |
| 3. Red, made of Khadi | : Remembrance of contribution of all commonwealth soldiers |
| 4. Purple             | : Remembrance of civilians who died                        |

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched ?

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

**Solution: b.**

In the month or so preceding Remembrance Day, which marks the anniversary of the end of the First World War, red poppy badges are a common sight across Britain. This year, however, some of them come with a difference. Prime Minister Theresa May is among the high profile figures to have chosen to wear (at least for part of the time) a poppy badge made out of khadi to remember India's contribution (not "all" commonwealth soldiers) to the war effort.

"We must never forget that over 74,000 soldiers came from undivided India... and they played a crucial role in the war across multiple continents," she told the House of Commons last week. The initiative — launched by Lord Gadhia, a member of the House of Lords — was taken up by the Royal British Legion, which has been running the annual poppy commemorations since 1921.

- Red poppies began being used as a symbol in 1921 to help to remember those who fought in war. The flower was chosen because it grows wild in many fields in northern France and Belgium – where some of the deadliest battles of World War One took place...
- The White Poppy, created in 1933 – just 12 years after the red version – many people wore white poppies to stress the "never again" message, which emerged after World War One, and which pacifists feared was slipping away. But like the red poppy, the white badge also symbolises remembrance for victims of war...
- Purple poppies are less common and created to remember the animals who die in war.
- Black poppies remember the African, Black and Caribbean communities who contributed to various war efforts.

[BBC](#); [TH](#);

(Q) Consider the following statements about Mughal paintings:

- 1. Some of these were influenced by European paintings of Jesus Christ.
- 2. There are paintings that show women working at construction sites.

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

**Solution: c.**

According to this idea (farr-i-izidi), there was a hierarchy in which the Divine Light was transmitted to the king who then became the source of spiritual guidance for his subjects. Paintings that accompanied the narrative of the chronicles transmitted these ideas in a way that left a lasting impression on the minds of viewers. Mughal artists, from the seventeenth century onwards, began to portray emperors wearing the halo, which they saw on European paintings of Christ and the Virgin Mary to symbolise the light of God.

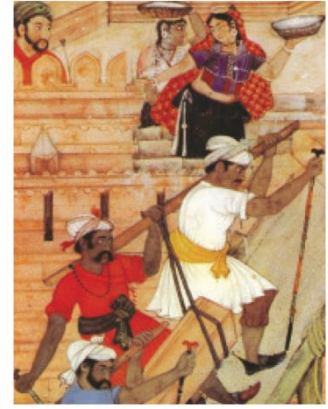


Fig. 8.8 b  
Women carrying loads  
Migrant women from neighbouring villages often worked at such construction sites.

Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part 2  
image);

Improvisation: [TH](#) (See

- (Q) In the context of 18<sup>th</sup> century India, the Treaty of Pondicherry marked the end of
- Third Carnatic War
  - Second Anglo-Mysore war
  - First Anglo-Burmese war
  - None of the above

**Solution: d.**

It marked the end of the Second Carnatic War (1749-54).

[Britannica: Carnatic wars;](#)

[Q5, TH Sunday Quiz;](#)

- (Q) The historical work Humayun-nama was authored by
- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| a) Nur Jahan      | b) Jodha Bai      |
| c) Jahanara Begum | d) Gulbadan Begum |

**Solution: d.**

“*Kings and Chronicles*”, Themes in Indian History Part-2: An interesting book giving us a glimpse into the domestic world of the Mughals is the Humayun Nama written by Gulbadan Begum. Gulbadan was the daughter of Babur, Humayun’s sister and Akbar’s aunt. Gulbadan could write fluently in Turkish and Persian. When Akbar commissioned Abu’l Fazl to write a history of his reign, he requested his aunt to record her memoirs of earlier times under Babur and Humayun, for Abu’l Fazl to draw upon.

[TH:](#)

- (Q) What is the relevance of the town of Villers Guislain, recently in the news, for India ?
- Subhas Chandra Bose set up an Indian government in-exile here.
  - This is where one of the battles of World War 1 unfolded, in which some Indian soldiers charged at German positions.
  - The first version of the Indian National Flag was unfurled by Bhikaji Cama here.
  - Most of the Indian inhabitants of this town were involved in the Ghadr movement which originated in North America.

**Solution: b.**

The Vice President of India recently inaugurated the First World War Memorial constructed by the Government of India at the town of Villers Guislain in France. This is the first such memorial built by the government of India in France and the historic occasion was witnessed by the representatives of Indian French armed forces and locals amidst severe rain.

It was almost 100 years back on this same soil that the Indian Cavalry comprising of the Deccan Horse, Hodson's Horse, Poona Horse, Central India Horse and 18 Cavalry had charged at German positions during the Battle.

PIB; TH;

**(Q)** The most recent Indian cultural element to be inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was

- a) Yoga
- b) Qawwali
- c) Kumbh Mela
- d) Sowa-Rigpa

**Solution: c.**

Kumbh Mela Advertisement in the newspaper;

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**Kumbh Calls**

15 January to 4 March 2019, Prayagraj

The Kumbh Mela is the single largest gathering of people in the world, a pilgrimage of more than estimated 120 million devotees to the holy city of Prayagraj. Blessed by the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and the mystical Saraswati, the Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj is a unique experience that celebrates the faith and devotion of millions of pilgrims. The massive gathering has been included in UNESCO's Representative list of 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'.

Come, join us and be a part of the truly unique digital journey and experience the **Divya Kumbh, Bhavya Kumbh at Prayagraj.**

Mail: [web.kumbh-up@gov.in](mailto:web.kumbh-up@gov.in)

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Apart from Rani-ki-Vav at Patan, no other site from Gujarat has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage Site List.
2. Pathan architecture is an austere style of architecture, the works related to which have been constructed only in Delhi.

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

**Solution: d.**

The [walled city of Ahmadabad](#) is another UNESCO WHS.

Pathan architecture is an austere style of architecture favoured by the Khalji rulers in Delhi who were considered Afghans. .. The so-called robust, austere Pathan architecture of *Mandu* with its surface embellishments of jalis, carved brackets, etc. and the lightness of the structures was an important intervention in the narrative of the Indo-Islamic architectural experience.

Improvisation: [Vikaspedia National Current Affairs September 2018](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The Lodhi dynasty encompassed parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Telangana.
2. Guru Nanak was born, and the years leading up to his demise were spent, in present-day Pakistan.

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

**Solution: b.**

Guru Nanak (1469-1539: he witnessed the decline of the Lodhi empire and the rise of the Mughals), the founder of Sikh religion was born at village Talwandi, now known as Nankana Sahib in Pakistan. Guru Nanak's three important precepts are: first, contemplation of One God (nam- japna); second, earning one's livelihood (kirat karna) and sharing one's earnings with others (vand chhakna). To demolish caste- system he insisted on common kitchen and built the first dharamsala or chapel of the Sikhs at Kartarpur. The Kartarpur gurdwara, situated on the site on the bank of the Ravi where the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, spent his last 18 years.





In the news: Kartarpur Corridor, [TH](#); [egyankosh: Sikhism](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The Jallianwala Bagh atrocities were a part of the efforts of the government to repress the first all-India struggle against the British government.
2. Satyagraha Sabhas were set up to launch the Rowlatt Satyagraha.

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

**Solution: c.**

- Mahatma Gandhi, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and others felt that the government had no right to restrict people's basic freedoms (context: Rowlatt Satyagraha). Gandhiji asked the Indian people to observe 6 April 1919 as a day of non-violent opposition to this Act, as a day of "humiliation and prayer" and hartal (strike). Satyagraha Sabhas were set up to launch the movement.

- The Rowlatt Satyagraha turned out to be the first all-India struggle against the British government although it was largely restricted to cities. In April 1919 there were a number of demonstrations and hartals in the country and the government used brutal measures to suppress them. The Jallianwala Bagh atrocities, inflicted by General Dyer in Amritsar on Baisakhi day (13 April), were a part of this repression.

NCERT Class 8 Our Past III Part-2;

In the news: [PIB](#);



## VIII. STATES

**(Q)** The demand for “Greater Nagaland” is a demand for the extension of Nagaland’s borders. This includes all contiguous Naga-inhabited areas including several districts of

- a) Manipur only
- b) Assam and Arunachal Pradesh only
- c) Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh only
- d) Assam, Mizoram, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh only

**Solution: c.**

- The NSCN-IM has been fighting for ‘Greater Nagaland’ or Nagalim — it wants to extend Nagaland’s borders by including Naga-dominated areas in neighbouring Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, to unite 1.2 million Nagas.

**TH1;**      **TH2;**

**(Q)** Uru making is a centuries old tradition that was established since India began its maritime trade with Mesopotamia. Which state is home to this tradition ?

- a) Gujarat
- b) Kerala
- c) Tamil Nadu
- d) Uttar Pradesh

**Solution: b.**

**TNM:** Uru making in Beypore is a centuries old tradition that was established since India began its maritime trade with Mesopotamia. There are stories that some traders from Yemen, who had settled in Kerala centuries ago, had practised uru making and passed on the craft to the local carpenters.

These ships are made without any work plan, blueprints or prior sketches. The maistry gives instructions to his workers on a daily basis on how to go about the construction. These ships are purely made of wood, without using any modern techniques, and traditional methods are used to launch this ship into the water. The carpenters manually join each piece of wood to build the large boat.

Improvisation: **PIB;**

**(Q)** The world’s best laws and policies promoting agro-ecology were awarded the World Future Council’s Future Policy Award (FPA) 2018. Which Indian state was awarded with the Gold Prize?

- a) Maharashtra
- b) Sikkim
- c) Odisha
- d) Punjab

**Solution: b.**

**WFC:** Gold Prize winner Sikkim is the first organic state in the world. All of its farmland is certified organic. At the same time, Sikkim's approach reaches beyond organic production and has proven truly transformational for the state and its citizens. Embedded in its design are socioeconomic aspects such as consumption and market expansion, cultural aspects as well as health, education, rural development and sustainable tourism. The policy implemented a phase out of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, and achieved a total ban on sale and use of chemical pesticides in the state. The transition has benefitted more than 66 000 farming families. The Sikkim tourism sector has benefitted greatly from the state's transition to 100 percent organic: the number of tourists increased by over 50 percent between 2014 and 2017. As such, Sikkim sets an excellent example of how other Indian states and countries worldwide can successfully upscale agroecology.

[Vikaspedia National Current Affairs October 2018;](#)

[About the Future Policy Award;](#)

**(Q)** Which one of the following tribal groups is restricted to the islands of Nicobar ?

- a) Onge
- b) Jarawa
- c) Shompen
- d) Sentinelese

**Solution: c.**

**A&N Islands** The Jarawa, the Onge, and the Sentinelese are the indigenous people of the Andamans. The indigenous peoples of the Nicobars are the Nicobarese, or Nicobari, and the Shompen.

Improvisation – death of the American who visited the North Sentinel Island.

**(Q)** The men's Hockey World Cup 2018 is being hosted by

- a) Punjab
- b) Karnataka
- c) Assam
- d) Odisha

**Solution: d.**

**TH:** The Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneshwar is all set to host the 14th edition of the Men's Hockey World Cup from November 28.

# IX. DEFENCE & SECURITY

(Q) Consider the following pairs:

**Artillery gun** – *manufactured by/in collaboration with*

1. Bofors – Russia
2. M777 A2 Howitzers – USA
3. K-9 Vajra-T – South Korea

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

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

**Solution: b.**

In the news ([TH1](#); [TH2](#)): Dhanush is an upgraded version of the Swedish Bofors gun procured by India in the mid-1980s. In April 2017, the Indian engineering conglomerate Larsen & Toubro (L&T) and Hanwa Techwin of South Korea signed a contract to manufacture the K9 Vajra-T guns, customised from the original K9 Thunder gun. M777 ultra-light howitzers are being procured by India from the U.S.

**Growing arsenal**

Artillery gun systems – including the M777 A2 ultra light howitzers, K-9 Vajra self-propelled gun – and a composite towing vehicle were inducted into the Army on Friday. A lowdown on their technical specifications and procurement process:

**M777 ULTRA LIGHT HOWITZER**

- It is a 155-mm, 39-calibre towed artillery gun made of titanium and aluminium alloys
- It has a range of 24 to 30 km, depending on the type of ammunition used
- The gun weighs four tonnes and can be transported by helicopters

• In November 2016, India signed a \$737 million deal with the U.S. for 145 howitzers under the Foreign Military Sales Programme

• Of the 145, 20 will be imported, and the rest will be assembled back home in phases

• The Army has not inducted any artillery gun since the 1980s

The M777 ultra light howitzer being fired on Friday at the Deolali artillery centre. ■ AJAJ SHARMA

**K9 VAJRA-T GUN**

- It is a 155-mm, 52-calibre self-propelled artillery gun with a maximum range of 40 km
- The fire control system has been customised for desert conditions
- In April 2017, Larsen & Toubro (L&T) and Hanwha Techwin of South Korea signed a contract to make the guns
- The gun was short-listed by the Army after extensive trials. The deal was worth about ₹4,500 crore for 100 guns

• The first 10 guns have been imported from South Korea in a semi-knocked-down state and assembled by L&T in India

• The remaining guns will largely be made in India with some major assemblies coming from South Korea

• The first regiment would be in place by July 2019, and all 100 guns will be delivered by November 2020

**ARTILLERY TRACTOR**

The 6x6 field artillery tractor was developed by Ashok Leyland and will replace the ageing fleet of Tatra artillery gun-towing vehicles

These guns are being inducted almost 30 years after the Bofors guns were inducted... Their induction will give a huge fillip to the fire-power capability of Indian Army on our western borders

— NIRMALA SITHARAMAN, DEFENCE MINISTER

K-9 Vajra showcases its potential. ■ PTI

Image source: [TH](#);

(Q) The Changi naval base, which the Indian Navy has access to for logistical support, belongs to

- a) Indonesia
- b) Singapore
- c) Mauritius
- d) Seychelles

**Solution: b.**

[ET \(June 2018\)](#): In a strategic move that is likely to irk China, India and Singapore signed a bilateral agreement that will allow Indian Navy ships logistical support, including refuelling, at Singapore's Changi naval base located near the disputed South China Sea.

In the news ([TH](#)): The 25th edition of the India-Singapore bilateral naval exercise, SIMBEX, has begun at the tri-services command in Port Blair. The two countries have vastly expanded their military cooperation in recent years under India's Act East policy. Late last year, the two countries signed a naval agreement which has a provision for mutual logistical support and gives India access to the Changi naval base.

**(Q)** Consider the following statements with reference to India-U.S. relations:

1. The two countries now conduct more bilateral military exercises with each other than they do with any other country.
2. No project is yet to be initiated under the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative which was launched in 2017.

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

**Solution: a.**

**Statement 1 is correct.**

During President Obama's visit in January 2015, the two sides agreed to start cooperation on 4 DTTI pathfinder projects and 2 pathfinder initiatives, which are currently at various stages of execution. During RM's visit in December 2015, the two sides also identified opportunities for bilateral cooperation in production and design of jet engine components. During Secretary Carter's visit in April 2014, two more G-2-G DTTI projects were added to the list. The DTTI meeting in Delhi in July 2016 decided to broaden its agenda by setting up five new Joint Working Groups on: Naval Systems; Air Systems, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance; Chemical and Biological Protection; and Other Systems.

Improvisation: [TH](#); Source: [India-U.S. Brief](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. India recently signed a defence deal with Russia to procure five S-400 missile systems.
2. The total number of S-400 systems that India intends to purchase will provide a "coverage bubble" that encompasses most of India-China and India-Pakistan land borders.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

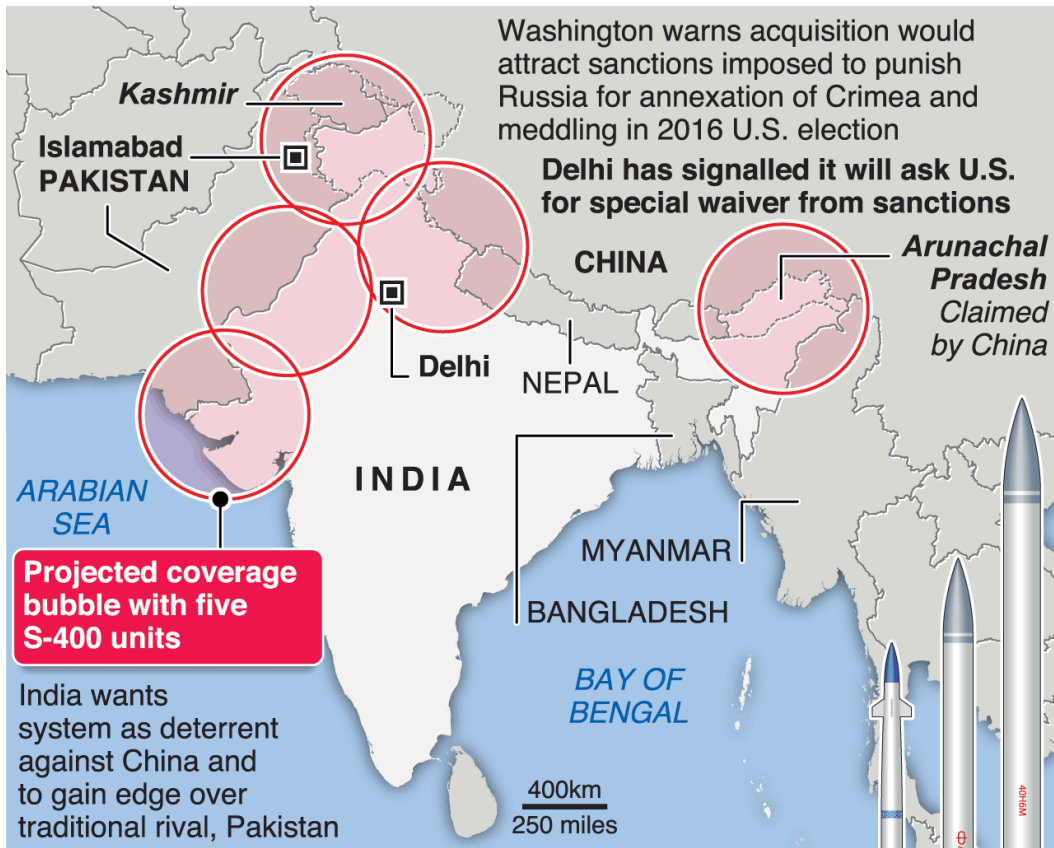
- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Solution: c.**

[Graphicnews](#);

# Russia, India to sign S-400 missile deal

Russia and India are expected to sign a deal worth more than \$5 billion on the delivery of Russian S-400 missile systems to New Delhi

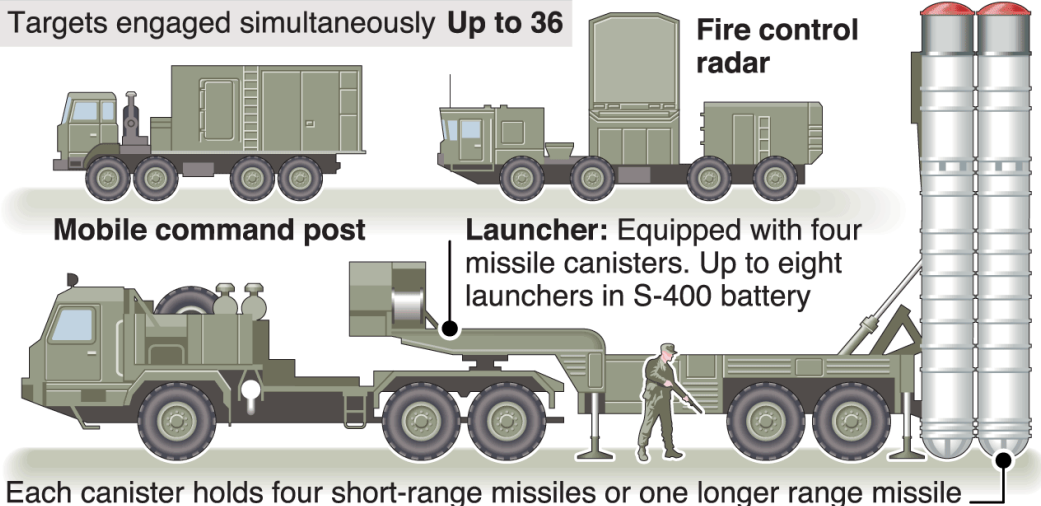


## S-400 TRIUMF (SA-21 Growler)

Maximum detection range	<b>600km</b>
Maximum altitude	<b>30km</b>
Maximum target speed	<b>4.8km/sec</b>
Targets engaged simultaneously	<b>Up to 36</b>

## Missile ranges

9M96:	<b>120km</b>
48N6:	<b>250km</b>
40N6:	<b>400km</b>





## X. REPORTS & INDICES

(Q) Which of the following are some findings in the World Wide Fund for Nature's bi-annual Living Planet Report, the 2018 edition of which was recently released ?

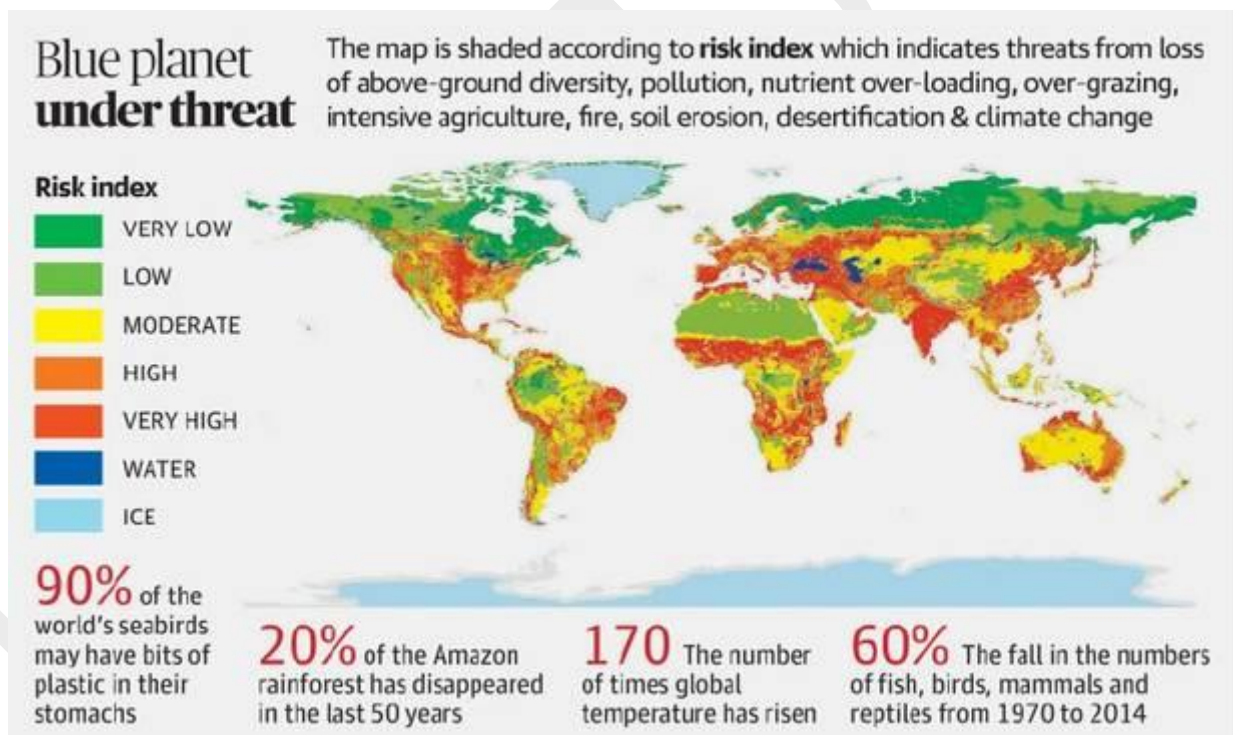
1. The soils only in regions that experience cool temperate continental climate face either "very low" or "low" threats to their biodiversity.
2. India has among the world's lowest per capita ecological footprints.

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

**Solution: b.**

**TH:** While India's per capita ecological footprint was less than 1.75 hectares/person (which is in the lowest band, among countries surveyed) its high population made it vulnerable to an ecological crisis, even if per-capita consumption remained at current levels, the WWF warned.



**Summary, Living Planet Report 2018:** Refer Page 6 and Page 8 for relevant figures.

For climatic zones of the world, refer GC Leong.

(Q) India's Multidimensional Poverty Index in 2018 was 0.121, placing it 53rd out of 105 developing countries for which data was available. The report identifies the largest contributor to India's multidimensional poverty to be

- a) Poor nutrition
- b) Illiteracy
- c) Insufficient access to clean water
- d) Child mortality



**Solution: a.**

**UNDP:** Across nearly every state, poor nutrition is the largest contributor to multidimensional poverty. Not having a household member with at least six years of education is the second largest contributor. Insufficient access to clean water and child mortality contribute least. Relatively fewer people living in poverty experience deprivations in school attendance – a significant gain.

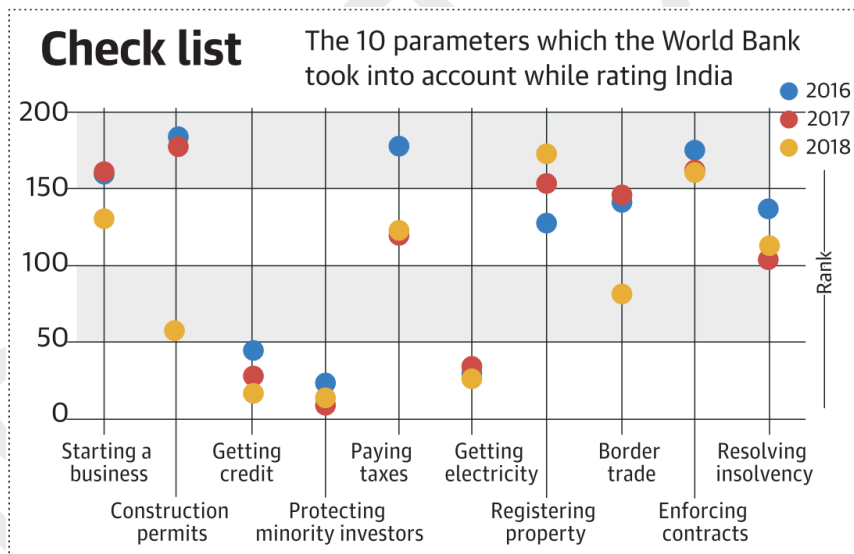
**TH:**

**(Q)** India jumped 23 ranks in the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business Index 2018 to 77. However, there are some parameters on which India’s ranking deteriorated. Among which one of the following parameters did India not witness a drop in its ranking ?

- a) Paying taxes
- b) Enforcing contracts
- c) Registering property
- d) Resolving insolvency

**Solution: b.**

- India’s ranking has deteriorated in the following parameters: Protecting minority investors, paying taxes, registering property and resolving insolvency. There is only a marginal improvement (164 in 2017 to 163 in 2018) in the ‘enforcing contracts’ parameter.



**TH:**

**(Q)** Consider the following statements with reference to India-related findings of the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index:

1. The MPI has gone down across communities, but it is still nearly double among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes when compared to Other Backward Classes.
2. The least multidimensionally poor state is Meghalaya.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

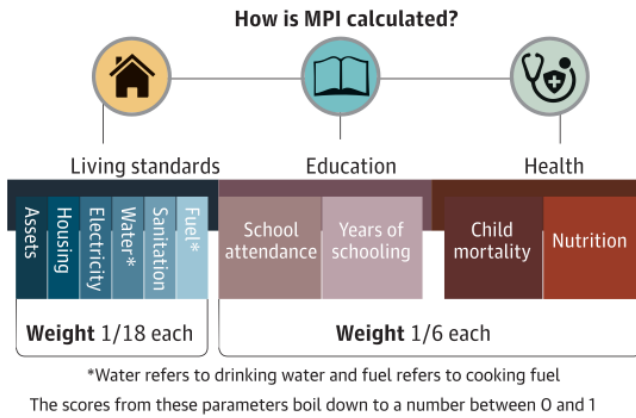
- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Solution: d.**

The least multidimensionally poor state is Kerala.

# States of poverty

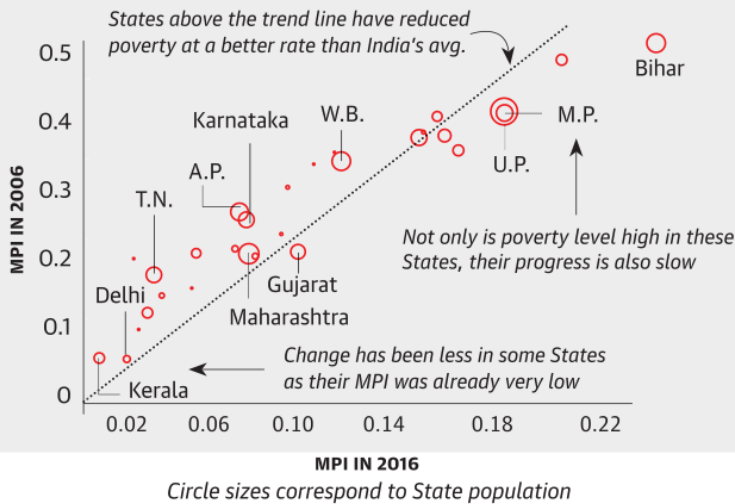
While overall poverty in India has come down, the progress has been uneven among States and communities. **Varun B. Krishnan** looks at the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to reveal variations. A MPI value of 1 indicates the highest deprivation level, while 0 indicates the lowest



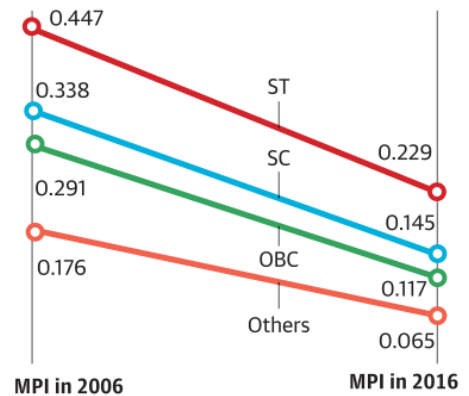
India's MPI is lower than the global average (0.159) but higher (worse) than BRICS countries

Rank	Country	Region	MPI
1	Armenia	Europe and Central Asia	0.001
25	Brazil	Latin America	0.016
26	China	East Asia and the Pacific	0.017
35	S. Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	0.023
53	<b>India</b>	<b>South Asia</b>	<b>0.121</b>
71	Pakistan	South Asia	0.228
105	Niger	Sub-Saharan Africa	0.591

India's MPI stood at 0.121 in 2016, half of what it was in 2006. The chart plots MPI in 2016 vs MPI in 2006 for all States



The MPI has gone down across communities, but it is still nearly double among Scheduled Tribes when compared to Others.



Source: Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, UNDP

Refer pages 8 and 9 of [Global MPI Country Briefing: India 2018](#);

**(Q)** As per NITI Aayog's Composite Water Management Index report released recently,

- Nearly 90% of water supply in India is contaminated.
- 900 million people in the country face high to extreme water stress.
- The country's water demand is projected to be twice the available supply by 2030.

Select the correct answer using the code give below:

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 3 only
- None of the above

**Solution: c.**

Some observations in the report:

- India is suffering from "the worst water crisis" in its history with about

- 60 crore people facing high to extreme water stress;
- 2 lakh people dying every year due to inadequate access to safe water.
- By 2030, the country's water demand is projected to be twice the available supply, implying severe water scarcity for hundreds of millions of people and an eventual 6 per cent loss in the country's GDP.
- With nearly 70 per cent of water being contaminated, India is placed at 120th among 122 countries in the water quality index.
- Currently, 600 million Indians face high to extreme water stress and about two lakh people die every year due to inadequate access to safe water.
- There is an imminent need to deepen understanding of water resources and usage.

IE; Improvisation: TH;

(Q) As per the Comptroller and Auditor General of India's report on National Rural Drinking Water Programme, for the 2012-17 period

1. Not more than half of any single target was attained.
2. Surface water-based schemes accounted for majority of the schemes under the programme.

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

**Solution: d.**

PRS CAG Report Summary: There was inadequate focus on surface water based schemes and 98% of the schemes, including piped water schemes continued to be based on ground water resources. The CAG also noted that operation and maintenance plans were either not prepared in most states or they had deficiencies in them. This led to schemes becoming non-functional. The CAG recommended that focus should be placed on effective works and contract management to ensure that works are completed in time as per the contractual terms. Delays attributable to contractors should be penalised and accountability should be enforced.

**Performance vs Targets of NRDWP# as reported by the CAG**

Issue	Achieved	NRDWP Target*
Access to drinking water in rural habitations	44%	100%
Access provided to drinking water by govt. schools & anganwadis	85%	100%
Population provided with potable water through pipes	18%	50%
Households given water connections	17%	50%

Table source: TH;

(Q) The Ministry of Rural Development recently ranked more than 1.6 lakh gram panchayats in the country on six parameters as part of Mission Antyodaya. Consider the following statements in the context of its findings:

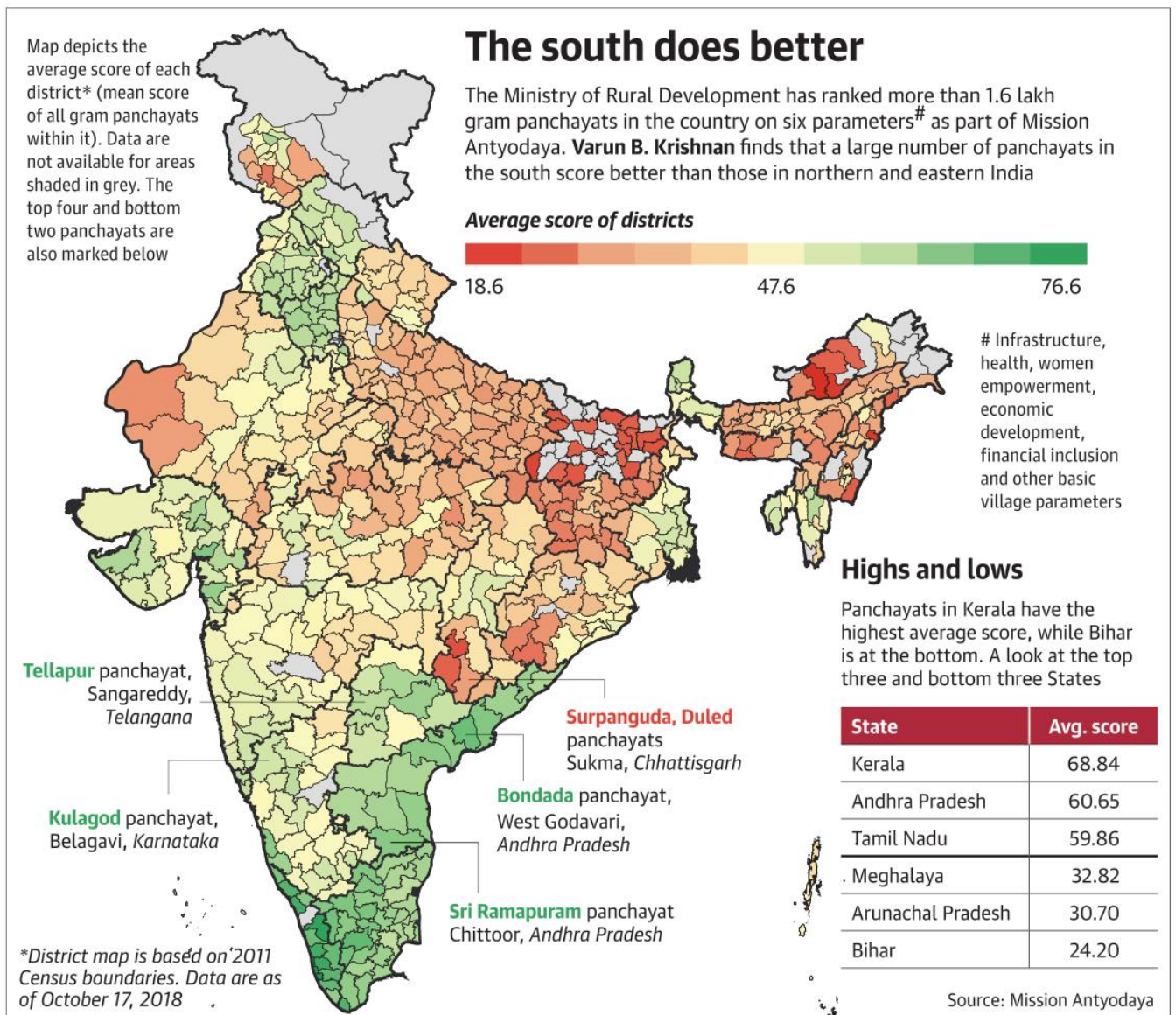
1. The South and Northeast Indian states are among the best performers.
2. In mainland India, the average score of each state reduces consistently as one moves from Tamil Nadu in the South to Jammu and Kashmir in the North.

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

**Solution: d.**

Data Point, 24th October, The Hindu;



(Q) Consider the following statements:

1. The Global Wetland Outlook Report finds that the world's wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests.
2. No Indian city is on the list that the Ramsar Convention has recently recognised for safeguarding and conserving wetlands.

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

**Solution: c.**



- ❖ **Wetlands** – the world’s most valuable ecosystem – are disappearing three times faster than forests, warns new report from the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Approximately 35 per cent of the world’s wetlands were lost between 1970-2015 with annual rates of loss accelerating from 2000.
- ❖ Wetlands are critical to human and planet life. More than one billion people depend on them for a living and 40 per cent of the world’s species live and breed in wetlands. They are a vital source for food, raw materials, genetic resources for medicines, and hydropower; they mitigate floods, protect coastlines and build community resilience to disasters, and they play an important role in transport, tourism and the cultural and spiritual well-being of people.
- ❖ To safeguard wetlands, the international meeting on wetlands has launched accreditation for cities that conserve wetlands. Under this scheme, 18 cities around the world have so far been recognised as conserving their wetlands. No Indian city is on this list.

[UN Water](#); [BBC](#); [Ramsar Convention](#);

**(Q)** As per the National Family Health Survey-4,

1. The Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) is 50.
2. Nearly 40% children under five years are stunted.
3. The percentage of children under five years who are wasted has increased since NFHS-3.

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

**Solution: d.**

The values in the last column (first from the right) are from NFHS-3, while those in the second-last column are from NFHS-4.

Infant and Child Mortality Rates (per 1,000 live births)				
19. Infant mortality rate (IMR)	29	46	41	57
20. Under-five mortality rate (U5MR)	34	56	50	74

[Fact Sheet NFHS-4](#); [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following pairs:

- | <i>Indicators often mentioned in the news</i> | <i>measurement</i>       |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Children under five years who are wasted   | Muscle mass-for-fat mass |
| 2. Children who are underweight               | weight-for-height        |

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched ?

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

**Solution: d.**

- Children under five years who are wasted – **weight-for-height**
- Children who are underweight – **weight-for-age**

1. Children under 5 years who are stunted (height-for-age) <sup>12</sup> (%)	31.0	41.2	38.4	48.0
2. Children under 5 years who are wasted (weight-for-height) <sup>12</sup> (%)	20.0	21.5	21.0	19.8
3. Children under 5 years who are severely wasted (weight-for-height) <sup>13</sup> (%)	7.5	7.4	7.5	6.4
4. Children under 5 years who are underweight (weight-for-age) <sup>12</sup> (%)	29.1	38.3	35.7	42.5

Improvisation: [TH](#);

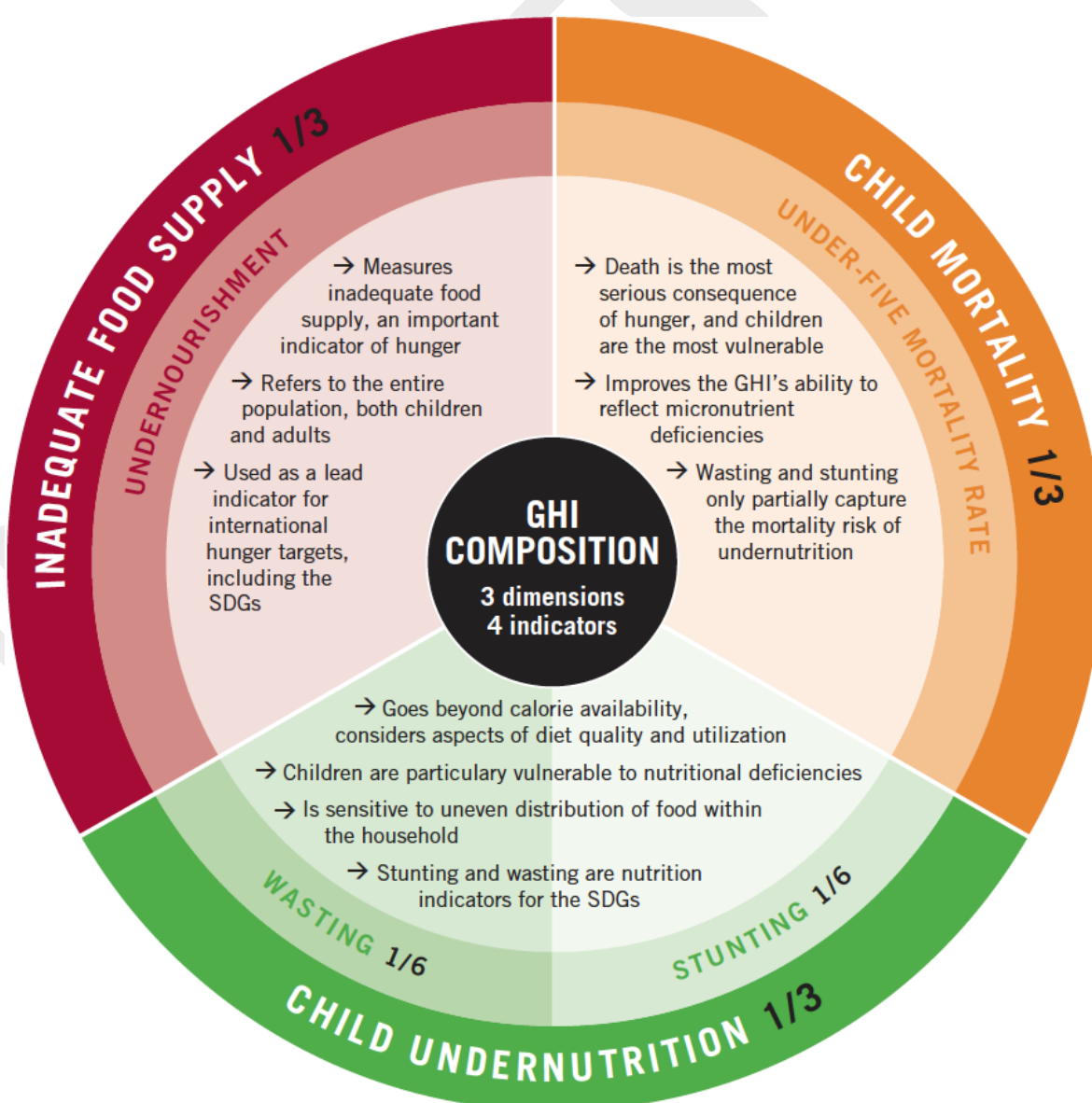
**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. “Hunger” usually refers to the distress associated with a lack of sufficient calories.
2. The latest Global Hunger Index (GHI) uses a combination of four indicators to measure hunger.
3. The GHI is calculated each year by the Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Solution: b.**





- **Hunger** is usually understood to refer to the distress associated with a lack of sufficient calories. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines food deprivation, or undernourishment, as the consumption of too few calories to provide the minimum amount of dietary energy that each individual requires to live a healthy and productive life, given that person's sex, age, stature, and physical activity level.
- **Undernutrition** goes beyond calories and signifies deficiencies in any or all of the following: energy, protein, and/ or essential vitamins and minerals. Undernutrition is the result of inadequate intake of food in terms of either quantity or quality, poor utilization of nutrients due to infections or other illnesses, or a combination of these factors. These, in turn, are caused by a range of factors, including household food insecurity; inadequate maternal health or childcare practices; or inadequate access to health services, safe water, and sanitation.
- **Malnutrition** refers more broadly to both undernutrition (problems caused by deficiencies) and over-nutrition (problems caused by unbalanced diets, such as consuming too many calories in relation to requirements with or without low intake of micronutrient-rich foods).

In the GHI report, "hunger" refers to the index based on four component indicators. Taken together, the component indicators reflect deficiencies in calories as well as in micronutrients.

The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger globally and by country and region. Calculated each year by the International Food Policy Research Institute ([IFPRI](#)), the GHI highlights successes and failures in hunger reduction and provides insights into the drivers of hunger.

[About GHI](#); Improvisation: [TH](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The Logistics Performance Index (LPI) is a publication of the World Bank.
2. In the LPI, India's ranking declined in 2018 when compared to its position in the previous edition of the report.
3. India's logistics cost is at about 10 per cent of the GDP.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Solution: b.**

[TH](#): "India has moved from the 54th position in 2014 to 44th in 2018 (it ranked 35th in 2016) in the World Bank's biennial Logistics Performance Index.

Logistics costs have been one of the biggest stumbling blocks for Indian manufacturers eyeing exports. At about 13-14% of GDP, India's logistics cost is high, and compares with about 8% in advanced nations that have efficient systems... The Centre has made clear its intention to bring down this cost to less than 10%, which would make Indian manufacturers globally relevant."

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. Nationwide, nearly 25 per cent of judicial positions in the subordinate judiciary are lying vacant.
2. The 120<sup>th</sup> Law Commission of India report on Manpower Planning in Judiciary suggested demographic factor to be the basis for fixing judge strength.

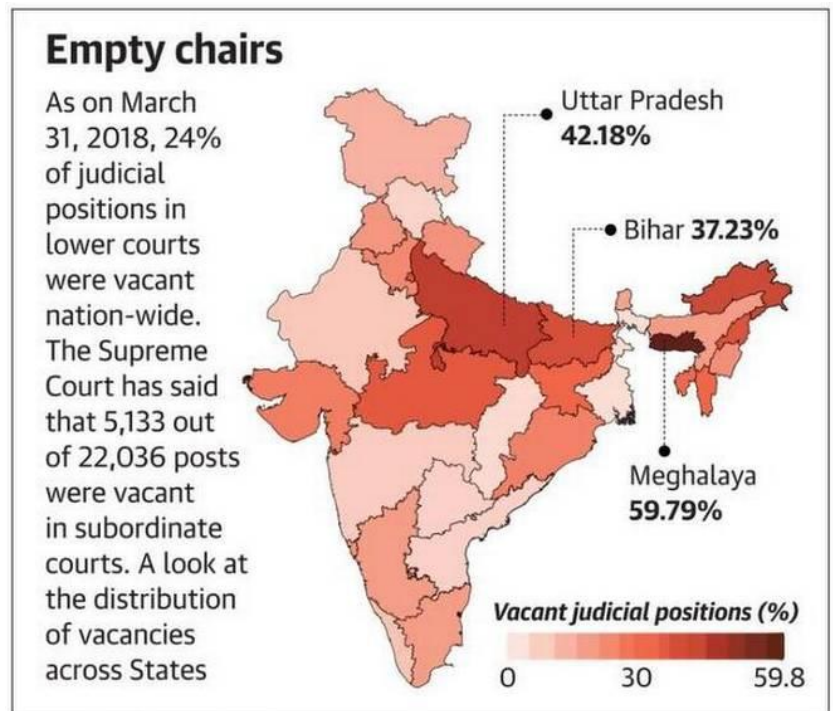
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Solution: c.**

**TH (2017):** The 120th Law Commission of India report on Manpower Planning in Judiciary, 1987, contained significant suggestions for reducing pendency and, for the first time, suggested a judge strength fixation formula. It suggested that the judge-population ratio in India be increased immediately from the then ratio of 10 judges to 50 judges per million. The report said since the demographic factor is the predominant consideration while delimiting legislative boundaries, demographics should be the basis for fixing judge strength.

Image source: [TH](#);



SOURCE: RAJYA SABHA Q&A

# XI. MAPS/ PLACES

(Q) Consider the following statements:

1. Bandar Abbas opens out to the strait of Hormuz.
2. Chabahar is nearer to Gwadar than it is to Bandar Abbas.

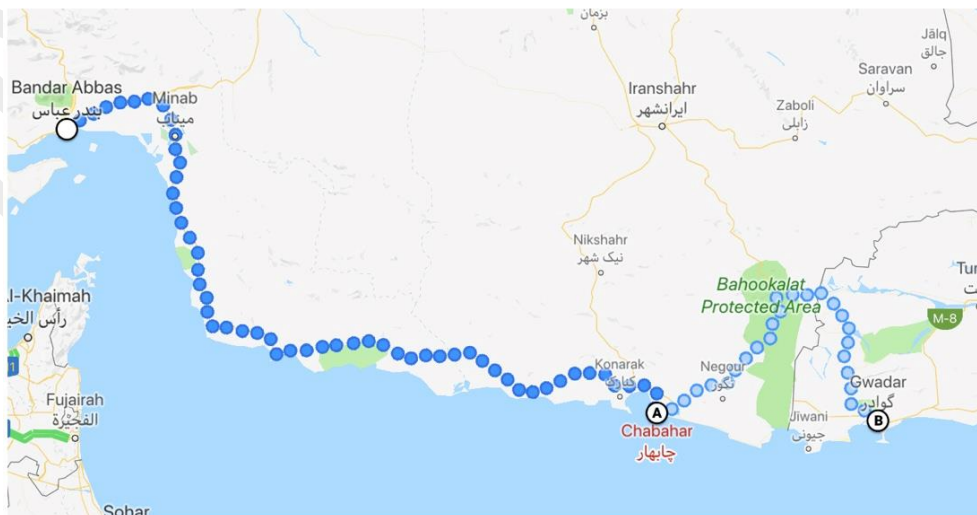
Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

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

**Solution: c.**

[Britannica](#);

[TH](#);



**(Q)** New Caledonia, recently in the news, is

1. A French territory in the Atlantic Ocean.
2. Rich in tellurium deposits, used in the manufacture of advanced solar panels.

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

**Solution: d.**

**BBC:** Voters in the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia have rejected a bid for independence... New Caledonia has large deposits of nickel, a vital component in manufacturing electronics, and is seen by France as a strategic political and economic asset in the region.



**(Q)** Israel has borders with

1. Lebanon
2. Syria
3. Saudi Arabia
4. Egypt
5. Jordan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Solution: d.**



Improvisation: [BBC](#); (Also, Israel is often in the news) [Britannica](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following list of west Asian cities:

1. Damascus
2. Beirut
3. Jerusalem
4. Amman

Arrange them as they would appear on a map from north to south:

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

**Solution: b.**



**(Q)** With which one of the following countries does Turkey have a land border ?

- a) Saudi Arabia
- b) Iran
- c) Jordan
- d) Lebanon

**Solution: b.**

[Britannica](#);

Turkey, often in the news.





(Q) To ensure energy security, the Government of India is setting up strategic crude oil storages at three locations in the first phase. Which of the following are among these locations ?

1. Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
2. Padur, Kerala
3. Mangalore, Karnataka
4. Ratnagiri, Maharashtra

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Solution: c.**

- India has built underground storages in **Visakhapatnam** (AP) and **Mangalore** and **Padur** (both in Karnataka; the latter near Udupi) to store about 5.33 million tonnes of crude oil to guard against global price shocks and supply disruptions. These strategic storages would be in addition to the existing storages of crude oil and petroleum products with the oil companies and would serve as a cushion in response to external supply disruptions. The construction of the strategic crude oil storage facilities is being managed by **Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL)**, a Special Purpose Vehicle, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Oil Industry Development Board (**OIDB**).
- The total 5.33 MMT capacity under Phase-I of the SPR programme is currently estimated to supply approximately 9.5 days of India's crude requirement according to the consumption data for FY 2017-18. Government has given 'in principle' approval in June 2018 for establishing additional 6.5 MMT SPR



facilities at **Chandikhol** in Odisha and **Padur** in Karnataka, which is expected to augment India's energy security by 11.5 days according to the consumption data for FY 2017-18.

[PIB](#);

(Q) Consider the following statements:

1. The Khmer Rouge was a radical Maoist movement in 20th century Laos.
2. Cambodia opens out to the Gulf of Thailand.

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

**Solution: b.**

[Britannica](#): Between 1975 and 1979 the country was devastated by the reign of the Khmer Rouge, a rural communist guerrilla movement. During the Khmer Rouge's period of power, at least 1.5 million Cambodians were killed or died, a monumental tragedy from which the country still suffers.



In the news ([BBC](#)): For the first time, two leaders of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia have been convicted of genocide.

(Q) Consider the following statements with reference to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands:

1. More than 500 islands are in the Andaman group.
2. The ten degree channel separates the North Sentinel Island from the South Sentinel Island.

3. Archaeological evidence confirms human occupation of the islands from at least around 2,000 years ago.

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) None of the above

**Solution: c.**

About [Andaman](#): Once a hill range extending from Myanmar to Indonesia, the islands today numbering around 572 and are covered with dense rain-fed, damp and evergreen forests and endless varieties of exotic flora and fauna. Most of these islands (about 550) are in the Andaman Group, 28 of which are inhabited. The smaller Nicobars, comprise some 22 main islands (10 inhabited). The Andaman and Nicobars are separated by the Ten Degree Channel which is 150 kms wide.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands have been inhabited for several thousand years, at the very least. Archaeological evidence yet documented goes back some 2,200 years; however, the indications from genetic, cultural and linguistic isolation studies point to habitation going back 30,000 – 60,000 years, well into the Middle Palaeolithic.

[IE](#); [TH](#); [TH2](#);

**(Q)** The Kerch strait links

- a) Java sea and Indian Ocean
- b) Adriatic and Ionian Sea
- c) Bering sea and Chukchi Sea
- d) Sea of Azov and Black Sea

**Solution: d.**



[BBC: Russia-Ukraine sea clash](#); [TH](#);

**(Q)** Along the banks of which one of the following rivers is the Kartarpur Gurudwara?

- a) Chenab
- b) Ravi
- c) Beas
- d) Satluj

**Solution: b.**

**TH:** “For scores of Sikh pilgrims from India who were at this shrine on the banks of the Ravi river in Pakistan as the foundation stone was laid for the Kartarpur corridor, the development is nothing short of a miracle... Despite the euphoria over the foundation-laying ceremonies in Dera Baba Nanak and Kartarpur this week, officials say they are apprehensive that the short distance of six kilometres between them cannot be spanned until there are direct talks between Indian and Pakistani delegations. Senior officials in New Delhi and Islamabad confirmed that no such talks have been held as yet, although both governments have been working separately for some months on plans to commemorate the 550th birth anniversary.”

## XII. Miscellaneous

(Q) Consider the following pairs:

<i>Country</i>	–	<i>Home of Indigenous tribes</i>
1. France	–	Kanaks
2. New Zealand	–	Maoris
3. India	–	Angami

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched ?

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

**Solution: d.**

**The Maoris** are often in the news (ex: last year, river Whanganui – long revered by the Maoris – was the first to be granted the same legal rights as a person).

**BBC:** About 175,000 people were eligible to vote in Sunday’s referendum New Caledonia (France), east of Australia, where indigenous Kanaks make up 39.1% of the population. Final results showed that 56.4% chose to remain part of France while 43.6% voted to leave.

**BBC:** The Angami tribe in the north-eastern Indian state of Nagaland gave up their ancient tradition of hunting to protect wildlife. They gave up what was an important source of livelihood some 20 years ago in order to create a more stable ecosystem for future generations.

(Q) ‘Banglanatak dot com’, sometimes in the news, is

- a) A social enterprise working across India with a mission to foster sustainable development using culture-based approaches.
- b) An initiative by the West Bengal government to promote traditional crafts of the state.
- c) A virtual museum which hosts a collection of virtual reality videos and images of arts and crafts that belong to eastern India.
- d) None of the above

**Solution: a.**

About [Banglanatak dot com](#): “...is a social enterprise working across India with a mission to foster inclusive and sustainable development using culture based approaches. We work for protection of rights of women, children and indigenous people.”

In the news (**TH**): In a unique initiative, three graphic novels have been published on three different art forms of the State, both in Bengali and English. These have been published by the West Bengal government, the UNESCO and banglanatak dot com for promotion of traditional crafts of West Bengal.

Additional information: [Chhau dance](#);

**(Q)** Consider the following statements:

1. The first North East Olympic Games was recently hosted by Assam.
2. The first national sports stadium for differently-abled is set to come up in Manipur.

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

**Solution: d.**

The Manipur Olympic Association hosted the first NEOG in Imphal from October 24th to 28th. The first national sports stadium for differently-abled is set to come up in Meghalaya.

**IE:** [Vikaspedia National Current Affairs October 2018](#)

**(Q)** Sometimes in the news, 'Survival International' is a movement that advocates the rights of

- a) Refugees
- b) Leprosy patients
- c) Tribal people
- d) Trafficked human beings

**Solution: c.**

**About SI:** "We are Survival, the global movement for tribal peoples' rights. We're the only organization that champions tribal peoples around the world. We help them defend their lives, protect their lands and determine their own futures."

**TH:** [TH2;](#)