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Q.1) Consider the following statements

1. A keystone species is an organism that helps to define an entire ecosystem
2. Any organism, from plants to fungi, may be a keystone species
3. A keystone species are always the largest or most abundant species in an ecosystem

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

Q.1) Solution (a)

A whopping 1,160 elephants were killed in the country due to reasons other than natural causes in the past 10 years up to December 31, 2020, according to the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

The major causes of deaths are due to electrocution, train hits, poaching and poisoning

Centre and the States together had a greater responsibility in protecting elephants, a keystone species, and their habitats.

A keystone species is an organism that helps define an entire ecosystem. Without its keystone species, the ecosystem would be dramatically different or cease to exist altogether.

Keystone species have low functional redundancy. This means that if the species were to disappear from the ecosystem, no other species would be able to fill its ecological niche. The ecosystem would be forced to radically change, allowing new and possibly invasive species to populate the habitat.

Any organism, from plants to fungi, may be a keystone species; they are not always the largest or most abundant species in an ecosystem. However, almost all examples of keystone species are animals that have a huge influence on food webs. The way these animals influence food webs varies from habitat to habitat.

India had a total of 29,964 wild elephants as per an estimation done in 2017. The southern region comprising Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra accounted for the highest population — 14,612 elephants.

Financial and technical assistance were provided to elephant range States under the centrally sponsored 'Project Elephant' scheme to protect elephants, their habitat and corridors

Critical elephant habitats are notified as 'elephant reserve' for focus and synergy in elephant conservation and to reduce conflict.

A Permanent Coordination Committee has been constituted between the Ministry of Railways and the MoEFCC for preventing elephant deaths due to train hits.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/1160-elephants-killed-due-to-reasons-other-than-natural-causes-moefcc/article37796114.ece>

Q.2) The terms Peechi-Vazhany, Chimmony, and Chulannur which is sometimes seen in news is related to:

- a) Tribes of Kerala
- b) Wildlife Sanctuaries
- c) Dams of Tamil Nadu
- d) Elephant Reserves

Q.2) Solution (b)

The four-day butterfly survey was conducted by the Kerala Forest Department and Travancore Nature History Society (TNHS) Thiruvananthapuram.

The Peechi-Vazhany, Chimmony, and Chulannur Wildlife Sanctuaries were surveyed using 14 base camps.

Peechi-Vazhany Wildlife sanctuary had 132 species of butterflies, Chimmony had 116 species, while Chulannur recorded 41 species. The survey added 80 species, almost double, to the older record of Peechi-Vazhany, 33 to Chimmony, and 41 species to Chulannur.

Other notable species are Nilgiri Grass Yellow, Travancore Evening Brown, Malabar Flash, Orange Tailed Awl, Southern Spotted Ace and Common Onyx. The report of Common Tinsel at Chulannur was another highlight. Altitudinal migration of Common Albatross was recorded in Chimmony.

Great Indian Hornbill, the State bird of Kerala, was reported from Peechi-Vazhany and Chimmony. The highest number of birds was reported from Vellani (104) in Vazhany, followed by Vallikayam in Peechi.

The sanctuary has a good population of Bengal tiger, gaur, elephants, dhole, and flying squirrels.

The teams also noted the presence of invasive plants and ants in the region.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/survey-records-a-rise-in-butterfly-species/article37791200.ece>

Q.3) Consider the following statements with respect to The Paika Rebellion of 1817:

1. It is called the first war of Independence against the British Rule.
2. The Paika Rebellion started in 1817 and continued till 1825

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

Q.3) Solution (b)

The 1817 Paika rebellion of Odisha could not be called the first war of Independence, but considering it as a beginning of a popular uprising against the British, it would be included as a case study in the Class 8 National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) history textbook, the Union Culture Minister said

At present, the Indian Mutiny or Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 is called the first war of Independence against British Rule.

The Paika Bidroha (Paika Rebellion) of 1817 took place nearly 40 years before the first sepoy mutiny.

The Centre had considered the proposal and examined the matter in consultation with the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, now renamed Ministry of Education. And as per recommendations from ICHR, the Paika Rebellion cannot be called the first War of Independence; Union Culture Minister had informed the Rajya Sabha.

However, considering that the rebellion which started in 1817 continued till 1825 and “is one of the beginnings of popular uprisings against the British in India”, the minister declared that it would now be included in the curriculum of Class VIII history textbook of NCERT.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/paika-rebellion-to-be-included-as-case-study-in-history-textbook-minister/article37805249.ece>

Q.4) The Lok Sabha recently passed The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020. In this regard consider the following statements:

1. The bill proposes the establishment of a national registry and registration authority for all clinics and medical professionals serving in the field.

2. The bill excludes single parents and the LGBTQ community from using this procedure
3. The foreign citizens cannot access ART

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

Q.4) Solution (c)

The Lok Sabha recently passed The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 that proposes the establishment of a national registry and registration authority for all clinics and medical professionals serving in the field.

Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2020 (Bill) aims to regulate ART banks and clinics, allow safe and ethical practice of ARTs and protect women and children from exploitation.

The first concern is who can access ART. The Bill allows for a married heterosexual couples and a woman above the age of marriage to use ARTs. It excludes single men, cohabiting heterosexual couples and LGBTQI individuals and couples from accessing ARTs. This violates Article 14 of the Constitution

Unlike the SRB, there is no prohibition on foreign citizens accessing ARTs. Foreigners can access ART but not Indian citizens in living relationships.

The Bill also has a provision that those involved in trafficking and sale of embryos will be fined ₹10 lakh at first instance and in second instance, the person can be imprisoned for up to 12 years

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/lok-sabha-passes-bill-to-regulate-ivf-clinics/article37790488.ece>

Q.5) Southern Birdwing, Grass Jewel, Buddha Peacock which is sometimes seen in news is related to:

- a) Peacock species
- b) Butterfly species
- c) Frog species
- d) Grasshoppers in Africa

Q.5) Solution (b)

A butterfly survey at the Peechi-Vazhani wildlife division has recorded a remarkable increase in the species' numbers. Southern Birdwing, the largest butterfly in India, and Grass Jewel, the smallest, were found during the survey. Buddha Peacock, the State butterfly of Kerala, was also recorded.

A total of 156 butterfly species, out of the 326 found in Kerala, were recorded in the 242 sq km division.

The four-day butterfly survey was conducted by the Kerala Forest Department and Travancore Nature History Society (TNHS) Thiruvananthapuram.

The survey teams also recorded birds, odonates, reptiles, amphibians, and spiders. A total of 152 bird species were recorded in Peechi-Vazhany, in Chimmony and 77 in Chulannur.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/survey-records-a-rise-in-butterfly-species/article37791200.ece>

Q.6) Telangana State develops Smartphone based e-voting solution. In this regard consider the following statements:

1. This facility will be available for all sections of voters
2. Blockchain technology has been used to secure the de-identified and encrypted votes

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

Q.6) Solution (b)

Telangana State develops smartphone based e-voting solution

It followed the Commission mooted e-voting facility for certain sections of voters. The list comprised persons with disabilities (PWD), senior citizens, those employed in notified essential services, polling personnel, IT professionals as well as those sick.

The solution leverages Artificial Intelligence for a three-factor authentication of valid voter -- name matching with Aadhaar, liveness detection of individual and image matching with EPIC database.

Blockchain technology has been used to secure the de-identified and encrypted votes so that they are maintained as immutable record.

The 'TSEC eVote' Android app is a security hardened mobile application to prevent tampering and binds a device ID and phone number to a specific citizen registration process so that only the same device can be used during voting, thus enhancing security.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/telangana/ts-develops-smartphone-based-e-voting-solution/article36865780.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/no-move-for-e-voting-law-minister-kiren-rijiju/article37824414.ece>

Q.7) Consider the following statements

1. All the State High Courts in India are situated inside the capital city
2. The building of Calcutta High Court is a UNESCO World Heritage Site

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

Q.7) Solution (d)

Tharoor moves Bill for permanent HC Benches in State capitals

In Kerala, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Goa, Uttarakhand, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Chhattisgarh the State High Court is situated outside the capital city.

The ***buildings of Bombay High Court*** (as part of the Victorian and art deco ensemble of Mumbai) and ***Punjab and Haryana High Court*** (as part of the architectural work of Le Corbusier) are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The Calcutta High Court is the oldest high court in the country, established on 2 July 1862.

The work of most high courts primarily consists of appeals from lower courts and writ petitions in terms of Articles 226 and 227 of the constitution. Writ jurisdiction is also an original jurisdiction of a high court.

Each state is divided into judicial districts presided over by a district and sessions judge. He is known as district judge when he presides over a civil case and session's judge when he presides over a criminal case. He is the highest judicial authority below a high court judge.

Article Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_courts_of_India

Q.8) Mount Semeru is an active volcano located in which of the following country?

- a) Philippines
- b) Indonesia
- c) Japan
- d) Greece

Q.8) Solution (b)

Indonesia volcano eruption kills 14, damages 11 villages

Semeru, or Mount Semeru is an active volcano in East Java, Indonesia. It is located in a subduction zone, where the Indo-Australian plate subducts under the Eurasia plate. It is the highest mountain on the island of Java.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/indonesia-semeru-volcano-eruption-many-dead/article37849027.ece>

Q.9) Consider the following statements with respect to The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE):

1. OSCE is the largest regional security organization in the world
2. The USA and Canada are the participating States of OSCE
3. India is the cooperation partner of OSCE

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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

Q.9) Solution (b)

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is the largest regional security organization in the world. In recent years, it has regained importance as a platform for dialogue between East and West.

Its headquarters are in Vienna.

The OSCE comprises 57 participating States, including the countries of Europe and the successor states to the Soviet Union, as well as the United States, Canada and Mongolia. The OSCE's decisions are reached by consensus, i.e. with the approval of all participating States. The decisions in which the participating States commit themselves to common values, ideas and goals are politically, but not legally, binding. The OSCE emerged from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in 1990 with the Charter of Paris.

Beyond its participating States, the OSCE conducts dialogues with partner countries in the Mediterranean region (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan) and with Asian partner countries (Japan, South Korea, Thailand and Afghanistan), as well as Australia. These cooperation partners also attend meetings of the OSCE bodies.

The OSCE's objective is to enhance security in Europe through cooperation and dialogue between the European and the eastern and western neighboring countries.

Article Link:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/putin-demands-nato-guarantees-not-to-expand-eastward>

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/internationale-organisationen/osze-node>

Q.10) Consider the following statements with respect to The Private Member's Bills:

1. The subject of the Bill should relate to the subjects included in the Union or Concurrent List contained in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India.
2. The Private Member's Bills can be introduced and discussed on any day
3. No Private Member's Bill has been passed by the Parliament since 1970

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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

Q.10) Solution (c)

A member of parliament (MP) who is not a minister is a private member. The Bills introduced by private members are referred to as Private Member's Bills. The Bills introduced by ministers are called government Bills. The government bills have the backing of the government and reflect its legislative agenda. Whether the Private Bill has to be admitted or not is decided by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha or Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha.

The first and foremost requirement in the case of a Private Member's Bill is that it should be within the legislative competence of the Parliament. In other words, the subject of the Bill should relate to the subjects included in the Union or Concurrent List contained in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India.

The Private Member's Bills are either drafted by the Member of Parliament (MP) or his staff. The MP who wants to move a Private Member's Bill has to give at least a month's notice, for the House Secretariat to examine it for compliance with constitutional provisions and rules on legislation. ***While a government Bill can be introduced and discussed on any day, a private member's bill is only introduced and discussed on Fridays.***

No Private Member's Bill has been passed by the Parliament since 1970

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tharoor-moves-bill-for-permanent-hc-benches-in-state-capitals/article37832344.ece>

Q.11) Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Barbados?

1. Barbados is an island country in the Caribbean region of the America
2. Barbados recently declared itself as a republic nation

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

Q.11) Solution (c)

The Caribbean island nation of Barbados has turned a page in history, declaring itself a republic, a move that coincides with the 55th anniversary of its independence from Britain.

This is the first time since the 1970s that a Caribbean state has become a republic. An important milestone in Bridgetown's long journey was a 2005 decision to drop the Privy Council in London as its final court of appeal, in preference for the Caribbean Court of Justice in Trinidad.

Consequent to the country's emergence as a republic, Barbadians will no longer regard the British crown as their head of state. This is similar to many states in the British Commonwealth. That constitutional position will, after 400 years, be occupied by the President of the country. On November 29, Barbados, once known as Little England, swore in its first President, Sandra Mason, who was until then the country's Governor General and the representative of Queen Elizabeth II.

Barbados is an island country in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies, in the Caribbean region of the Americas, and the most easterly of the Caribbean Island

Barbados' population of 287,000 is predominantly of African descent. While it is an Atlantic island, Barbados is closely associated with the Caribbean and is ranked as one of its leading tourist destinations

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/the-making-of-the-republic-of-barbados/article37818187.ece>

Q.12) The Government has made it mandatory for the introduction of a Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number in every piece of jewellery. In this regard consider the following statements:

1. The aim is to bring transparency in the jewellery trade and increase trust among consumers
2. The implementation is done by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)
3. Hallmarking & HUID are mandatory for 10, 14, 18 and 22 carat gold jewellery.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.12) Solution (c)

The Government has made it mandatory for the introduction of a Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number in every piece of jewellery.

The aim to bring transparency in the jewellery trade and increase trust among consumers

It is now being implemented by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) in a phased manner.

HUID is a six-digit alphanumeric code, or one that consists of numbers and letters. It is given to every piece of jewellery at the time of hallmarking and is unique for each piece.

Jewellery is stamped with the unique number manually at the Assaying & Hallmarking (A&H) centre.

The hallmark consists of three symbols which give some information about the jewellery piece. The first symbol is the BIS logo; the second indicates purity and fineness; and the third symbol is the HUID.

Hallmarking & HUID are mandatory for 14-, 18- and 22-carat gold jewellery and artefacts.

HUID gives a distinct identity to each piece of jewellery enabling traceability.

Jewellers' trade bodies, however, say it's cumbersome to number each piece of jewellery and HUID cannot be engraved in tiny pieces and also that it will increase cost for consumers.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/explained-how-is-hallmarking-being-implemented/article37847127.ece>

Q.13) Consider the following statements with respect to National Mission on Cultural Mapping

1. It is a pilot project covering most of the villages of North India
2. The aim is to create a huge database related to Indian villages and the culture, customs and traditions there
3. Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is the implementation agency of the project

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.13) Solution (a)

Culture mapping of 80 villages associated with noted personalities in history, in particular the freedom movement, unique crafts and festivals had been started as a pilot project.

From Sempore in Kashmir to Kanjirapally in Kerala, villages with a connection to the Independence struggle as well as those with their own art practices had been selected for the pilot project being conducted by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).

The project would lead to a “national register and interactive database of artists and art practices from the villages of India”. Each artist would be given a unique ID and an e-commerce platform set up.

IGNCA, which is an autonomous organization under the administrative control of Ministry of Culture has been designated as implementation agency for the National Mission on Cultural Mapping.

The aim is to create a huge database related to our villages and the culture, customs and traditions there.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/culture-mapping-of-80-villages-kicks-off/article37842557.ece>

Q.14) With respect to the Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS), consider the following statements:

1. It is a new syndrome which has been reported in people who have received adenoviral vector COVID-19 vaccines
2. The syndrome is characterized by blood clots
3. It causes low platelet count

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.14) Solution (d)

Study finds mechanism of blood clots after giving Oxford vaccine

Thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS), also known as Vaccine-induced prothrombotic immune thrombocytopenia (VIPIT) or vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia (VITT), is a rare and newly identified syndrome which has been reported in people who have received adenoviral vector COVID-19 vaccines such as Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca) and the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine.

The syndrome is characterized by thrombosis formation (blood clots) combined with thrombocytopenia (low platelet count).

A multi-institutional study published recently has revealed for the first time the mechanism responsible for blood clots arising from thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome (TTS) following vaccination with AstraZeneca vaccine. Thrombocytopenia syndrome causes low platelet count. A low number of platelets – blood cells that help prevent blood loss when vessels are damaged – can result in no symptoms or can lead to an increased risk of bleeding or, in some cases, clotting.

According to an Arizona University release, in very rare cases, the viral vector may enter the bloodstream and bind to PF4, where the immune system then views this complex as foreign. The scientists believe this misplaced immunity could result in the release of antibodies against PF4, which bind to and activate platelets, causing them to cluster together and triggering blood clots in a very small number of people after the vaccine is administered.

Article Link:

<https://mvec.mcri.edu.au/references/thrombosis-with-thrombocytopenia-syndrome/>

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/study-finds-mechanism-of-blood-clots-after-giving-oxford-vaccine/article37842168.ece>

Q.15) “Chocolate-bordered Flitter” which is sometimes seen in news is a:

- a) species of Honeybee
- b) medicinal plant
- c) species of Butterfly
- d) species of Birds

Q.15) Solution (c)

New species of Butterfly found in Sikkim’s Dzongu, the ‘land of butterflies’

The National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), Bengaluru, maintains the photos and record of Butterflies in the ‘Butterflies of India’ website

The closest relatives of the Chocolate-bordered Flitter are in southeastern China

The new species of butterfly, now named the Chocolate-bordered Flitter, also carries the scientific name *Zographetus dzonguensis*, after Dzongu in north Sikkim, the place where it was discovered. Its closest relatives are *Zographetus pangi* in Guangdong, and *Zographetus hainanensis* in Hainan, both in southeastern China, close to Hong Kong

The physical appearance of the species differ slightly and the internal structures of the males also differ slightly

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/new-species-found-in-sikkims-dzongu-the-land-of-butterflies/article37829131.ece>

Q.16) Cheyzeru River is a river in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh that is a tributary of which of the following river?

- a) Krishna River
- b) Pennar River
- c) Godavari River
- d) Tungabhadra River

Q.16) Solution (b)

The Annamayya project on Cheyzeru River has turned out to be the sorrow of many a village in Rajampet Assembly constituency in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh.

Annamayya is a medium irrigation project with a gross capacity of only 2.24 tmc ft on Cheyzeru, a tributary of Penna River, in Rajampet constituency. It caters to an ayacut of 22,500 acres, besides fulfilling the drinking water needs of 140 habitations.

Cheyzeru River is a river in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh that is a tributary of the Pennar river.

Article Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/hyderabad/andhra-pradesh-deluge-annamayya-dam-cheyzeru-river-7634151/>

Q.17) Consider the following statements

- 1) Cyclonic Storm Jawad was a weak tropical cyclone

- 2) Saudi Arabia has given the cyclone its name Jawad
- 3) Naming of cyclones in the Indian Ocean region was started with a treaty in 1953

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.17) Solution (c)

Cyclonic Storm Jawad was a weak tropical cyclone that caused major disruptions over Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal in India while bringing heavy rainfall and strong winds over these states as a weakened system

Saudi Arabia has given the cyclone its name 'Jawad'. The meaning 'Jawad' is liberal or merciful. The carries significance as this cyclonic storm will not be as severe as the previous ones.

It is interesting to know that the naming of cyclones was started with a treaty in 1953 in the Atlantic region. ***In the Indian Ocean region, the name of cyclone system started from 2004.*** To name the cyclones, the member countries give a list of names on their behalf. After this, the alphabetical listing is done. In the way, storm cyclones are named after the suggested name.

Article Link:

<https://www.india.com/news/india/cyclone-jawad-what-it-means-and-how-did-it-get-its-name-all-you-need-to-know-5122711/>

Q.18) Consider the following statements with respect to Invasive species:

1. An invasive species does not have to come from another country
2. They can harm the environment, the economy and even human health
3. Some invasive species can change the soil chemistry or the intensity of wildfires

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

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

Q.18) Solution (d)

Invasive species are among the leading threats to native wildlife. Approximately 42 percent of threatened or endangered species are at risk due to invasive species.

Many of our commercial, agricultural and recreational activities depend on healthy native ecosystems.

An invasive species can be any kind of living organism—an amphibian (like the cane toad), plant, insect, fish, fungus, bacteria, or even an organism's seeds or eggs—that is not native to an ecosystem and causes harm. They can harm the environment, the economy, or even human health. Species that grow and reproduce quickly, and spread aggressively, with potential to cause harm, are given the label "invasive."

An invasive species does not have to come from another country.

Invasive species are primarily spread by human activities, often unintentionally.

The direct threats of invasive species include preying on native species, outcompeting native species for food or other resources, causing or carrying disease, and preventing native species from reproducing or killing a native species' young.

There are indirect threats of invasive species as well. Invasive species can change the food web in an ecosystem by destroying or replacing native food sources. The invasive species may provide little to no food value for wildlife. Invasive species can also alter the abundance or diversity of species that are important habitat for native wildlife. Additionally, some invasive species are capable of changing the conditions in an ecosystem, such as changing soil chemistry or the intensity of wildfires.

Article Link:

<https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Threats-to-Wildlife/Invasive-Species>

Q.19) Consider the following statements with respect to the Statutory Bail:

1. It is also known as Default Bail
2. This is a right to bail that accrues when the police fail to complete investigation within a specified period in respect of a person in judicial custody
3. Statutory Bail is a right, regardless of the nature of the crime

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.19) Solution (d)

Why was lawyer and activist Sudha Bharadwaj given bail, but the co-accused denied the same relief?

What is default bail?

Also known as statutory bail, this is a right to bail that accrues when the police fail to complete investigation within a specified period in respect of a person in judicial custody. This is enshrined in Section 167(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure where it is not possible for the police to complete an investigation in 24 hours, the police produce the suspect in court and seek orders for either police or judicial custody. This section concerns the total period up to which a person may be remanded in custody prior to filing of charge sheet.

For most offences, the police have 60 days to complete the investigation and file a final report before the court. However, where the offence attracts death sentence or life imprisonment, or a jail term of not less than 10 years, the period available is 90 days. In other words, a magistrate cannot authorize a person's judicial remand beyond the 60-or 90-day limit.

At the end of this period, if the investigation is not complete, the court shall release the person "if he is prepared to and does furnish bail".

Default or statutory bail is a right, regardless of the nature of the crime. The stipulated period within which the charge sheet has to be filed begins from the day the accused is remanded for the first time. It includes days undergone in both police and judicial custody, but not days spent in house-arrest. A requirement for the grant of statutory bail is that the right should be claimed by the person in custody. If the charge sheet is not filed within the stipulated period, but there is no application for bail under Section 167(2), there is no automatic bail. In general, the right to bail on the investigation agency's default is considered an 'indefeasible right', but it should be availed of at the appropriate time.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-when-can-an-individual-get-statutory-bail/article37846868.ece>

Q.20) Consider the following statements

- 1) Ballistic missiles follow a fixed trajectory and travel outside the atmosphere to re-enter only near impact.
- 2) Hypersonic missiles travel within the atmosphere and can manoeuvre midway
- 3) Hypersonic missiles can fly faster than 5,000 kms per hour which makes their detection and interception extremely difficult

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.20) Solution (d)

They are manoeuvrable weapons that can fly at speeds in excess of Mach 5, five times the speed of sound. The speed of sound is Mach 1, and speeds up to Mach 5 are supersonic and speeds above Mach 5 are hypersonic. Ballistic missiles, though much faster, follow a fixed trajectory and travel outside the atmosphere to re-enter only near impact. On the contrary, hypersonic weapons travel within the atmosphere and can manoeuvre midway which combined with their high speeds makes their detection and interception extremely difficult. This means that radars and air defences cannot detect them till they are very close and little time to react.

According to the latest memo of the Congressional Research Service (CRS), 'Hypersonic Weapons: Background and Issues for Congress' of October 2021, there are two classes of hypersonic weapons, hypersonic glide vehicles (HGV) and hypersonic cruise missiles (HCM). HGVs are launched from a rocket before gliding to a target while HCMs are powered by high-speed, air-breathing engines, or scramjets, after acquiring their target.

Hypersonic missiles are a new class of threat because they are capable both of manoeuvring and of flying faster than 5,000 kms per hour, which would enable such missiles to penetrate most missile defences and to further compress the timelines for response by a nation under attack

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/explained-the-arms-race-towards-hypersonic-weapons/article37874968.ece>

Q.21) Consider the following statement with respect to Digi Yatra initiative:

1. It aims to make air travel paperless and hassle-free in India
2. It will simplify passenger-related processes using FRT-based biometric scanning
3. Passengers' biometric information will be collected via an app, and deleted 24 hours after flight departure

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.21) Solution (d)

This biometric boarding system is part of the first phase of Digi Yatra scheme's implementation

Digi Yatra initiative aims to make air travel paperless and hassle-free in the country, and proposes to simplify passenger-related processes at various check points at the airport by using FRT-based biometric scanning.

Once implemented, air travellers who choose to use the service won't have to show their tickets, boarding passes, or physical identity cards at several points at the airport. This in turn would reduce queue waiting time and accelerate processing time.

Passengers' biometric information will be collected via an app, and deleted 24 hours after flight departure. And the security of the FRT system will be tested independently

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/the-hindu-explains-facial-recognition-tech-in-indian-airports/article37885267.ece>

Q.22) Recently Rajya Sabha passed the Dam Safety Bill, 2019. In this regard consider the following statements:

1. Central Water Commission (CWC) along with the Central Dam Safety Organisation (CDSO) has been functioning as the apex body to advise States on issues of dam safety
2. There is no specific Central law that governs the subject
3. The ownership of dams and their maintenance predominantly falls in the purview of the States

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.22) Solution (d)

The Dam Safety Bill, 2019, which provides for the surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance of all specified dams across the country, and has been debated for decades, finally got the nod of the Rajya Sabha. In August 2019, the Bill was approved by the Lok Sabha.

India ranks third globally with 5,745 large dams in operation. According to the National Register of Large Dams prepared in June 2019 by the Central Dam Safety Organisation (CDSO) in the Central Water Commission (CWC), 67 dams were built prior to the 20th century and 1,039 dams during the first 70 years of the 20th century.

Even though the CWC, along with the CDSO, has been functioning as the apex body to advise States on issues of dam safety, there is no specific Central law that governs the subject, given the situation that the ownership of dams and their maintenance predominantly falls in the purview of the States.

The Bill covers those dams having the height of over 15 metres and between 10 and 15 metres with certain stipulations. It seeks to create two national institutions -- National Committee on Dam Safety to evolve dam safety policies and recommend necessary regulations, and the National Dam Safety Authority to implement policies and address unresolved issues between two States.

The legislation also envisages the formation of State Dam Safety Organisations and State Committees on Dam Safety. Dam owners will be held responsible for construction, operation, maintenance and supervision of dams.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-what-is-the-debate-on-the-dam-safety-bill/article37846798.ece>

Q.23) Recently *Physella acuta*, which is globally branded as highly invasive snail species reported in Kerala. In this regard consider the following statements:

- 1. It is native to North America
- 2. Its rapid growth rate, air-breathing capability and tolerance to pollution make it a potential competitor to native fauna

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

Q.23) Solution (c)

Highly invasive snail species reported in Kerala

A tiny snail with a striking, pellucid golden-yellow shell found in the Edappally canal in Kochi has been flagged as an invasive species that could play havoc with native ecosystems.

Cochin University of Science and Technology (CuUSAT) have pinned it down as the acute bladder snail *Physella acuta*, globally branded as highly invasive.

It plays host to worms that can cause food-borne diseases and skin itches in humans. Its rapid growth rate, air-breathing capability, and tolerance to pollution make the *Physella acuta* a potential competitor to native fauna.

Physella acuta is considered native to North America but is now found in all continents except Antarctica. The snail was first reported in India in the early 1990s.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/highly-invasive-snail-species-reported-in-kerala/article37869236.ece>

Q.24) India Observes 'Maitri Diwas' with which of the following country?

- a) Bhutan
- b) Nepal
- c) Bangladesh
- d) Myanmar

Q.24) Solution (c)

Liberation Of Bangladesh: India Observes 'Maitri Diwas' To Mark 50 Years Of Friendship

India and Bangladesh are jointly observing 'Maitri Diwas' or 'Friendship Day' to commemorate 50 years of the Bangladesh Liberation War 1971 and India's role in the neighbouring nation's freedom struggle.

India would further “expand and deepen” ties with Bangladesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday, marking Maitri Divas that commemorates the day when India recognised Bangladesh as an independent country in 1971.

The war to liberate Bangladesh began on December 3, 1971 and ended with the signing of the Instrument of Surrender by Pakistani General A.A.K. Niazi on December 16. Three days after the beginning of the war, the government of India, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi recognised Bangladesh as an independent nation.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/look-forward-to-continue-working-with-bangladesh-pm-to-further-deepen-ties-pm-modi/article37861900.ece>

Q.25) The AK-203 rifles will be manufactured by an Indo-Russian joint venture company, at Amethi, India. In this regard consider the following statements:

1. AK-203 is a modern assault rifles with a proven technology
2. AK-203 rifles would replace Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) rifles

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

Q.25) Solution (c)

The AK-203 assault rifles will be manufactured by an Indo-Russian joint venture company, Indo-Russia Rifles Private Limited (IRRPL), based at Amethi, India

The project will be implemented by a special purpose vehicle, Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd (IRRPL).

AK-203 rifles would replace Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) rifles, inducted over three decades ago.

AK-203 assault rifles, with an effective range of 300 meters, are light weight, robust and easy to use modern assault rifles with a proven technology

Article Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/lucknow/big-boost-to-make-in-india-govt-india-russia-arms-unit-to-be-set-up-in-amethi-7656756/>

Q.26) Recently Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment launched the 'Shreshtha Yojna' which:

- a) aims at facilitating purchase of plant & machinery by providing upfront capital subsidy to Scheduled Castes owned MSEs to promote new enterprise
- b) will aid socio-economic upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled Castes students by providing quality residential education in reputed private schools
- c) aims at integrated development of Scheduled Castes majority villages through a redressal Portal software with a view to enable an area based development approach
- d) None of the Above

Q.26) Solution (b)

Mahaparinirvana Diwas' Observed Nationwide on 66th Death Anniversary of Dr.Bhim Rao Ambedkar

On the occasion of the Mahaparinirvana Diwas 2021, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment (SJE) launched the 'Shreshtha Yojna' and National Fellowship Management and Grievance Redressal Portal during the event.

ShreshthaYojna' will aid socio-economic upliftment and overall development of the Scheduled Castes students by providing quality residential education in reputed private schools.

In the Next 5 years, the Ministry has decided to extend support to 24800 meritorious Scheduled Caste students, involving Rs. 300 Crores approx. for providing them quality residential education from class 9th to 12th in reputed private residential schools in aspirational districts identified by the NITI Aayog, in educationally backward districts and districts having population of SC community at national average.

Fellowship Management and Grievance redressal Portal software was launched with a view to enable an area based development approach. The initiative aims at integrated development of Scheduled Castes majority villages.

Article Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1778573>

Q.27) Kazhaveli is a bird sanctuary located in which of the following Indian state?

- a) Kerala
- b) Tamil Nadu
- c) Telangana
- d) Gujarat

Q.27) Solution (b)

Kazhuveli notified as 16th bird sanctuary in Tamil Nadu

An area of 3,027.25 hectares comprising eight villages in Marakkanam taluk and 2,124.35 hectares in five villages in Vanur form part of the sanctuary. The area has adequate ecological, faunal, floral and geomorphological significance for the purpose of protecting, propagating and developing wildlife and its environment.

The tank lies adjacent to the the Bay of Bengal along the East Coast

Kazhuveli is a wetland of international importance on the East Coast

The place is home to a diverse species of flora and fauna and is a feeding ground for long-distance migrants from the cold subarctic regions of Central Asia and Siberia including Black-tailed Godwits, Eurasian Curlew, White Stork and Ruff." Spread over 670 sq. km of catchment areas, the Kazhuveli wetlands is said to be the second largest brackish water lake in South India after Pulicat lake

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/kazhuveli-notified-as-16th-bird-sanctuary-in-tn/article37874874.ece>

Q.28) Consider the following statements with respect to The Poshan Tracker

1. It records real-time data on malnourished and 'severe acute malnourished' children in each anganwadi
2. The nutrition status of pregnant women and lactating mothers are also recorded in the portal

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

Q.28) Solution (c)

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has spent over ₹1,000 crore on its Poshan or Nutrition Tracker, which records real-time data on malnourished and 'severe acute malnourished' children in each anganwadi. But four years since its launch, the Government is yet to make the data public.

The Poshan Tracker, known as the ICDS-CAS (Integrated Child Development Services-Common Application Software) in its earlier avatar, was set up with the aim of tracking and improving various services delivered at anganwadis and to ensure nutritional management of beneficiaries.

This real-time monitoring system is one of the key pillars of Poshan Abhiyan or Nutrition Mission approved by the Union Cabinet in November 2017 with a financial outlay of ₹9,000 crore for three years.

The Poshan Tracker gives the Ministry daily data from 12.3 lakh anganwadi centres, with 9.8 lakh beneficiaries, including children, in the age of six months to six years, as well as pregnant women and lactating mothers.

With the help of their mobile phones, anganwadi workers log into the Poshan Tracker mobile application and input data such as the height or weight of a child, which when tracked over a period of time indicates whether the child is growing appropriately for his or her age or is stunted, wasted or under-weight. Other services recorded include the vaccination status of the child; the nutrition status of pregnant women and lactating mothers; whether an anganwadi was opened on a particular day; how many children attended the anganwadi; how many received take-home rations and hot cooked meals, among others. It triggers alerts for beneficiaries and service providers, and provides a dashboard to enable officials from the Centre to district level to review progress.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/analysis-1000-crore-spent-on-poshan-tracker-but-where-is-the-data/article37822823.ece>

Q.29) Consider the following statements

1. Narcotics designate chemical substances that act upon the mind, which is on the conscious or unconscious mental life of an individual.
2. Psychotropics include substances that cause stupor, muscular relaxation and a reduction or elimination of sensitivity.

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

Q.29) Solution (d)

A Bill to replace an ordinance amending the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 was introduced in the Lok Sabha

The NDPS (Amendment) Bill, 2021 would replace an ordinance promulgated in September to correct a drafting error in a 2014 amendment to the Act. Before the 2014 amendment, clause (viii-a) of Section 2 contained sub-clauses (i) to (v), which defined the term “illicit traffic

This clause was re-lettered as clause (viii-b) by the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Act, 2014, as a new clause (viii-a) in section 2 defining ‘essential narcotic drugs’ was inserted

Psychotropics designate chemical substances that act upon the mind, which is on the conscious or unconscious mental life of an individual.

Narcotics include substances that cause stupor, muscular relaxation and a reduction or elimination of sensitivity.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/parliament-proceedings-bill-to-correct-drafting-error-in-ndps-act-introduced-in-lok-sabha/article37864503.ece>

Q.30) Consider the following statements with respect to the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0:

1. AMRUT 2.0 includes Pey Jal Survekshan which will encourage competition among cities for benchmarking urban water services
2. The funds for the projects will be shared by Centre, State and ULBs

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

Q.30) Solution (c)

The Union Cabinet recently approved the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0 (AMRUT 2.0) till 2025-26, as a step towards AatmaNirbhar Bharat and with aim of making the cities ‘water secure’ and ‘self-sustainable’ through circular economy of water.

The project shall lead to ease of living by providing piped water supply and sewerage / septage facility to urban households.

Mission will be monitored on a robust technology based portal. The projects will be geo-tagged. There will be an endeavor to make it a paper-less Mission. Cities will assess their water sources, consumption, future requirement and water losses through a city water balance plan. Based on this, city water action plans will be prepared which will be summed up as State Water Action Plan and will be approved by the Ministry of Housing and Urban affairs. The funds for the projects will be shared by Centre, State and ULBs

Other key features of AMRUT 2.0 (U) include Pey Jal Survekshan which will encourage competition among cities for benchmarking urban water services.

Mission has a reform agenda focused towards financial health and water security of ULBs. Meeting 20% of water demand through recycled water, reducing non-revenue water to less than 20% and rejuvenation of water bodies are major water related reforms. Reforms on property tax, user charges and enhancing credit worthiness of ULBs are other important reforms. ULBs will be rewarded with incentive on accomplishing the reforms.

Article Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1763350>

Q.31) Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Synthetic Drugs?

1. Synthetic drugs are produced by treating natural drug chemically to either isolate its active ingredient or to modify it
2. Morphine, codeine, heroin are some of the examples of synthetic drugs

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

Q.31) Solution (d)

Drugs that are abused can be classified into:

- Natural drugs
- Semi-synthetic drugs and

- Synthetic drugs.

Natural drugs come from one of the following three plants:

- Opium poppy (Papaver somniferous)
- Cannabis
- Coca

Opium poppy (Papaver somniferum) plant produces beautiful red and white flowers which mature into bolls. Opium is a drug of abuse.

Cannabis plant grows wild and is also illegally cultivated. The flowering tops of cannabis are called ganja. The resin produced by crushing the plant is called hashish or charas. Hashish oil is also produced through distillation.

The leaves of coca plant and the coca paste made from these leaves are stimulating drugs.

Thus, opium, ganja, hashish, hashish oil, coca leaves and coca paste are natural drugs.

Semi-synthetic drugs: If the natural drug is treated chemically to either isolate its active ingredient or to modify it, semi-synthetic drugs are produced. Morphine, codeine, heroin, etc. are semi-synthetic drugs produced from opium while cocaine is a semi-synthetic drug produced from coca plant.

Synthetic drugs: Synthetic drugs are produced purely through chemical processes. Amphetamines, ecstasy, diazepam, methaqualone (commonly called mandrax) are some examples of synthetic drugs

How are drugs abused?

Drugs are smoked, snorted, consumed orally or injected depending on the nature of drug. Some drugs can be used in more than one way. For instance, heroin can be smoked while purer form of heroin can be injected. Injections give a greater high than oral use or smoking and hence injecting drug use is more harmful than oral use or smoking.

Article Link:

<https://dor.gov.in/narcoticdrugspsychotropic/drugs-abuse>

Q.32) Consider the following statements:

1. The Winter Olympic Games are held once in every four years for sports practiced on snow and ice
2. Both Summer Olympic Games and the Winter Olympic Games are held in the same year
3. The International Olympic Committee is a non-governmental sports organisation based in Paris, France.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.32) Solution (b)

Canada joined Australia, Britain and the United States in a diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics in Beijing on Wednesday, with China calling the boycotts "political posturing" and a smear campaign.

The United States was the first to announce the boycott this week, saying on Monday its government officials would not attend February's Beijing Olympics because of China's human rights "atrocities", weeks after talks aimed at easing tense relations between the world's two largest economies.

The Winter Olympic Games is a major international multi-sport event held once every four years for sports practiced on snow and ice. The first Winter Olympic Games, the 1924 Winter Olympics, were held in Chamonix, France.

Baron Pierre de Coubertin founded the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894, leading to the first modern Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece in 1896.

The IOC is the governing body of the Olympic Movement, with the Olympic Charter defining its structure and authority.

Until 1992, the Summer Olympic Games and the Winter Olympic Games were held in the same year and in accordance with the **1986 decision by the IOC to place the Summer Olympic Games and the Winter Olympic Games on separate four-year cycles in alternating even-numbered years**

The International Olympic Committee is a non-governmental sports organisation based in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Article Link:

<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/australia-joins-diplomatic-boycott-beijing-winter-games-2021-12-08/>

Q.33) Trincomalee is a port city located in which of the following country?

- a) Brazil
- b) Sri Lanka
- c) Vietnam
- d) Bangladesh

Q.33) Solution (b)

Trincomalee is a port city on the northeast coast of Sri Lanka.

Trincomalee harbour being the second deepest natural harbour in the world, the British who were in control of the island decided make this as their primary logistics station in the east after World War I. They started the oil storage project in the 1924 and completed in late 1930's.

The facility, built by the British around World War II as a refuelling station, has 99 storage tanks that look like giant wells. They have a capacity of 12,000 kilolitres each. Eighty-four of those are in the 800-acre Upper Tank Farm (UTF). For a good part of a century now, these tanks have remained unused, shrouded in a forest. The Lower Tank Farm (LTF) has 16 tanks, spread across 50 acres. One tank is damaged from a Japanese aerial attack the war, so 15 are operational and run by the LIOC, while the UTF, for decades, remains neglected. Four of the 15 tanks are used for water storage by the Sri Lanka Air Force and Prima Group, a well-known name in Sri Lanka's food processing sector.

From India's geostrategic viewpoint, Trincomalee is an important counterbalance to the southern Hambantota Port backed substantially by China.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/the-battle-for-the-trincomalee-oil-tank-farm/article37910694.ece>

Q.34) The Konyaks are one of the major ethnic groups located in which of the following Indian state?

- a) Odisha
- b) Nagaland
- c) Manipur
- d) Kerala

Q.34) Solution (b)

The Konyak is the largest tribe, followed by Ao, Tangkhul, Sema, and Angami in **Nagaland**. Other Naga tribes include Lotha, Sangtam, Phom, Chang, Khiemnungam, Yimchungre, Zeliang, Chakhesang (Chokri), and Rengma.

Konyaks live in Mon district of Nagaland, Tirap, Longding, and Changlang districts of Arunachal Pradesh; Sibsagar District of Assam; and also in Myanmar. They are known in Arunachal Pradesh as the Wanchos

In the past, the Konyaks were famous for their practice of head hunting. A rite of passage for young boys of the tribe was to present the decapitated heads of the rival tribe members into the community. And this resulted in their community being mostly isolated. The decapitated heads were brought back as trophies and hung in a community barn known as a “baan”. The number of heads decapitated was directly proportional to the honor and the position of the warrior in the society.

A unique feature of the Konyak tradition is the practice of the Angh (king) system.

Article Link:

<https://www.news18.com/news/india/tattooed-headhunters-warriors-craftsmen-a-history-of-nagalands-konyak-tribe-4531898.html>

Q.35) Recently NASA launched its new Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (LCRD). In this regard consider the following statements:

1. The LCRD will help NASA to test optical communication in space
2. Optical communications systems are smaller in size, weight and require less power compared with radio instruments.

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

Q.35) Solution (c)

NASA launched its new Laser Communications Relay Demonstration (LCRD) — the agency’s first-ever laser communications system — from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. The LCRD will help the agency test optical communication in space.

Currently, most NASA spacecraft use radio frequency communications to send data. Optical communications will help increase the bandwidth 10 to 100 times more than radio frequency systems.

LCRD has two optical terminals – one to receive data from a user spacecraft, and the other to transmit data to ground stations. The modems will translate the digital data into laser signals. This will then be transmitted via encoded beams of light. These capabilities make LCRD NASA’s first two-way, end-to-end optical relay

Laser communications and radio waves use different wavelengths of light. Laser uses infrared light and has a shorter wavelength than radio waves. This will help the transmission of more data in a short time.

Optical communications systems are smaller in size, weight, and require less power compared with radio instruments.

Article Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-what-is-nasas-new-communications-system-lcrd-its-importance-7661272/>

Q.36) Consider the following statements with respect to World Inequality Report (WIR):

1. The latest WIR flags India as a poor and very unequal country
2. Middle East is the region with the least amount of inequality
3. WIR is released every year by the International Monetary Fund

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.36) Solution (a)

The World Inequality Lab, a research centre at the Paris School of Economics, released the 2022 World Inequality Report (WIR)

Its main finding is that the gap between the rich and the poor in terms of share of national income is quite large, and growing rapidly as a result of government policies that favour the affluent elite.

The latest World Inequality Report flags India as a poor and very unequal country, with the top 10% holding 57% of national income in 2021, and the bottom 50% holding just 13%.

While Europe was the region with the least amount of inequality (the income share of the top 10% was 36%), ***inequality was highest in the MENA*** (Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where the share of the top 10% was 58%.

The report has found India to be one of the world's most unequal countries, with the top 1% getting 21.7% of the national income.

Wealth inequality in India is even worse than income inequality.

While all governments regularly release economic numbers, such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and growth rate, these do not tell us how growth is distributed across the population – which sections are gaining, and which ones losing. The WIR studies different kinds of financial data to find out how a country's (and the world's) income and wealth are distributed.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/global-and-indian-trends-in-inequality/article37910844.ece>

Q.37) Which of the following statements is/are *not correct* regarding Green tobacco sickness (GTS)?

1. GTS is a type of nicotine poisoning that occurs while handling tobacco plants.
2. Tobacco harvesters, whose clothing become saturated from tobacco wet with rain or morning dew, are at high risk of developing GTS

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

Q.37) Solution (d)

The tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced, killing more than 8 million people a year around the world. More than 7 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while around 1.2 million are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke

Green tobacco sickness (GTS) is a type of nicotine poisoning that occurs while handling tobacco plants. Workers are at especially high risk for developing this illness when their clothing becomes saturated from tobacco that is wet from rain or morning dew, or perspiration. Symptoms of GTS include nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and headaches. Workers have also noted difficulty sleeping or eating. Symptoms of GTS may be similar to those of heat illness and pesticide poisoning, which can make it difficult to diagnose.

Article Link:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco>

Q.38) Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)?

1. It is a scheme of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas
2. Under this scheme the LPG connections will be given to either men or women from BPL households.
3. All PMUY beneficiaries will be provided with first LPG refill and Stove both free of cost

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Q.38) Solution (a)

High LPG prices are scorching the air pollution fight

Solid fuel use for cooking is the leading contributor to air pollution and related premature deaths in India, estimated to be around over 600,000 every year, as per the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019.

As per the India Residential Energy Survey (IRES) 2020, conducted by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) and the Initiative for Sustainable Energy Policy, LPG has now replaced biomass as the most common cooking fuel in India. Nearly 85% of Indian homes have an LPG connection and 71% use it as their primary cooking fuel, compared to only 30% a decade back.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana is a scheme of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for **providing LPG connections to women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households.**

The scheme was launched in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh.

The target under the scheme was to release 8 Crore LPG Connections to the deprived households by March 2020.

All PMUY beneficiaries will be provided with first LPG refill and Stove (hotplate) both free of cost

A woman of the BPL household, which does not have access to LPG connection, may apply for a new LPG connection to the LPG distributor.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/high-lpg-prices-are-scorching-the-air-pollution-fight/article37904630.ece>

Q.39) Singareni is a village located in which of the following Indian state?

- a) Telangana
- b) Karnataka
- c) Maharashtra
- d) Andhra Pradesh

Q.39) Solution (a)

Singareni is a village located in Khammam district, **Telangana**, India. Coal reserves in Telangana were found first in Singareni. There is a railway line from Singareni that meets the Manuguru-Dornakal railway at Karepalli junction.

Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) workers are on strike to protest against the Central government's decision to auction four coal blocks for commercial mining.

The Singareni Collieries Company Limited or SCCL is a government-owned-coal mining corporation in India. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Energy, Government of Telangana. The Union Government's administration of the company is through the 49% ownership held by Ministry of Coal. SCCL is currently operating 45 mines where 20 opencast and 25 underground mines in 6 districts of Telangana

Article Link:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/teelangana/2021/dec/11/mines-wear-a-deserted-look-as-strike-continues-2394184.html>

Q.40) Consider the following statements with respect to Algo trading:

1. It is a computer assisted buying and selling of stocks
2. Mobile trading is a form of Algo trading
3. Every Algo trading strategy and programme should be approved by the SEBI before they are deployed by traders

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

d) 1, 2 and 3

Q.40) Solution (d)

Algorithmic trading or Algo trading is computer assisted buying and selling of stocks. It is also known as automated or programmed trading since pre-programmed computer strategies execute buy and sell trades depending on set parameters, instructions or market pattern and conditions.

The key purpose of algo trading is speed of order execution.

Mobile trading is also a form of algo trading, where orders are executed via apps. Order execution without human intervention is an advanced form of algo trading.

Around 50 per cent of the daily trading volume in Indian stock markets is through an advanced form of algo trading where computer programmes execute trade orders based on pre-defined strategies.

Why is SEBI trying to regulate Algo Trading?

SEBI and stock exchanges regulate and monitor broker terminals, but the algo programmes deployed by traders did not require any exchange approvals so far as there were no rules. But SEBI now believes that unregulated/unapproved algos pose a risk to the market and can be misused for systematic market manipulation as well to lure retail investors by guaranteeing them higher returns.

SEBI wants every algo trading strategy and programme to be approved by the exchanges before they are deployed by traders.

The algo trading system automatically monitors the live stock prices and initiates an order when the given criteria are met. This frees the trader from having to monitor live stock prices and initiate manual order placement.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/blexplainer/why-is-sebi-seeking-to-regulate-algo-trading/article37942656.ece>

Q.41) Consider the following statements with respect to the Compressed Bio Gas (CBG):

1. CBG can be used to replace compressed natural gas (CNG)
2. CBG has methane (CH₄) content of more than 90%
3. CBG can be produced from crop residue, cattle dung, municipal wet waste and also effluents from a sewage treatment plant

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.41) Solution (d)

Waste / Bio-mass sources like agricultural residue, cattle dung, sugarcane press mud, municipal solid waste and sewage treatment plant waste, etc. produce bio-gas through the process of anaerobic decomposition. The biogas is purified to remove hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), carbon dioxide (CO₂), water vapor and compressed as Compressed Bio Gas (CBG), which has methane (CH₄) content of more than 90%.

CBG has calorific value and other properties similar to CNG and hence can be utilized as green renewable automotive fuel. Thus it can replace CNG in automotive, industrial and commercial areas, given the abundance biomass availability within the country

CBG can be used to replace compressed natural gas (CNG)

Irrespective of technology, producing CBG from biomass involves a two-pronged approach. First, biogas is produced through anaerobic decomposition of biomass. Since biogas contains 55 to 60 per cent methane, 40 to 45 per cent carbon dioxide (CO₂) and trace amounts of hydrogen sulphide, the second process involves purifying the gas to remove carbon dioxide and hydrogen sulphide gases to prepare CBG.

Thus chemically, CBG is the same as CNG — both are compressed methane — and has the same calorific value. The difference is that while CNG is a by-product of petroleum, CBG can be produced from any biomass, be it crop residue, cattle dung, sugarcane press mud, municipal wet waste or effluents from a sewage treatment plant.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/high-lpg-prices-are-scorching-the-air-pollution-fight/article37904630.ece>

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/energy/clean-push-why-compressed-biogas-has-an-edge-over-cng-74874>

Q.42) Consider the following statement with respect to Avian flu:

1. Avian flu is spread by close contact between healthy birds and ones who have been infected, even if they are dead.
2. According to the WHO, there are many subtypes of the avian influenza virus and all of them will be dangerous to humans.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.42) Solution (a)

The Kerala government on Thursday sounded a high alert in Alapuzha district after the state animal husbandry department confirmed bird flu (H5N1 influenza) in some samples sent to the National Institute of High-Security Animal Disease in Bhopal.

Bird flu, also known as Avian Flu, is a variety of influenza caused by an airborne virus in birds. It can spread to humans in rare conditions, and if it happens, it can trigger a person to person transmission. There are many variants of the virus and H7N9 is considered the dangerous among them, they added.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are many subtypes of the avian influenza virus and only some of them will be dangerous to humans.

Avian flu is spread by close contact between healthy birds and ones who have been infected, even if they are dead.

Article Link:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/high-alert-in-kerala-after-bird-flu-detection-101639077707328.html>

Q.43) Consider the following statements:

1. The suicide rate among Indian girls and women is twice the global rate
2. India reports the highest number of suicide deaths in the world

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

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

Q.43) Solution (c)

As India lumbers on with the formulation of its national suicide prevention strategy, in the works for some years now, The Lancet has published a broad and comprehensive policy paper offering a range of evidence-based solutions across sectors to reduce the very high suicide rate in the country.

The suicide rate among Indian girls and women continues to be twice the global rate, though it has dropped in the last decade or so. We are also losing a large number of young lives to suicide, which accounts for most deaths in the 15-39 years age group

India reports the highest number of suicide deaths in the world. Hanging is the most common method of suicide, followed by pesticides poisoning, medicine overdose, and self-immolation. Depression and alcohol use disorders, and social and cultural factors, appear to increase the risk of suicide.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/laying-out-a-path-for-indias-national-suicide-prevention-strategy/article37919322.ece>

Q.44) Consider the following statements

1. Assarting is a farming method that involves the cutting and burning of plants in a forest or woodland to create a field
2. Slash-and-burn is a type of shifting cultivation in which farmers routinely move from one cultivable area to another.

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

Q.44) Solution (b)

Slash-and-burn agriculture is a farming method that involves the cutting and burning of plants in a forest or woodland to create a field called a swidden. The method begins by cutting down the trees and woody plants in an area. The downed vegetation, or "slash", is then left to dry, usually right

before the rainiest part of the year. Then, the biomass is burned, resulting in a nutrient-rich layer of ash which makes the soil fertile, as well as temporarily eliminating weed and pest species.

Slash-and-burn is a type of shifting cultivation, an agricultural system in which farmers routinely move from one cultivable area to another.

Assarting is the clearing of forests, usually (but not always) for the purpose of agriculture. Assarting does not include burning

Tribal groups in the northeastern Indian states of Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland and the Bangladeshi districts of Rangamati, Khagrachari, Bandarban and Sylhet refer to slash-and-burn agriculture as jhum or jhoom cultivation.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-looking-to-use-stubble-as-biofuel-minister/article37927354.ece>

Q.45) The Summit for Democracy was a virtual summit hosted by which of the following nation?

- a) India
- b) USA
- c) New Zealand
- d) Australia

Q.45) Solution (b)

The Summit for Democracy was a virtual summit hosted by the United States "to renew democracy at home and confront autocracies abroad" on December 9–10, 2021. The three themes are defending against authoritarianism, addressing and fighting corruption, and advancing respect for human rights

The Summit presents an opportunity to discuss how to strengthen democracy in times of peril and to show how democracy still works and can improve people's lives in tangible ways. It aims to show how open, rights-respecting societies can work together to effectively tackle the challenges of our time, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, and inequality.

Article Link:

<https://www.usaid.gov/democracy/the-summit-for-democracy>

Q.46) The term Vechur, Vilwadri which was recently seen in news is related to the:

- a) cattle breed of Kerala

- b) species of Butterfly
- c) tribes of Assam
- d) dance form of Telangana

Q.46) Solution (a)

A genetic diversity study by a group of scientists of the Centre for Advanced Studies in Animal Genetics and Breeding (CASAGB) under the Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (KVASU) has established that the native Vilwadri cattle of Thrissur district is genetically divergent from the rest of the cattle population in the State.

The native cattle breed of Kerala — Vechur, along with Kasaragod and Vilwadri cattle — separated into distinct populations with more genetic distance from others

The Vilwadri cattle are found in the Thiruvilwamala area on the Palakkad-Thrissur border. The cattle are humped like other indigenous cattle of the State but they are bigger with longer horns compared to others. Indigenous breeds are disease-resistant and can withstand high temperatures.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/vilwadri-cattle-established-as-genetically-divergent/article37253337.ece>

Q.47) Consider the following operations conducted by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) against illegal wildlife trade in India:

1. Operation Save Kurma is focused on the poaching, transportation and illegal trade of live turtles and tortoises
2. Operation Clean Art is to drag attention of enforcement agencies towards illegal wildlife trade in Mongoose hair brushes
3. Operation Wetmark is aimed to draw the attention on the ever increasing illegal wildlife trade over internet using social media platforms.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.47) Solution (c)

Between 2018 and 2020 about 2054 cases were registered for killing or illegal trafficking of wild animals in India. In the three years about 3836 accused were arrested for the crime. The number of cases registered in the year 2018 was 648 and 1099 persons were arrested, followed by 805 cases and 1506 arrests in 2019 and 601 cases and 1231 arrests in 2020. The data was made available on the basis of cases registered by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and State Forest and Police Authorities in the past three years.

Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has conducted a number of species-specific enforcement operations with coordination of State Enforcement Agencies

Operation "Save Kurma" - focus on the poaching, transportation and illegal trade of live turtles and tortoises

Operation Turtshield- was taken up to tackle the illegal trade of live turtles

Operation "Lesknow" - gain attention of enforcement agencies towards the illegal wildlife trade in lesser-known species of wildlife

Operation Clean Art" - drag attention of enforcement agencies towards illegal wildlife trade in Mongoose hair brushes

Operation Softgold" - tackle Shahtoosh Shawl (made from Chiru wool) illegal trade and to spread awareness among the weavers and traders engaged in this trade

Operation Birbil" to curb illegal trade in wild cat and wild bird species

Operation Wildnet" - aimed to draw the attention of the enforcement agencies within the country to focus their attention on the ever increasing illegal wildlife trade over internet using social media platforms.

"Operation Freely" - illegal trade of live birds

"Operation Wetmark" to ensure prohibition of sale of meat of wild animals in wet markets across the country

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/2054-cases-registered-for-killing-trafficking-of-wild-animals/article37934115.ece>

Q.48) Consider the following statements with respect to The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme

1. The Scheme was launched with the aim to address sex selective abortion and the declining child sex ratio
2. It is implemented by the states with 100% central assistance
3. It is a tri-ministerial scheme with the Health and Family Welfare Ministry as the nodal ministry

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.48) Solution (c)

According to the report, nearly 80 per cent of the funds for the scheme have been used for its advertising and not on sectoral interventions such as in health and education for women

The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme, launched to address the decline in Child Sex Ratio and related issues of empowerment of girls, is implemented by states with 100% central assistance. It is a tri-ministerial scheme with the Women and Child Development Ministry as the nodal ministry. The other two ministries involved are Health and Family Welfare and Education (Department of School Education and Literacy).

The Beti Bachao scheme was launched in January 2015 with the aim to address sex selective abortion and the declining child sex ratio which was at 918 girls for every 1,000 boys in 2011. The programme is being implemented across 405 districts in the country.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/beti-bachao-beti-padhao-whopping-80-of-funds-spent-on-media-campaigns-says-parliamentary-committee/article37922778.ece>

Q.49) Consider the following statements with respect to The State of the Education Report for India 2021: No Teacher, No Class:

1. The proportion of teachers in private schools who report working with no job contract is higher than teachers with contracts
2. Half of India's 9.43 million school teachers are men.

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

Q.49) Solution (a)

The 'State of the Education Report for India 2021: No Teacher, No Class ' was launched by UNESCO New Delhi on the occasion of World Teacher's Day, 5 October 2021, with over 400 attendees, including representatives from the government, civil society, academia, partners and youth.

Published annually, this third edition of the State of Education Report of India, focused on the theme of teachers, teaching and teacher education, underscores that the work of teaching is complex. It attempts to provide an understanding of key aspects of the teaching profession, provides a profile of nearly 9.7 million teaching workforce, as well as the challenges of their intricate teaching routine and their professional development.

This publication is the annual flagship report of UNESCO New Delhi and it is based on extensive research.

Only 19% schools across India have access to internet: UNESCO report

The teaching workforce has a deficit of over 1 million teachers and the need is likely to grow, given the shortages of teachers in certain education levels and subjects such as early childhood education, special education, physical education, music, arts, and curricular streams of vocational education.

UNESCO said contractual rather than regular teachers' jobs 'presents further complexity' and the problem is equally alarming in both private and government schools.

At least 16% of the schools in Goa and Telangana were managed by just one teacher

The overall proportion of teachers in private schools who report working with no job contract is alarmingly high at 69%

In the government sector, the overall number of school teachers with contracts of more than three years' duration is high at 67%

Half of India's 9.43 million school teachers are women.

Article Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/education/foundational-learning-took-a-hit-amid-covid-only-19-schools-have-access-to-internet-unesco-report-7553799/>

Q.50) Recently Pinaka Extended Range (ER) rocket launcher system was tested successfully. In this regard consider the following statements:

1. Pinaka is a multiple rocket launcher produced in India and developed by DRDO
2. France Military Industries have teamed up with DRDO to implement its Trajectory Correction System (TCS) on the Pinaka

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

Q.50) Solution (a)

Successful tests of Pinaka Extended Range (ER) multi-barrel rocket launcher system

Pinaka is a multiple rocket launcher produced in India and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the Indian Army. The system has a maximum range of 40 km for Mark-I and 60 km for Mark-I enhanced version and can fire a salvo of 12 HE rockets in 44 seconds. The system is mounted on a Tatra truck for mobility. Pinaka saw service during the Kargil War, where it was successful in neutralising enemy positions on the mountain tops. It has since been inducted into the Indian Army in large numbers

The Pinaka-ER is the upgraded version of earlier version which has been in service with the Army for the last decade.

The Pinaka is in the process of further improvement. *Israel Military Industries* teamed up with DRDO to implement its Trajectory Correction System (TCS) on the Pinaka, for further improvement of its CEP.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pinaka-extended-range-rocket-system-successfully-tested-drdo/article37932502.ece>

Q.51) Consider the following statement:

1. The Juvenile Justice Act states that inquiry pertaining to minors involved in petty offences, for which imprisonment is a maximum of three years, shall stand terminated if it remains inconclusive till six months.
2. Petty offences can be classified as anything from chain snatching and vehicle theft to burglaries and drug trafficking or distribution
3. The juveniles those involved in petty offences, should be granted bail and handed over to their parents, after being presented before the Juvenile Justice Board

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

Q.51) Solution (d)

Children in conflict with the law are entitled to prompt legal proceedings under the Juvenile Justice Act. Despite that, hundreds of cases remained pending before the six JJBs in the city, forcing the High Court to step in and ensure speedy justice

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, was brought in with the purpose of conducting criminal trials of minors or children in conflict with law (CCLs) who are accused of petty or serious offences before the Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs).

Child in Conflict with Law" has been defined under Section 2 (13) of the Juvenile Justice (Care & Protection of Children) Act, 2015 as a child who is alleged or found to have committed an offence and has not completed eighteen years of age on the date of commission of such offence.

However, according to data recently provided by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) before the High Court, as many as 1,903 cases of petty offences — those between six months and one year and more than a year old — were pending before six JJBs

The Juvenile Justice Act states that inquiry pertaining to minors involved in petty offences, for which imprisonment is a maximum of three years, shall stand terminated if it remains inconclusive till six months.

The JJB is supposed to verify the child's age within a period of 30 days from the first production.

Petty offences can be classified as anything from chain snatching and vehicle theft to burglaries and drug trafficking or distribution

After being presented before the board, the juveniles, especially those involved in petty offences, are generally granted bail and handed over to their parents. They are sent to an observation home only when the family is untraceable or on the court's discretion.

According to the Act, the JJB can also ascertain the child's age from physical appearance

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/minor-cases-major-delays/article37947995.ece>

Q.52) Consider the following statements with respect to The Finn's weaver bird:

1. It is endemic to the Indian subcontinent
2. It is listed as "vulnerable" in the IUCN Red List

3. It is primarily found in Terai grasslands

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q.52) Solution (a)

The Finn's weaver bird, numbering less than 500 in India is primarily found in Terai grasslands, in Uttarakhand and western Uttar Pradesh, apart from a few pockets in Assam.

The Finn's weaver (Ploceus megarhynchus) which until now was listed as "vulnerable" in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List has been uplisted to "endangered" category.

Endemic to the Indian subcontinent

Finn's Weaver or Finn's Baya (Ploceus megarhynchus) builds nests on tops of trees or in reeds. According to ornithologists, they breed from May to September and line the inside of their nests, unlike other weaver birds.

Article Link:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/a-pleasant-surprise-claim-experts-on-rare-sighting-of-finn-s-weaver-birds-in-uttarakhand/story-oJwCRLFewMEH57bQvhXmZI.html>

Q.53) Consider the following statements with respect to the Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF):

- 1. The ZBNF method is meant to reduce input costs by eliminating the need for expensive fertilizers and pesticides.
- 2. Zero budget farming promises to end a reliance on loans and drastically cut production costs, ending the debt cycle for desperate farmers.

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

Q.53) Solution (c)

The ZBNF method is meant to reduce input costs by eliminating the need for expensive fertilizers and pesticides, and also protect soil health and conserve water resources.

Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) is a set of farming methods, and also a grassroots peasant movement, which has spread to various states in India. It has attained wide success in southern India, especially the southern Indian state of Karnataka where it first evolved. The movement in Karnataka state was born out of collaboration between Mr Subhash Palekar, who put together the ZBNF practices, and the state farmers association Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS), a member of La Via Campesina (LVC).

'Zero budget' farming promises to end a reliance on loans and drastically cut production costs, ending the debt cycle for desperate farmers. The word 'budget' refers to credit and expenses, thus the phrase 'Zero Budget' means without using any credit, and without spending any money on purchased inputs. 'Natural farming' means farming with Nature and without chemicals.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/agriculture/zero-budget-natural-farming-back-on-top-of-government-agenda/article37948720.ece>

Q.54) Consider the following statements with respect to Bharatiya Prakritik Krishi Paddhati Programme (BPKP):

1. Natural farming is promoted as BPKP under centrally sponsored scheme Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)
2. BPKP is aimed at promoting traditional indigenous practices which reduces externally purchased inputs
3. Telangana is the first state to take up natural farming under BPKP programme

Which of the following statements is/are correct?

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

Q.54) Solution (a)

Government is implementing Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Padhati (BPKP) as a sub scheme of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) since 2020-21 for the promotion of traditional indigenous practices.

The scheme mainly emphasizes on exclusion of all synthetic chemical inputs and promotes on-farm biomass recycling with major stress on biomass mulching; use of cow dung-urine formulations; plant-based preparations and time to time working of soil for aeration.

Under BPKP, financial assistance of Rs 12200/ha for 3 years is provided for cluster formation, capacity building and continuous handholding by trained personnel, certification and residue analysis.

As of now, an area of 4.9 lakh ha is covered in 8 states and Rs. 4980.99 lakh has been released. Telangana has not taken up natural farming so far under BPKP programme.

It is considered as a cost- effective farming practices with scope for raising employment and rural development.

Article Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1737751>

Q.55) Which of the following strait connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden?

- a) Strait of Hormuz
- b) Malacca Strait
- c) Bab-el-Mandeb
- d) Strait of Gibraltar

Q.55) Solution (c)

The U.S. Navy tested a laser weapon and destroyed a floating target in West Asia, a system that could be used to counter bomb-laden drone boats deployed by Yemen's Houthi rebels in the Red Sea.

The test saw the USS Portland test-fire its Laser Weapon System Demonstrator at the target in the Gulf of Aden, the body of water separating East Africa from the Arabian Peninsula.

Previously, the Portland used the laser to bring down a flying drone in May 2020.

The Gulf of Aden sits along the southern coast of war-torn Yemen, which has been at war since Iranian-backed Houthi rebels seized its capital, Sanaa, in 2014.

The war also has bled into the surrounding waterways, like the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb, which connects the sea to the Gulf of Aden. These waterways lead to the Suez Canal and onto the Mediterranean Sea, making them crucial for international shipping and global energy supplies.

The Bab-el-Mandeb is a strait between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula, and Djibouti and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa. It connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden.

Article Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-tests-laser-weapon-in-west-asia/article37963913.ece>

Q.56) Consider the following statements

1. Iron deficiency in the Indian diet is a universal problem.
2. Iron increases the risk of non-communicable diseases.

Select the correct code:

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

Q.56) Solution (b)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
Iron deficiency in the Indian diet is not a universal problem: the Indian requirement for iron has been lowered by half to two-thirds in 2020.	Iron increases the risk for many non-communicable diseases like diabetes, hypertension and even high blood cholesterol.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/inescapable-risks-of-mandatory-iron-fortification/article37986787.ece>

Q.57) Which of the following legislations prescribe the age of 18 years for the bride and 21 years for the groom?

1. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
2. Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872

3. The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937

Select the correct code:

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

Q.57) Solution (b)

The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, and the Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872, prescribe the age of 18 years for the bride and 21 years for the groom. The Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act, 1937, allows marriage if the boy and the girl have attained puberty. The Special Marriage Act, 1954, which governs inter-faith marriages also lays down 18 years for women and 21 years for men as the age of marriage. There is also the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, which prohibits marriage below 18 years for women and 21 years for men.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-is-raising-marriage-age-enough-to-help-girls/article37988102.ece>

Q.58) The 'FL-2027' which was in news recently is a variety of

- a) Mustard
- b) Rice
- c) Potato
- d) Wheat

Q.58) Solution (c)

The FL-2027 variety of potatoes, used in Lays potato chips, came to the limelight in April 2019, when it became the centrepiece for a David vs Goliath fight in the potato belt of northern Gujarat. Introduced to India in 2009, the potato was grown by about 12,000 farmers with whom the company had an exclusive contract to sell seeds and buy back their produce. In 2016, the company registered the variety under the PPV&FR Act, 2001.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/agriculture/explained-what-will-be-the-impact-of-pepsico-verdict/article37988124.ece>

Q.59) Consider the following statements about 'Canine Parvovirus'.

1. It is highly contagious and affects all dogs.
2. It cannot be prevented through vaccination.

Select the correct statements

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

Q.59) Solution (a)

The parvovirus is a highly contagious viral disease that dogs can get. It has a 90 percent mortality rate, but can be prevented with proper vaccination.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-what-is-parvovirus-that-has-affected-over-2000-dogs-in-maharashtras-amaravati-city-767876/>

Q.60) Which of the following pairs are correctly matched?

1. Operation Freefly - Illegal trade of live birds
2. Operation Wetmark - Prohibition of sale of meat of wild animals
3. Operation Birbil - Curb illegal trade in wild cat and wild bird species

Select the correct code:

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

Q.60) Solution (d)

WCCB conducted "Operation Birbil" to curb illegal trade in wild cat and wild bird species.

WCCB conducted "Operation Freefly" on illegal trade of live birds and "Operation Wetmark" to ensure prohibition of sale of meat of wild animals in wet markets across the country.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/2054-cases-registered-for-killing-trafficking-of-wild-animals/article37934115.ece>

Q.61) Consider the following statements about 'Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)'

1. The members of OIC are found across three continents only.
2. India is granted the status of an observer and has applied for membership recently

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.61) Solution (d)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Incorrect
The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation founded in 1969 has 57 members spanning four continents namely Asia, Africa, Europe and South America.	India is not a member of OIC due to opposition from Pakistan. It is also not an observer at OIC but was invited as a 'Guest of Honor' at its plenary in 2019.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/at-oic-summit-countries-vow-to-provide-aid-to-afghanistan/article37990355.ece/amp/>

Q.62) In a particular region in India, the local people train the roots of living tree into robust bridges across the streams. As the time passes these bridges become stronger. These unique 'Living Root Bridges' are found in which of the following states?

- a) Himachal Pradesh
- b) Meghalaya
- c) Jharkhand
- d) Nicobar Islands

Q.62) Solution (b)

Mawlynnong in Meghalaya is a place famous for root bridges. Such bridges have been fashioned by Khasi villagers over decades by weaving the roots of ficus trees.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/features/kids/living-root-bridges-of-meghalaya/article4159798.ece/amp/>

Q.63) Consider the following statements

1. Elephant corridors are notified under the Environment (Protection) Act,1986.
2. Maharashtra has the highest number of elephants in India.

Select the correct statements

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

Q.63) Solution (a)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
According to the rules, the state government needs to send a proposal of notification of these corridors to the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), who could then notify it under the Environment (Protection) Act,1986.	Karnataka has the highest number of elephants (6,049), followed by Assam (5,719) and Kerala (3,054).

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/cautious-welcome-as-first-jumbo-herd-moves-into-gadchiroli-forests/article37991123.ece>

Q.64) 'Poshan Abhiyaan' is a flagship programme of which ministry?

- a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- b) Ministry of Women and Child Development
- c) Ministry of Education
- d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Q.64) Solution (b)

The Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition or POSHAN Abhiyaan or National Nutrition Mission, is Government of India's flagship programme of the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/poshan-tracker-data-not-made-public-due-to-privacy-concerns-govt/article37991888.ece/amp/>

Q.65) The Objectives of 'Extended producer responsibility (EPR)' which is part of 'Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021' are

1. Integration of environmental costs
2. Reduction of disposal
3. Reduction of burden on municipalities

Select the correct code:

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

Q.65) Solution (d)

The objectives of EPR are as follows:

- Integration of environmental costs
- Improved waste management
- Reduction of disposal
- Reduction of burden on municipalities
- Design of environmentally sound products

Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1783418>

Q.66) PANEX21 is a disaster management exercise conducted by

- a) SAARC
- b) ASEAN
- c) BIMSTEC
- d) G20

Q.66) Solution (c)

PANEX 21 is a disaster management exercise of the multilateral grouping Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). It is for the first time that an exercise of this magnitude involving multiple agencies from multiple countries is being undertaken to review Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief mechanism in the backdrop of a pandemic.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/army-chief-gen-naravane-calls-for-global-cooperation-to-handle-any-pandemic-like-situation/article37995387.ece>

Q.67) Consider the following statements regarding 'Indian Desert Cat'

1. It is listed as 'Vulnerable' in the IUCN Red List.
2. It is found in semi-arid and arid regions of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh.

Choose the correct code:

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

Q.67) Solution (b)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
IUCN status is Least Concern.	It is found in arid and semi-arid regions of India which includes Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/indian-desert-cat-spotted-in-mps-panna-tiger-reserve/article37993332.ece>

Q.68) Consider the following statements regarding India's 'Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP)'

1. Ethanol is an agro-based product, mainly produced from a by-product of the sugar industry namely molasses.
2. Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP) comes under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy

Choose the correct code:

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

Q.68) Solution (a)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
<p>IUCN status is Least Concern.</p> <p>Ethanol is an agro-based product, mainly produced from a by-product of the sugar industry, namely molasses. Following raw materials apart from molasses which are allowed are sugarcane juice, sugar, sugar syrup, damaged food grains like wheat and rice unfit for human consumption.</p>	<p>This Programme comes under Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.</p>

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/oil-firms-notify-mills-for-366-cr-litres-of-ethanol/article38000121.ece>

Q.69) Consider the following statements regarding 'Neutralising antibodies'

1. They are considered to be functional antibodies.
2. The presence of Neutralising antibodies above a certain threshold number assures protection from severe disease and infection.

Choose the correct code:

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

Q.69) Solution (a)**Statement Analysis:**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
Neutralising antibodies are considered functional antibodies that block the virus from entering host cells.	Data indicate that in general, higher levels of neutralising antibodies indicate greater chances of protection from severe disease and infection, but there is no magic number above which there is assured protection.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/amid-vaccine-booster-talk-context-matters-a-lot/article38000199.ece>

Q.70) Which among the following Central Asian countries do not border Afghanistan?

- a) Turkmenistan
- b) Uzbekistan
- c) Tajikistan
- d) Kyrgyzstan

Q.70) Solution (d)

Afghanistan borders Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to the north, Iran to the west, Pakistan to the east and south. It has a small border section with China and India to the northeast.



Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/a-strategic-bulwark-on-third-india-central-asia-dialogue/article38000172.ece>

Q.71) Consider the following statements regarding 'Sahariya Tribe'.

1. They are found in Chhattisgarh
2. Swang is the name of their dance form.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.71) Solution (b)

Statement analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct

Sahariya are an ethnic group in the state of Madhya Pradesh, India. The Saharias are mainly found in the districts of Morena, Sheopur, Bhind, Gwalior, Datia, Shivpuri, Vidisha and Guna districts of Madhya Pradesh and Baran district of Rajasthan. They are classified as Particularly vulnerable tribal group.	Swang is the dance form of this tribal group.
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Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/how-the-code-on-wages-legalises-bonded-labour/article38007358.ece>

Q.72) 'World Press Freedom Index' is released by

- a) World Economic Forum
- b) Amnesty International
- c) Reporters Without Borders
- d) United Nations Commission on Human Rights

Q.72) Solution (c)

World Press Freedom Index is released by Reporters Without Borders. India is ranked 142 out of 180 countries.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/govt-doesnt-agree-with-indias-rank-in-world-press-freedom-index-ib-minister/articleshow/88418467.cms>

Q.73) Consider the following statements:

1. India is totally reliant on imports to meet its crude oil needs
2. Saudi Arabia is the largest exporter of crude oil to India

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Q.73) Solution (d)**Statement analysis**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Incorrect
India is 85% reliant on imports to meet its crude oil needs as domestic output is insufficient to meet demand.	Iraq is the largest exporter of crude oil to India.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/indias-crude-oil-output-extends-slide-declined-2-in-november/article38007152.ece>

Q.74) “Thangka” is the name of

- Martial art
- Scroll painting
- Metal craft
- Shifting cultivation

Q.74) Solution (b)

Thangka is a Tibetan Buddhist painting on cotton, silk appliqué, usually depicting a Buddhist deity, scene, or mandala.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/enchanting-ladakh-showcases-regions-art-craft-in-delhi/article38005776.ece>

Q.75) Consider the following statements regarding ‘Election Laws (Amendment) Bill’

- The bill makes it voluntary to link Aadhaar card to the voter ID for new applicants as well as existing voters.
- The Aadhaar verification is necessary as it is a proof of citizenship.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.75) Solution (a)

Statement analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
The bill proposes to allow Election Commission officials to seek Aadhaar details of registered voters on a voluntary basis and makes the language of the Representation of the People Act (RP Act), 1950.	Aadhaar card is proof of identity, not citizenship. Any person who lives in India more than 180 days can apply for Aadhaar card.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/thinking-before-linking-on-linking-electoral-rolls-with-aadhaar/article38007291.ece>

Q.76) Consider the following statements regarding Delimitation Commission

- 1) It is a commission established by the Government of India under the provisions of the Representation of People's Act.
- 2) The orders of the commission cannot be challenged in any court of

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.76) Solution (b)

Statement analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
The Delimitation commission or Boundary commission of India is a commission established by the Government of India under the provisions of the Delimitation Commission Act	The Commission is a powerful and independent body whose orders cannot be challenged in any court of law.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/non-population->

[criteria-always-part-of-delimitation-say-officials/article38023881.ece](https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/plans-afoot-to-uproot-lantana-from-bandipur-brt-reserve/article38023556.ece)

Q.77) 'Mikania', 'Lantana', 'Thrips' which was seen in news recently are

- a) Newly discovered plant variety in Eastern Ghats
- b) Species of Lichen
- c) Invasive alien species
- d) Crops used to produce biofuel

Q.77) Solution (c)

They are invasive alien species found in India.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/plans-afoot-to-uproot-lantana-from-bandipur-brt-reserve/article38023556.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/state-for-participatory-eco-restoration/article37963019.ece>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/insect-hits-chilli-crop-south-india-7668378/>

Q.78) "PAHAL" which was seen in news recently is

- a) Star rating scheme for energy efficiency
- b) Shoulder fired missiles developed by DRDO
- c) Direct Benefit Transfer of LPG
- d) Ration card portability

Q.78) Solution (c)

PAHAL or Pratyaksh Hanstantrit Labh Scheme aims to provide direct benefits to consumers. The scheme, which was originally introduced in 2013 was relaunched to cover the entire country. As per the scheme, LPG consumers can get the subsidy amount directly into their bank account, eliminating the need for any third party

Source : <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/this-clean-cooking-fuel-plan-needs-more-firing-up/article38023687.ece>

Q.79) Consider the following statements regarding Olive Ridley turtles

- 1) They are one of the largest and the most abundant turtles species found in the world.
- 2) Their IUCN status is Endangered.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.79) Solution (d)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Incorrect
The olive ridley sea turtle is the second-smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.	The IUCN status is vulnerable

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/olive-ridley-turtle-trail-to-get-a-boost-with-mass-tagging-mission/article38018428.ece>

Q.80) Consider the following statements regarding 'Tokenisation'

- 1) Tokenization refers to the replacement of actual card details with a unique alternate code called the 'token', which is unique for every transaction.
- 2) Token requestor can store the details for a period of 6 months from the date of the transaction.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.80) Solution (a)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect

Tokenization refers to the replacement of actual card details with a unique alternate code called the 'token', which is unique for a combination of card, token requestor (i.e. the entity which accepts request from the customer for tokenization of a card and passes it on to the card network to issue a corresponding token) and identified device	Token requestor cannot store Primary Account Number (PAN), i.e., card number, or any other card detail
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Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/business/expained-what-is-tokenisation-of-debit-and-credit-cards/article38027437.ece>

Q.81) Consider the following statements regarding Delimitation Commission

- 1) It is a commission established by the Government of India under the provisions of the Representation of People's Act.
- 2) The orders of the commission cannot be challenged in any court of law.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.81) Solution (b)

Statement analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
The Delimitation commission or Boundary commission of India is a commission established by the Government of India under the provisions of the Delimitation Commission Act	The Commission is a powerful and independent body whose orders cannot be challenged in any court of law.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/non-population-criteria-always-part-of-delimitation-say-officials/article38023881.ece>

Q.82) 'Mikania', 'Lantana', 'Thrips' which was seen in news recently are

- a) Newly discovered plant variety in Eastern Ghats
- b) Species of Lichen
- c) Invasive alien species
- d) Crops used to produce biofuel

Q.82) Solution (c)

They are invasive alien species found in India.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/plans-afoot-to-uproot-lantana-from-bandipur-brt-reserve/article38023556.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/state-for-participatory-eco-restoration/article37963019.ece>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/insect-hits-chilli-crop-south-india-7668378/>

Q.83) "PAHAL" which was seen in news recently is

- a) Star rating scheme for energy efficiency
- b) Shoulder fired missiles developed by DRDO
- c) Direct Benefit Transfer of LPG
- d) Ration card portability

Q.83) Solution (c)

PAHAL or Pratyaksh Hanstantrit Labh Scheme aims to provide direct benefits to consumers. The scheme, which was originally introduced in 2013 was relaunched to cover the entire country. As per the scheme, LPG consumers can get the subsidy amount directly into their bank account, eliminating the need for any third party

Source : <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/this-clean-cooking-fuel-plan-needs-more-firing-up/article38023687.ece>

Q.84) Consider the following statements regarding Olive Ridley turtles

- 1) They are one of the largest and the most abundant turtles species found in the world.
- 2) Their IUCN status is Endangered.

Choose the correct statements:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

- c) Both 1&2
d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q.84) Solution (d)**Statement Analysis:**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Incorrect
The olive ridley sea turtle is the second-smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world.	The IUCN status is vulnerable

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/olive-ridley-turtle-trail-to-get-a-boost-with-mass-tagging-mission/article38018428.ece>

Q.85) Consider the following statements regarding 'Tokenisation'

- 1) Tokenization refers to the replacement of actual card details with a unique alternate code called the 'token', which is unique for every transaction.
- 2) Token requestor can store the details for a period of 6 months from the date of the transaction.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.85) Solution (a)

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
Tokenization refers to the replacement of actual card details with a unique alternate code called the 'token', which is unique for a combination of card, token requestor (i.e. the entity which accepts request from the	Token requestor cannot store Primary Account Number (PAN), i.e., card

customer for tokenization of a card and passes it on to the card network to issue a corresponding token) and identified device	number, or any other card detail
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Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Explained-what-is-tokenisation-of-debit-and-credit-cards/article38027437.ece>

Q.86) Consider the following statements regarding 'Tai Khamti' people

- 1) They follow Mahayana Buddhism and live in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.
- 2) They waged a war against British much before the First War of Independence.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.86) Solution (b)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
The Tai Khamti people follow Theravada Buddhism and number a little more than 1,00,000 today live in areas straddling Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.	They waged a war against British in 1839 much before the First War of India's Independence took place in 1857. It resulted in the death of 80 British soldiers including Col. Adam White

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/1839-struggle-by-tai-khamti-is-indias-first-war-of-independence-arunachal-deputy-cm/article38034194.ece>

Q.87) Consider the following statements regarding Chilika lake

- 1) It is the largest wintering ground for migratory birds on the Indian sub continent
- 2) It is home to the only known population of Irrawaddy dolphins in India

Choose the correct statements:

- a) 1 only

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

Q.87) Solution(c)**Statement Analysis:**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Correct
Chilika lake is the largest wintering ground for migratory birds on the Indian sub continent. In 1981, Chilika Lake was designated the first Indian wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention	The Irrawaddy dolphin (<i>Orcaella brevirostris</i>) is the flagship species of Chilika lake. It is home to the only known population of Irrawaddy dolphins in India and one of only two lagoons in the world that are home to this species.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/carcasses-of-migratory-birds-seized-near-chilika-lake/article38038481.ece>

Q.88)'Khartoum' a place which is seen in news recently is located in

- a) Libya
- b) Yemen
- c) Sudan
- d) Myanmar

Q.88) Solution(c)

Khartoum or Khartum is the capital of Sudan. It is located at the confluence of the White Nile, flowing north from Lake Victoria, and the Blue Nile, flowing west from Lake Tana in Ethiopia. The city is witnessing intense protests against a military coup which took place two months ago.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/thousands-of-people-march-in-sudans-anti-coup-rallies/article38038891.ece>

Q.89)The experiment will employ a powerful telescope positioned at 1.5 million kilometers from Earth at Lagrange 2 point where it intends to find out the origins of the universe and Earth-like planets beyond our solar system. The experiment in question refers to

- a) James Webb Space Telescope
- b) Event Horizon Telescope
- c) Chandra Telescope
- d) Hubble Telescope

Q.89) Solution (a)

James Webb Space Telescope is the world’s most powerful space telescope which is headed to an outpost 1.5 million kilometres from Earth.It is expected to help scientists understand more about the origins of the Universe and Earth-like planets beyond our solar system.It is located at Lagrange 2 point and was chosen in part because it will keep the Earth,Sun and the Moon all on the same side of the sun shield.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/nasas-revolutionary-new-space-telescope-launched/article38036738.ece>

Q.90) Consider the following statements regarding Magnetars:

- 1.They have masses more than that of the Sun.
- 2.They are more luminous than the Sun.
- 3.Their rotation period is lesser than the Sun.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.90) Solution (d)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3
Correct	Correct	Correct
Massive stars with masses around 10-25 times the mass of the sun eventually collapse and shrink to form very compact	Magnetars have high magnetic fields and they emit energy in the range	They have breathtakingly high rotation speeds that can

objects called neutron stars. A subset of these neutron stars become Magnetars.	of 10^{37} - 10^{40} joules per second. Compare this to the luminosity of the sun which is in the order of 10^{26} joules per second	be just 0.3 to 12 seconds
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Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/study-of-distant-magnetar-reveals-facets-of-the-exotic-star/article38037663.ece>

Q.91) Consider the following statements regarding 'Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act'

- 1) The permission of Ministry of Home Affairs alone is sufficient to prosecute the accused
- 2) Normal bail rules do not apply to an accused under this act.

Choose the correct statements

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

Q.91) Solution (b)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
For prosecution under Section 13 of the UAPA, the permission of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is required. However, for prosecution under Sections 16,17 and 18, the permission of the respective State government is required	The police normally have 60 to 90 days to investigate a case and submit a charge-sheet failing which the accused may obtain default bail. However, under the UAPA, this pre-charge sheet time is extended to 180 days. Further, normal bail rules do not apply to an accused under Section 43(d)5 of the UAPA.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/two-more-names-added-to-haridwar-hate-speech-fir/article38042378.ece>

Q.92) 'Mission SAGAR' seen in news recently is related to

- a) Extracting marine resources from India's EEZ
- b) Anti piracy operations undertaken by Indian Navy
- c) India's maritime humanitarian and outreach program
- d) India's naval exercise with Sri Lanka.

Q.92) Solution(c)

Mission Sagar was a COVID-19 relief mission launched by the government of India in May 2020 as a part of its efforts to provide essential aid to the Indian Ocean countries.

Source: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1785282>

Q.93) Consider the following statements regarding 'Sabarimala Temple'

- 1) It lies on the banks of the river Pamba inside the Periyar Tiger Reserve
- 2) It follows the doctrine of Shaivism only.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.93) Solution (a)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
It is a temple complex located at Sabarimala hill inside the Periyar Tiger Reserve in the Perinad Village, Pathanamthitta district, Kerala, India. It lies on the banks of the river Pamba. The river is also known as 'Dakshina Bhageerathi'	The traditions of Sabarimala are a confluence of Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism and other Śramaṇa traditions.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/mandalam-puja-performed-at-sabarimala/article38046105.ece>

Q.94) The area known as 'Golan Heights' appears in the news in the context of events related to

- a) Central Asia
- b) South-East Asia
- c) Western Africa
- d) Middle East

Q.94) Solution(d)

The Golan Heights refers to the border region captured from Syria by Israel during the Six-Day War of 1967.



Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/world/israel-plans-to-double-settlement-in-occupied-golan-heights-7691508/>

Q.95) Consider the following statements regarding 'Drugs Controller General of India'

- 1) Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is the head of department of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization.
- 2) It comes under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Choose the correct statements

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

Q.95) Solution (a)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is the head of department of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization of the Government of India responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines, and sera in India	Drugs Controller General of India, comes under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/covid-19-jabs-for-15-18-group-from-january-3-booster-for-seniors-from-january-10/article38038942.ece>

Q.96) Consider the following statements regarding 'Foreign Contribution Regulation Act'

- 1) It is mandatory for any NGO or association to register under this act to receive foreign donations.
- 2) It is implemented by the Ministry of External Affairs

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.96) Solution (a)**Statement Analysis:**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) registration is mandatory for any NGO or association to receive foreign funds or donations. The Act makes Aadhaar number mandatory for all office bearers, directors or	It is implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

key functionaries of a person receiving foreign contribution, as an identification document.	
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Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/shocked-to-hear-about-freezing-of-missionaries-of-charity-bank-accounts-mamata/article38047626.ece>

Q.97) Consider the following statements regarding 'NITI Aayog Health Index'

- 1) It is part of report commissioned by NITI Aayog, the World Health Organization and Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry.
- 2) The Health Index score is prepared based on the States' performance across a large set of indicators that are divided into three broad domains.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.97) Solution (b)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
It is part of a report commissioned by the NITI Aayog, the World Bank and Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	The Health Index score is prepared based on the States' performance across a large set of indicators that are divided into three broad domains- health outcomes, governance and information, key inputs and processes.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala-best-state-on-health-parameters-uttar-pradesh-worst-niti-aayog/article38047317.ece>

Q.98) 'Right to be forgotten' is an intrinsic part of

- a) Article 19
- b) Article 21

- c) Article 14
- d) Article 32

Q.98) Solution (b)

While the right is not recognized by law in India, courts in recent months have held it to be an intrinsic part of the right to privacy which comes under Article 21.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-right-to-be-forgotten-7691766/>

Q.99) Consider the following statement regarding 'Flex Fuel Vehicles'

- 1) They are capable of running on a combination of 100% petrol or 100% bio-ethanol and their blends
- 2) The two fuels are stored in separate tanks and the engine runs on one fuel at a time

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.99) Solution(a)**Statement Analysis:**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
A flexible-fuel vehicle (FFV) or dual-fuel vehicle (colloquially called a flex-fuel vehicle) is an alternative fuel vehicle with an internal combustion engine designed to run on more than one fuel, usually gasoline blended with either ethanol or methanol fuel, and both fuels are stored in the same common tank.	Flex-fuel vehicles are distinguished from bi-fuel vehicles, where two fuels are stored in separate tanks and the engine runs on one fuel at a time, for example, compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), or hydrogen.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/roll-out-flex-fuel-vehicles-in-six-months-gadkari/article38051022.ece>

Q.100) 'Yedoorlagayi', 'Siddhulagayi', 'Guralapadah' recently seen in news are related to

- Mango varieties
- a) Ramsar sites

- b) Saline lakes
- c) Rock art sites

Q.100) Solution(d)

Newly explored rock art sites in the Kundu river valley in Gadivemula Mandal are 40 Km from Kurnool and these caves are locally known as Yedoorlagayi, Siddhulagayi, Guralapadah. These sites are reportedly dated back to the Megalithic period and early historical period.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/rare-black-rock-art-depictions-found-in-kurnool-village/article38051299.ece>

Q.101)'Emergency Use Listing' is used in the context of

- a) Import of essential commodities during crisis
- b) Deployment of nuclear warheads
- c) Approval of new or unlicensed vaccines
- d) Contingency fund utilization during emergencies

Q.101) Solution(c)

Covovax is produced by the Serum Institute of India under license from Novovax, a US based biotechnology company. The vaccine has been approved by the World Health Organization(WHO) under its Emergency Use Listing.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/corbevax-covovax-molnupiravir-approved-for-restricted-emergency-use-against-covid-19/article38053695.ece>

Q.102) Consider the following statements:

- 1) Countervailing duties or CVDs are a protectionist tariff that a domestic government imposes on foreign imports that it believes are priced below fair market value
- 2) An anti-dumping duty is a tariff on imported goods that are imposed to offset subsidies given by the exporting country's government

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.102) Solution(d)**Statement Analysis:**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Incorrect
Countervailing duties or CVDs are tariffs on imported goods that are imposed to offset subsidies given by the exporting country's government. The WTO only permits countervailing duties to be charged after the importing nation has conducted an in-depth investigation into the subsidized exports	An anti-dumping <i>duty</i> is a protectionist tariff that a domestic government imposes on foreign imports that it believes are priced below fair market value.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/trade-defence-the-hindu-editorial-on-anti-dumping-duty-on-chinese-goods/article38058485.ece>

Q.103) With reference to the history of India, Manu, Vijnaneshwara and Kautilya were famous

- Jain monks
- Playwrights
- Temple architects
- Political thinkers

Q.103) Solution(d)

Manu, Vijnaneshwara and Kautilya were political thinkers who lived during different time periods.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/supreme-courts-views-on-indianisation-of-the-legal-system-have-varied/article38057819.ece>

Q.104) Consider the following statements regarding 'Apatani' tribe

- The tribe predominantly weaves shawls known as jig-jiro and jilan or jackets called supuntarii.
- The Apatani practice aquaculture along with rice farming uniquely known as Rice-fish culture.

Choose the correct statements

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1&2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Q.104) Solution(c)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Correct
The tribe predominantly weaves shawls known as jig-jiro and jilan or jackets called supuntarii. The people here use different leaves and plant resources for organic dying the cotton yarns in their traditional ways. And only women folk are engaged in weaving.	The Apatani are a tribe inhabiting the Ziro Valley of Lower Subansiri District of Arunachal Pradesh. The Apatani practice aquaculture alongwith rice farming on their plots. Rice - fish culture in the valley is a unique practice in the state where two crops of rice (Mipya and Emoh) and one crop of fish (Ngihhi) are raised together

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/plea-seeks-gi-tag-for-arunachal-apatani-textile-product/article38059215.ece>

Q.105) Consider the following statements regarding 'Capital Conservation Buffer'

- 1) The capital conservation buffer (CCB) is intended to protect the banking sector against losses that could be caused by cyclical systemic risks increasing in the economy.
- 2) It is part of Basel 3 norms.

Choose the correct statements:

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

Q.105) Solution(b)**Statement Analysis:**

Statement 1	Statement 2
Incorrect	Correct
The capital conservation buffer (CCoB) is a capital buffer amounting to 2.5% of a bank's total exposures during normal times. It must be made up of Common Equity Tier 1 capital. This buffer is in addition to the 4.5% minimum requirement for Common Equity Tier 1 capital.	In 2010, Basel III guidelines were released The guidelines aim to promote a more resilient banking system by focusing on four vital banking parameters viz. capital, leverage, funding and liquidity

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/rbi-flags-banks-capital-buffer-needs/article38058548.ece>

Q.106) Consider the following statements regarding 'Faceless Appeal Scheme'

1. A person would not be permitted to appear before the income-tax authority either personally or through an authorised representative in connection with any proceedings under this scheme.
2. It was recently notified by CBIC

Choose the correct statements

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

Q.106) Solution(a)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
Correct	Incorrect
A person would not be permitted to appear before the income-tax authority either personally or through an authorised representative in connection with any proceedings under this scheme. However, Commissioner (Appeals) shall allow the request for personal hearing via video conference and communicate the date and time of hearing to the appellant through the National Faceless Appeal Centre	It was notified by Central Board of Direct Taxes(CBDT)

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/business/i-t-dept-eases-norms-for-personal-hearing-via-video-conference-under-faceless-appeal-scheme-7696224/>

Q.107) In which of the following relief sculpture inscriptions is the 2,000-year-old Buddhist Stupa and the first inscribed portrait of Ashoka found?

- a) Dhauri
- b) Girnar
- c) Sannati

d) Shahbazgarhi

Q.107) Solution(c)

Sannati is a Buddhist site where a nearly 2,000-year-old Buddhist Stupa and the site of first Inscribed portrait of Emperor Ashoka is found. It is in Kalaburagi district of Karnataka.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/asi-hampi-asked-to-propose-world-heritage-status-for-buddhist-site-at-sannati/article38065135.ece>

Q.108) Consider the following pairs of Tradition vs State

1. Tholpavakkothu: Kerala
2. Yampuri: Bihar
3. Kathputli: Odisha

Choose the correct statements

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

Q.108) Solution(b)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3
Correct	Correct	Incorrect
Tholpavakkothu is a shadow puppetry form of Kerala.	The Rod puppetry practised in Bihar is known as Yampuri.	Kathputli is a string puppet theatre, native to Rajasthan and is the most popular form of Indian puppetry.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/an-art-form-swings-across-the-gender-barrier/article38065655.ece>

Q.109) In which one of the following groups are all the four countries touching Baltic Sea?

- a) Denmark, Poland, Norway, Russia
- b) Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Netherlands
- c) Sweden, Finland, Belarus, Poland
- d) Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Sweden

Q.109) Solution(d)

The Baltic Sea (in Latin Mare Balticum) is an arm of the Atlantic Ocean, enclosed by

Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden and the North and Central European Plain.



Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/a-whiff-of-trouble-in-the-nord-stream-pipeline/article38066564.ece>

Q.110) Consider the following statements regarding Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements (ARIIA)

1. It is used to systematically rank higher education institutions and universities in India.
2. It is an initiative of NITI Aayog.

Choose the correct statements

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

Q.110) Solution(a)

Statement Analysis:

Statement 1	Statement 2
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Correct	Incorrect
ARIIA is an initiative which systematically rank all major higher educational institutions in India on indicators related to innovation, start-up and entrepreneurship development among students and faculties. ARIIA evaluates institutions on parameters such as patent filing and granted, number of registered students and faculty start-ups, fund generation by incubated start-ups, specialised infrastructure created by institutions to promote innovation and entrepreneurship, etc.	It is an initiative of Ministry of Education

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/iit-madras-tops-in-atal-innovation-rankings/article38065814.ece>