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DELHI JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2023 - 76 SELECTIONS FROM RAHUL'S IAS OUT OF 110 TOTAL SELECTIONS (69.09%).

Rank 1 PRANJAL GANGWAR	Rank 2 ANSHUL AGNIHOTRI	Rank 3 DESHNA GOLECHHA	Rank 5 AASTHA SHARMA	Rank 6 VANSIKA MEHTA	Rank 7 ANJALI SINGH	Rank 8 ARADHANA	Rank 9 SUKRITI JHA	Rank 10 SHRADDHA TRIPATHI	Rank 12 RAVISHA SIDANA	Rank 13 ABHAY CHOUDHARY	Rank 17 VISHVA GARG	Rank 18 MANISHA BHAI	Rank 19 NEHA SINGH	Rank 20 NISH JINDAL	
Rank 21 PARUL SHARMA	Rank 22 SHUBHAMJOT KAUR RAHORA	Rank 23 GARIMA GARG	Rank 24 NITIKA	Rank 25 SUKASH SETHI	Rank 26 ANUSHAY BULAWAN	Rank 27 SOMANT KRISHAN SINGH	Rank 28 JAYANTI CHANDER	Rank 29 SHUBHAMJI SRIVASTAVA	Rank 30 AMIT RAMA	Rank 33 ARVIND TOMAR	Rank 34 BHAVINA RATTAN	Rank 35 ANKIT SOLANKI	Rank 37 ASHMA LAKHPAL	Rank 39 PRITHVI JOSHI	
Rank 40 YASHU KHURANA	Rank 41 KULSHRESTHA	Rank 42 PARASHAR	Rank 43 SAYISHA CHADHA	Rank 44 SHREEDER ABBOT	Rank 45 RUNAL SONI	Rank 47 AKANKSHA SINGH	Rank 49 RITIKA JAIN	Rank 50 SITA SHARMAJAI	Rank 52 MAYANK SINGHAL	Rank 53 NANDINI GARG	Rank 54 RUMAL KUMAR	Rank 55 YOUSUF GARG	Rank 56 RISHA RAMA	Rank 57 RISHI SHAH	
Rank 60 SARJANA KADANA	Rank 63 ISHA THAKUR	Rank 64 ANITA BHATTIA	Rank 65 TANMAY BATHAM	Rank 68 ARIBA KHAN	Rank 70 NORMA JAIN	Rank 71 SHUBHANGI AGGARWAL	Rank 72 GANVEER	Rank 73 URVI GUPTA	Rank 74 SAFENOHA PAL SINGH	Rank 76 AKSHAY PRAKASH	Rank 77 KAMALDEEP KAUR	Rank 78 NANDINI SHARMA	Rank 80 DEEPIKA YADAV	Rank 81 SHREYA SINGH	
Rank 83 HALA GUJAMAR	Rank 84 GURVIR GUPTA	Rank 85 SHIVAM GUPTA	Rank 87 SUNJET ANAND	Rank 88 PREERNA RAI	Rank 89 DISHA LANGAN	Rank 90 RANGAT GHOSH	Rank 91 JUNI ANAND	Rank 92 TUNHA MARDI	Rank 93 LYOLFI KHEKHTA	Rank 94 ANSHUL NEGI	Rank 95 PREYANKA DEVI	Rank 96 UPENDER KUMAR	Rank 97 NEHA JARRAL	Rank 98 SONICA MEENA	Rank 99 PUNEET NEGI

UTTAR PRADESH JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2023 - 107 SELECTIONS FROM RAHUL'S IAS OUT OF 302 TOTAL SELECTIONS (35.43%).

Rank 7 HARSHVIR KUMAR	Rank 10 MOHAMMAD YOUSUF	Rank 13 AAKANKSHA MEHRA	Rank 16 SINGHA PRADHAN	Rank 23 JYOTI SHARMA	Rank 25 SNEHA SRIVASTAVA	Rank 26 PRAJANAL AGARWAL	Rank 28 SUSUK MUSKAN	Rank 29 KASHISH AGGARWAL	Rank 31 SONAKSH SINGHAL	Rank 33 MONICA KALRA	Rank 34 YATAN KWATRA	Rank 36 AKSHI GILL	Rank 37 SANJANA RAO	Rank 38 ASHA RANI	
Rank 40 KIRTI MISHRA	Rank 46 AKANKSHA PATHAK	Rank 47 SHEETAL SINGH	Rank 48 MEDHA KUSHWAHA	Rank 54 ANKIT	Rank 55 PRASHANT KUMAR	Rank 60 ANKIT KAUSHIK	Rank 61 KARISHMA SEHDEV	Rank 68 JAGRATI KESARWANI	Rank 69 NEHA AGARWAL	Rank 70 AKRITI TYAGI	Rank 71 PRASHANT KAUSHIK	Rank 76 FOZIYA JAHAN	Rank 81 SACHIN NAYAL	Rank 83 SHRISTI SHUKLA	
Rank 84 ROHI TIWARI	Rank 85 SIDDHI SHARMA	Rank 87 ANKIT TIWARI	Rank 88 PARVEEN	Rank 89 TANYA SINGH	Rank 93 KANNIK RATHAUR	Rank 94 KISHAN MISHRA	Rank 95 KEERTI SINGH	Rank 96 AKANKSHA AWASTHI	Rank 104 PARITOSH PRAKASH	Rank 105 SINGHI SINGH	Rank 109 APARNA SINGH	Rank 115 SNE ANAND	Rank 116 ANJU YADAV	Rank 119 PARISHA GANGHAR	
Rank 125 PRABHAT KUMAR	Rank 127 SHIVAM YADAV	Rank 128 ABHISHEK JAISWAL	Rank 131 AKANKSHA SINGH	Rank 132 TUBA FATIMA	Rank 133 RAMSHA TANWIR	Rank 134 SONAL SAHU	Rank 136 MAMTA YADAV	Rank 141 ABHISHEK SINGH	Rank 145 KHUSHBOO DHANKAR	Rank 147 ANIND	Rank 148 ROHIT PATEL	Rank 151 AMAR SINGH	Rank 152 GULAFSHA	Rank 153 SHIVESH RAJ JAISWAL	
Rank 154 MADHO ANSARI	Rank 155 DEEPAK KUMAR	Rank 160 PRINCE TOMAR	Rank 166 ADITYA NATH SHARMA	Rank 171 ADESH PRATAP SINGH	Rank 173 SAKSHI CHAUDHARY	Rank 178 MORID JUNEID	Rank 177 PRIYANSHI YADAV	Rank 183 HARSHIT AGARWAL	Rank 188 AAJURTI PRAKASH	Rank 188 STUTI SONKAR	Rank 192 ASTHA SINGH	Rank 193 SHWETA KASHYAP	Rank 194 ANAMIKA SINGH	Rank 201 SHWETA SINGH	
Rank 202 AMAL RAI	Rank 213 SWATI YADAV	Rank 216 LAVLISH KUMAR	Rank 217 RAVI RANJ YADAV	Rank 221 AKHIL CHOUDHARY	Rank 224 ABHILASHA SAINI	Rank 225 MOHIT KUMAR	Rank 227 AKANKSHA	Rank 229 TANYA SAXENA	Rank 231 SACHIN KUMAR	Rank 237 SHREYANSHI NGAM	Rank 237 ABHISHEK SWAMI	Rank 239 AKSHAT SONKAR	Rank 240 PRATISHA CHAUDHARY	Rank 244 RADHIKA RAJ	Rank 246 PRIYANKA GAUTAM
Rank 248 PRAGATI	Rank 249 MONU	Rank 252 VISHWANATH	Rank 254 NITYANAND TYAGI	Rank 258 SANKALP PANDEY	Rank 260 ALEKH NANDAN	Rank 262 AKANKSHA PIPIL	Rank 263 SHIVANI SINGH	Rank 268 RISHA CHAUDHARY	Rank 273 JANVI TRIPATHI	Rank 280 SURSHI SINGH	Rank 284 SAURASH KUMAR	Rank 286 AVYANSH KUMAR	Rank 290 URFI AZMI	Rank 295 VIKAS KUMAR	Rank 297 NANDA PRASAD

PUNJAB JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2023

Rank 1 SARITA SHARMA	Rank 4 SAKSHI AGROHA	Rank 5 SHWALIKA SUNEJA	Rank 7 DIPANSHU AGGARWAL	Rank 11 SARVEESHA SHARMA	Rank 14 RAVNEET	Rank 15 GURLEEN KALUR	Rank 17 PRAHJOT SINGH	Rank 18 RANCHOAL GOEL	Rank 22 SALLI GOEL	Rank 23 TARUN WALLA	Rank 27 SHARIKA SINGLA	Rank 34 SHANU GOHAL	Rank 39 VISHU CHAWLA	Rank 41 PRIYANKA BONDHI	Rank 44 PARAMVIR
Rank 45 SARITA KOUR BANERJIA	Rank 49 DIVYA NARCI	Rank 50 NANDITA	Rank 51 SARAN MITAL	Rank 52 ICY JARWAL	Rank 53 JAMAAN SANDHU	Rank 54 RUPINDER KALUR	Rank 55 PARHAPREET SINGH	Rank 56 SOMANJIT KALUR	Rank 57 ROHAN SINGH	Rank 58 DALPINDER GHOTRA	Rank 59 YOGITA	Rank 60 KABINI	Rank 61 ADYANAL KALUR	Rank 62 RANCHOAL DHIR	Rank 63 GARIMA SHARWAR

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DELHI HIGHER JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

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HARYANA JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022 - 62 SELECTIONS OUT OF 122 TOTAL SELECTIONS

Rank 2 RUMELA	Rank 3 AKASH SARGHA	Rank 4 DEEPAI SINGLA	Rank 5 DEEPAK SARGAR	Rank 8 SAYESHA CHADHA	Rank 9 NEHA SINGH	Rank 10 NISH JINDAL	Rank 11 AVISHAKE GARG	Rank 13 AKSHAY KUMAR	Rank 15 AMRITESH KAUR	Rank 17 ANMOL KAKKAR	Rank 22 AKSHAY AGROA	Rank 23 JOYASHA SHARMA	Rank 25 HARSH TRIPATHI	Rank 28 DEEPIKA TADAY	Rank 33 LAKSHAY GARG	Rank 34 ANITA MAHAJAN	Rank 35 VIRUL BANSAI	Rank 37 SHALY NAIN
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BIHAR JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022 - 87 SELECTIONS OUT OF 214 TOTAL SELECTIONS

Rank 1 SHWETA NANDA	Rank 2 DIVYANSHU GUPTA	Rank 3 RAGHAV	Rank 4 SINDHU SINGH	Rank 5 PAYAL MISRA	Rank 6 HARSHVINDA SINGH	Rank 11 RANDEET KUMAR	Rank 12 ANALI KAPOOR	Rank 13 RIYA SINGH	Rank 14 RISHI KUMAR	Rank 15 ANUP SINGH SHARMA	Rank 16 SADAF MUSTAFA	Rank 18 ABHISHEK KUMAR RAI	Rank 19 PRIYANU CHAWLA	Rank 20 ASHWANTH DEEP	Rank 22 PRANALI PRAKASH	Rank 23 KAMALDEEP KAUR	Rank 28 RISHAV KUMAR	Rank 33 SUNAM PRATAP SINGH
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RAJASTHAN JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 1 ANURAG	Rank 2 AUS K. SHARMA	Rank 3 NUPUR PRITAGARSHI	Rank 4 ANUSHA RAJ	Rank 5 NAFEEZ KAMRAN	Rank 6 ATULYA STUTI	Rank 7 SALMYA SUMAN	Rank 8 RATNA KUMARI	Rank 9 AMIT K. ARYAN	Rank 10 DIWAKAR RAM	Rank 11 TILKA BHASKAR	Rank 12 DESHNA GOLECHHA	Rank 7 DEEKSHA GUPTA	Rank 8 SANGEETA MOGA	Rank 14 SEEMA GOEL	Rank 16 MOHIT ANAND	Rank 22 SRISHTI JAIN
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GUJARAT JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 103 HARSHIT NADA	Rank 11 MAYUR RAKESH JAIN	Rank 13 KIRTI SHARMA	Rank 17 RANAL SACHDEVIA	Rank 21 TANVINDER P. YADAV	Rank 22 RANOL AGGARWAL	Rank 34 SONIA R. ANSHU	Rank 53 PRIYANSHU P. KALA
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U.P. HIGHER JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 1 MANJULA BHALOTIA	Rank 11 PRIYANKA KUMAR	Rank 15 AJAY SHUSHAN	Rank 20 JYENDRA KUMAR	Rank 30 MOHAMMAD ARIF
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MADHYA PRADESH JUDICIAL SERVICES RESULTS, 2022

Rank 6 AKANKSHA GUPTA	Rank 8 SURABHI BETHI	Rank 9 KUNAL SONI	Rank 10 GOURI SAXENA	Rank 13 FARHAN SHARMA	Rank 16 DESHNA GOLECHHA	Rank 17 METALI VANI	Rank 18 DHIRUV AGRAWAL	Rank 26 RASHMI QJHA	Rank 27 KASHISH MATTA	Rank 29 AGYA AGRAWAL	Rank 30 PUJIT KAMAL	Rank 33 SHIVANGI SINGH	Rank 34 DEERSHA AREEN	Rank 35 TRAPTI JAIN	Rank 40 SANGEETA MOGA
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To Our Readers

Dear Readers,

It is with a sense of great delight and pleasure that we are presenting the January issue of your favourite magazine **Pratiyogita Darpan**. As usual, present issue of the magazine contains useful material relevant to competitive examinations. Our editorial board and the team of highly qualified and experienced authors take painstaking efforts to present the study material, keeping in view the requirements of our esteemed readers. We are sure that if you read it intelligently and wisely, it will go a long way in equipping you with knowledge to face the gruelling battle of the examination and bring you the desired success.

We always try to understand the demands and requirements of our readers, their suggestions and changes in the pattern and content of the competitive examinations. We make all efforts to include them, as far as possible, in successive issues of the magazine. It gives us great satisfaction to know that our readers have unanimously endorsed the utility of the magazine.

In the present issue, a number of core articles on important national and international events, contributed by reputed authors, have been given. Some of the representative articles in the present issue of this magazine are : Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Its First Export Promotion Policy; Tamil Nadu Implements 'Project Dolphin'; Sheynnis Palacios Crowned Miss Universe 2023; Lionel Messi Wins Record-extending 8th Ballon d'Or; ATP Finals 2023; WTA Finals 2023; Australia Wins ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023; Pankaj Advani Wins IBSF World Billiards Championship 2023.

The most important section of the Magazine contains a number of question papers selected from various competitive examinations. They have been solved with relevant hints in short, but clear-cut explanations. All efforts are made to give their error-free solutions. A careful study of and practice session with these papers will be very useful to face any competitive examination.

The columns **Divya Darpan**, **Compendium**, **Test Your Knowledge**, **Memorable Points** and **Concentric Quiz** have been widely appreciated as trusted tools for the benefit of our readers. An intelligent study and memorizing of their content will be highly useful in solving questions in any future examination.

Pratiyogita Darpan gives you the best guidance and reading material. It is upto you to make the best use of it for a bright success in any competitive examination.

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With best wishes for your brilliant success and bright future.
Sincerely yours,

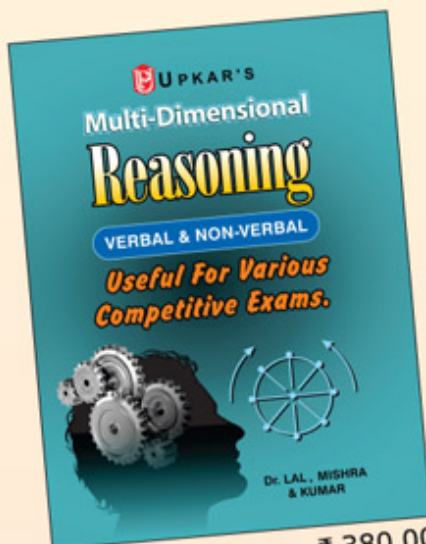
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(Editor)

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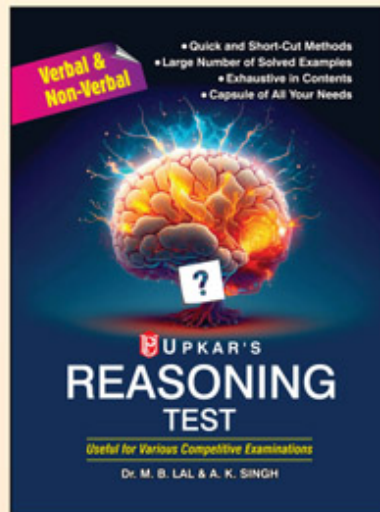
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These books may be of great utility for competitive exams and help increase your level of intelligence and logical ability



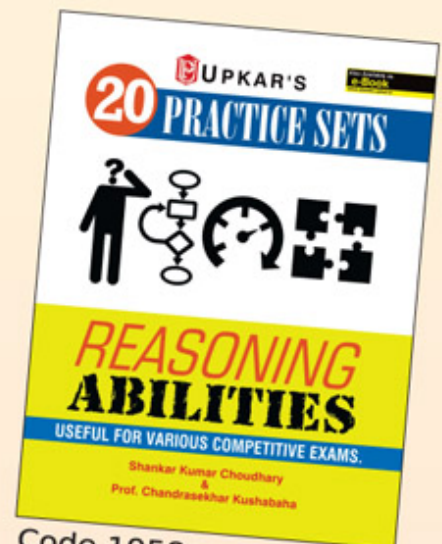
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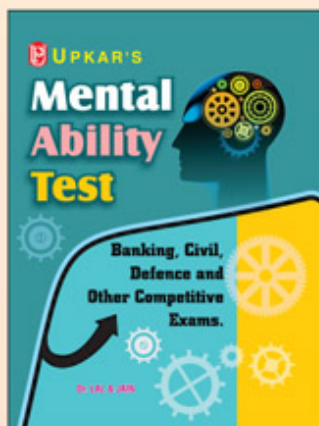
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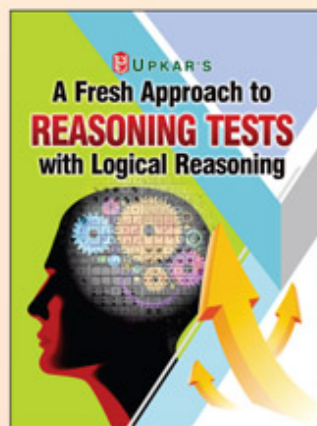
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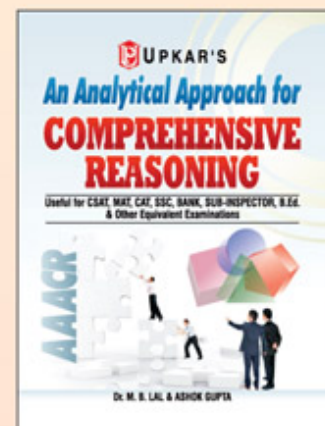
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Revolution means a drastic and sudden change in the order of things. The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 brought in communism and a communist form of government with Vladimir Lenin at its head. Then there was Chinese revolution of 1949 in which communist form of government was established and the nationalists were driven away. Earlier, there was French Revolution which ended monarchy and established democracy. The American revolution ushered in American Independence. There are so many other revolutions in the history of the world. Most of them, however, were violent and bloody revolutions. But there are other revolutions as well, which need not be violent or bloody. Mahatma Gandhi and earlier Swami Vivekanand and Dayanand Saraswati brought about moral or spiritual revolutions. They were in fact revolutions of ideas or of values. When the value system of a society undergoes a sudden and drastic change, it is said to be a revolution. In such revolutions no blood is shed, no bullet is fired. They are peaceful revolutions that bring about drastic transformation in the psyche of human beings. Our present society also needs a revolution, *i.e.*, a revolution of ideas, of values and of ethical standards. There is need of a revolution which may make the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity a palpable reality. It is incumbent on us to welcome such a revolution, the sooner, the better, for bringing about a near-total transformation in our lives.

When a leader gives slogan of revolution—long live revolution, etc. the Russian Revolution of 1917 A.D. is at the back of his mind. Russian Revolution is often a reminder to the proletariat class that if they stand united, they can achieve political power. While talking of bringing about a revolution, people miss the point that revolutions were always rapid and that you can not make a revolution with silk gloves. Edmund Burke gave the same advice to the revolutionaries that “make the Revolution a settlement and not a nursing of future revolutions.” But the matter of fact is, as Chateaubriand says, that “Every revolution is the consequence of one revolution and the beginning of another.” Having seen the iron-curtain of Vladimir Lenin after the 1917 Revolution, the great English dramatist G.B. Shaw gave this lucid comment that “Revolutions have never lightened the burden of tyranny, they have only shifted it to another shoulder.” Be as it may, but the reality is revolution has been described as any fundamental change or reversal of conditions, a sudden radical or complete change. A common man generally thinks in terms of measures which would bring about political, social and/or economic change. But we are here to consider about transformation and revolution of the individual at the individual level, transformation in one’s psyche, in one’s whole being, which actually is the source, the fountain-head of the outer revolution.

Man by nature wants to be free, wants to soar high, wants to break open

to see light. He is disturbed with the present circumstances and so wants to bring about a drastic change within which would be a source of change of outside, so the moment of transformation within is revolution. This realisation can dawn upon an individual only when he is seriously concerned about it. Archimedes had been working on a problem for several days. So he was prepared to cry eureka, eureka—I have found it, I have found it. Every moment in life provides an opportunity to proceed on this path. Therefore, the essence of revolution is in concentrated form within. It is rightly said that visionaries bring about revolutions because they are able to perceive the whole picture in totality. Vision does not come in pieces or fragments. It comes like a flash of lightning and one sees and perceives the whole gamut of scenario in the completeness. The key to development is transformation, *i.e.*, complete change. Mahatma Gandhi was altogether a different person after reading Ruskin’s book ‘Unto This Last.’ He had undergone an inner revolution. But we are generally not ready for a drastic change. We are afraid of new changes because they may land us in strange and unfamiliar circumstances. That is why we do not want to explore the mysteries hidden within our own hearts. Even then, every person waits eagerly to see sunlight after a darkness of the night.

The essence of revolution lies in the revolution of values. The moments or the ideologies, that bring about changes in

the ways of thinking of the people, are capable of bringing about a revolution. Arya Samaj brought about a social revolution. Theosophical society brought about a cultural revolution, Gandhiji brought about a revolution of values in politics. The lives of great people show that radical and fundamental change can be brought about, provided we set about it in the right way. Swami Dayanand, Madam Blavatsky, Swami Vivekanand and Gandhiji drew man’s attention to the path of moral and spiritual upliftment and laid great emphasis on the supreme value of moral regeneration over and above material advancement. We can also do so, provided we bring about a powerful and meaningful change in our whole psyche, our thought process and actions and try to establish harmony among them. It is only the disturbance within which will ultimately bring about understanding of the oneness of the without and within. The unity and harmony which vibrate and resonate in the whole universe, including the individual will be perceived. But we should be very clear about the difference between uniformity and unity.

Let these words of a celebrated saint be our guide—As freely we have received His blessings, so freely let us give the best of ourselves to our fellowmen. That would bring about a revolutionary change in our probabilities, which have been hardened and made insensitive by our self interests.



41 Workers Trapped in Silkyara Tunnel Uttarakhand Rescued

- ➔ 41 Workers Trapped in Silkyara Tunnel Uttarakhand Rescued
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- ➔ News in Brief

On 28th November, 2023, After enduring a 17-day ordeal, the 41 workers who were trapped inside a tunnel in Uttarakhand were finally pulled out in a mammoth cross-team operation that took hundreds of man hours was handled by personnel of the National Disaster Relief Force, with their state counterparts providing support. The collapse may have been caused by a geological fault, known as a 'shear zone'. In geology, a shear zone is a thin zone within the Earth's crust or upper mantle that has been strongly deformed, due to the walls of rock on either side of the zone slipping past each other. With the help of Rat-hole mining, a banned practice saved 41 lives.



'Operation Zindagi' was launched by the State Government to save the trapped workers. Uttarakhand CM has announced that ₹ 1 lakh will be given to each of the 41 construction workers.

About Rat Hole Mining

- Rat-hole mining is a method of extracting coal by digging very small pits, not more than 4 feet wide.
- Once the miners reach the coal seam, tunnels are made sideways to extract the coal.

About Silkyara Bend Tunnel

- The Silkyara Bend Tunnel is a part of the Char Dham Pariyojana (project) in Uttarakhand that aims to improve connectivity to the religious pilgrimage sites of Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath.
- The Silkyara Tunnel is being built by NHIDCL on Yamunotri National Highway connecting Silkyara to Barkot.
- This 4531 m long tunnel will shorten the road distance by 26 km and 45 minutes of travel time.

About NDRF and SDRF

The NDRF was constituted under Section 44 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 for a specialized response to natural and man-made disasters. At present, NDRF comprise of 16 battalions, with each battalion consisting 1149 personnel. These battalions have been trained and equipped to respond to all man-made and natural disasters.

As per of National Policy on Disaster Management 2009, the State Governments are required to raise their own SDRF for quickly responding to disasters.

IAF Deploys 3 S-400 Missile Units on China

Following the operationalization of three S-400 air defence missile squadrons by the Air Force along their borders with China and Pakistan. In related news, Project Kushi's purchase of the Indian Long Range Surface Air Missile (LRSAM) system was recently approved by the Defence Acquisition Council of India.

About S-400 Missile

In 2018, India signed a \$ 5.43 billion deal with Russia for the S-400 Triumf missile system, despite US objections and potential sanctions under Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA).

- The S-400 Triumf is a mobile, surface-to-air missile system (SAM) designed by Russia.
- It is the most dangerous operationally deployed modern long-range SAM (MLR SAM) in the world, considered much ahead of the US-developed Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD).
- The system can engage all types of aerial targets including aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and ballistic and cruise missiles within the range of 400 km, at an altitude of up to 30 km.
- The system can track 100 airborne targets and engage six of them simultaneously.



About Project Kusha

The Indian Air Force is working with the DRDO to squeeze the delivery schedule of the LR-SAM by 2028-29.

- The three-layered long-range surface-to-air missile (LRSAM) defence system would be able to strike down enemy aircraft and missiles at around 400 km ranges.
- The system would be ably complemented by the existing air defence systems, including the Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) of the three services and is already operational.



One Nation, One Registration Platform

Recently, the National Medical Commission (NMC) made an announcement about the reforms it will make into "Medical Practitioners and Licence to Practice Medicine".

Key Points :

- The aim is to eliminate duplication, red tape and allow the public to access information on any physician working in India.
- Undergraduate students on NMR will receive a masked ID, which will be unmasked upon course completion, allowing them to update qualifications and access state licenses for work across the country.
- The database will be available to the general public. This will contain relevant information about a

medical practitioner's qualifications, date of registration, place of working [name of hospital/institute], speciality, year of passing, university, name of the institute/university where qualification was obtained etc.

- Commission has also signed a MoU with the Quality Council of India (QCI) for rating medical institutions in India. Both government and private medical colleges will be rated based on the quality of medical education they provide, from the 2024-25 academic session.

National Medical Commission

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as National Medical Commission Act, 2019. It has replaced the Medical Council of India (MCI), which was part of the Indian Medical Council Act of 1933.

NMC is responsible for the creation and regulation of all elements of medical education, practice, and institutions as :

1. Improve access to quality and affordable medical education.
2. Ensure availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals in all parts of the country.
3. Promote equitable and universal healthcare that encourages community health perspective and makes services of medical professionals accessible to all the citizens.
4. Encourages medical professionals to adopt latest medical research in their work and to contribute to research.
5. Objectively assess medical institutions periodically in a transparent manner.
6. Maintain a medical register for India.
7. Enforce high ethical standards in all aspects of medical services.
8. Have an effective grievance redressal mechanism.

IAF Phases Out Mig-21 Fighter Squadron

On 31st October, 2023, The Indian Air Force (IAF) phased out one of its three remaining squadrons of the aging MiG-21 fighters squadron, based at Uttarlai and it will be entirely phased out by 2025 and will be replaced by the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-MK1A.

About Mig-21

The Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG 21 is a Soviet Union supersonic jet fighter and interceptor aircraft, designed by the Mikoyan-Gurevich Design Bureau, which entered service in 1959.

(LCA)-MK1A

- LCA Mk1A is the most advanced version of the LCA Tejas.
- It is a supersonic fighter at all altitudes for air combat which can carry a payload of 3,500 kg and it is best suited for offensive air support.
- It is equipped with AESA Radar, EW suite consisting of radar warning and self-protection jamming, Digital Map Generator (DMG), Smart Multi-function Displays (SMFD), Combined Interrogator and Transponder (CIT), Advanced Radio Altimeter and other advance features.

Inauguration of LCH Prachand

Recently, the Army's Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) successfully carried out inaugural firing of 70 mm rockets and 20 mm turret guns.

About LCH Prachand

- It was designed and developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL).
- It was designed for the Indian armed forces operating in deserts and mountainous areas.
- The LCH is the only attack helicopter in the world that can land and take off at an altitude of 5,000 metres (16,400 ft), which makes it ideal to operate in the high altitude areas of the Siachen glacier.
- It is also capable of firing a range of air-to-ground and air-to-air missiles and can destroy air defence operations of the enemy.

Centre to Depute National Level Monitors to Oversee Livestock Schemes

Recently, The Centre has decided to deploy National Level Monitors (NLM) to oversee the implementation of its livestock schemes including National Livestock Mission and Rashtriya Gokul Mission.

About National Level Monitors (NLM)

- The Department of Animal Husbandry implements the National Programme for Dairy Development and Livestock Health and Disease Control, which are also monitored by NLMs.
- This monitoring aims to ensure Ministry programmes are implemented according to guidelines, follow processes, and consider villagers' views, suggestions for improvement, and transparent, unbiased, and fair beneficiary selection.
- Monitoring will assess distribution of incentives to paravets, technicians, and farmers, and uploading real-time data on vaccination, disease monitoring, and artificial insemination on the National Digital Livestock Mission.
- NLMs are also proposed to be deputed to verify facts or conduct preliminary inquiries in cases of serious complaints from people's representatives and farmers regarding misuse of funds.

The NLMs will be third-party independent monitors—individuals and institutions deployed by the government. Individual NLMs will be selected from among retired Civil/Defence Services Officers, and academia.

Significance of Livestock Sector in Agriculture

- The contribution of livestock sector in agriculture in terms of output, has increased from 24.32 per cent (2014-15) to 30.87 per cent (2020-21).
- The Livestock sector has been growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 7.93 per cent (at constant prices) from 2014-15 to 2020-21.

- Value of output of livestock sector is ₹ 14.49 lakh crore at current price during 2020-21 (as per National Account Statistics 2022).
- Value of output of milk is more than ₹ 9.31 lakh crore which is the highest of the agriculture produce and even more than the combined value of Paddy and Wheat."

National Livestock Mission

The National Livestock Mission (NLM) was launched in 2014-15 to improve livestock production systems and build stakeholder capacity, realigned in 2021-22 to link unorganized and organized sectors.

The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying is implementing the scheme since the financial year 2014-15.

Aim and Objectives :

- Employment generation through entrepreneurship development in small ruminant, poultry and piggery sector & Fodder sector.
- Increase of per animal productivity through breed improvement.
- Increase in production of meat, egg, goat milk, wool and fodder.
- Promoting risk management measures including livestock insurance for farmers.
- Promoting applied research in prioritized areas of poultry, sheep, goat, feed and fodder.
- Promoting skill based training and dissemination of technologies for reducing cost of production, and improving production of livestock sector.

Rashtriya Gokul Mission :

The Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM) is a scheme since 2014 aimed at developing and conserving indigenous bovine breeds in India. It aims to boost milk production and productivity, benefiting rural farmers and women, especially those involved in livestock farming. The scheme is also continued under umbrella scheme Rashtriya Pashudhan Vikas Yojna from 2021 to 2026 with a budget outlay of ₹ 2400 crore.

It is implemented under the National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development (NPBBDD) by the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying.

Objectives :

- To enhance productivity of bovines and increasing milk production in a sustainable manner using advance technologies.
- To propagate use of high genetic merit bulls for breeding purposes.
- To enhance Artificial insemination coverage through strengthening breeding network and delivery of Artificial insemination services at farmers doorstep.
- To promote indigenous cattle & buffalo rearing and conservation in a scientific and holistic manner.

NCERT to Introduce Electoral Literacy Content in Textbooks

NCERT plans to incorporate electoral literacy content into school textbooks, following a Memorandum of Understanding between the Election Commission of India and the Education Ministry. The MoU aims to address issues such as voter apathy among urban and young Indians.

About MoU

- MoU aimed at extending the ECI's flagship Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) in schools and colleges.
- Beginning with classes 6 to 12 in all schools, this integration will also extend to the curricular framework for all colleges and universities, tailored to suit different disciplines and credited accordingly.
- The document also focuses on the orientation and training of teachers in effectively imparting electoral literacy in classrooms, establishing electoral literacy clubs (ELCs) in schools and colleges and encouraging various activities to promote voter awareness among students.
- It also seeks to evolve a robust mechanism to fulfil the aspirational goal of the EC to hand over the voter ID cards to every student immediately on attaining the age of 18.
- **Democracy Room** : The document highlights the inclusion of electoral literacy in adult education curriculums, designating 'democracy rooms' one of the rooms in every senior secondary school for voter education, and conducting Continuous Electoral and Democracy Education activities throughout the years.

This initiative is expected to help in the Election Commission's endeavour to address the urban and youth apathy, leading to better electoral participation in the next general elections.

About Electoral Literacy

Electoral literacy is the knowledge and skills required for effective participation in democratic elections, enabling citizens, particularly new and young voters, to make informed choices and exercise their voting rights responsibly.

Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP)

- The SVEEP program is an initiative of the Election Commission of India (ECI) aimed at educating citizens about the electoral process and increasing voter participation in India.
- The overarching goal of SVEEP is to not just increase the quantity of voter turnout but also to enhance the quality of democratic participation by making it more inclusive and informed.
- It employs a variety of tools and channels, from traditional media campaigns to innovative digital interventions, to engage with voters across the country.

India Flags off First International Cruise Liner

On 3rd November, 2023, the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways flagged off the maiden voyage of the vessel Costa Serena, and the first International Cruise Liner in India from Mumbai.

Key Points :

- The initiative aligns with the 'Dekho Apna Desh' campaign, reflecting the government's emphasis on promoting tourism.
- The development of cruise and lighthouse **tourism** is part of the Sagarmala Programme, which aims to

establish India as the premier cruise hub in the Asia Pacific region by 2030.

- The goal is to increase the annual number of cruise passengers in India to 18 lakhs by 2030, up from the current figure of 4-72 lakhs.
- India plans to have 25 operational cruise terminals by 2047, with an estimated annual passenger count of 5 million.

Discretionary Power of the Governor

Recently, The Supreme Court took cognizance of the Tamil Nadu Government's claim that the Constitution did not empower the Governor with the 'power' to reject the re-enacted Bills or transfer them to the President.

State governments are approaching to the Supreme Court for judicial intervention. There is a power tussle going on between the elected government and the respective Governors from the country's capital to South India's Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana through West Bengal to Punjab and Jharkhand.

Can the Governor withhold his assent to a bill in the exercise of his discretionary powers ?

- A simple interpretation of Article 200 states that the Governor may withhold his consent, experts question whether the Governor can withhold consent solely on the basis of advice from the Council of Ministers.

Constitutional Provisions Related to the Governor

- **Article 153** : It stipulated that each State would have a Governor. One person can be appointed as Governor for two or more States.
- **Article 155** : It deals with the appointment of a Governor by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.
- **Article 156** : The Governor shall hold office during the pleasure of the President. The Governor may, by writing under his hand addressed to the President, resign his office.
- **Article 161** : Governor has the power to grant pardons, reprieves, etc.
- **Article 163** : It states that there is a council of ministers headed by the Chief Minister to aid and advises the Governor in the exercise of his functions, except some conditions for discretion. Discretionary powers include :
 - ❑ Appointment of a Chief Minister when no party has a clear majority in the state legislative assembly.
 - ❑ In times of no-confidence motions.
 - ❑ In case of failure of constitutional machinery in the State (Article 356).
- **Article 200** : Gives the power to governors to grant assent/withhold assent or reserve the bill for the President's consideration. He may return the bill (if it is not a Money Bill) for reconsideration by the House.
- **Article 201** : It specifically states that "When a Bill is reserved by a Governor for the consideration of President, the President shall declare either that he assents to the Bill or that he withholds assent therefrom". But no time stipulation is provided in the Constitution.
- **Article 361** : The Governor has complete immunity from court proceedings for any act done in the exercise of their powers.

- The Constitution provides that the Governor can exercise his executive powers only on the advice of the Council of Ministers under Article 154.
- The question is why a Governor should be allowed to withhold assent when the Bill is passed by the Assembly ?
- The Supreme Court of India recently addressed the issue of Governors sitting on Bills that they do not agree with, leading to an indefinite delay in State Legislative Assemblies. The Court referred to the provision of Article 200 of the Constitution, which mandates that Governors should not delay over Bills sent to them for assent after they had been passed by Legislative Assemblies.

Joint Exercise of Navies of India and Bangladesh at Northern Bay of Bengal

The 4th edition of Bilateral Exercise BONGOSAGAR-23 and the 5th edition of Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) by the two navies were conducted in the Northern Bay of Bengal from 7-9 November, 2023. Ships and aircraft from both navies undertook joint patrolling along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL), and subsequently conducted maritime exercises to enhance interoperability.



Key Points :

- Indian Navy Ships Kuthar, Kiltan and Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) Dornier participated in the exercise along with Bangladesh Navy Ships Abu Bakr and Abu Ubaidah.
- INS Kuthar is an indigenously built guided-missile Corvette, whereas INS Kiltan is an indigenously built anti-submarine Corvette.
- CORPAT-23 also included the maiden Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) drills conducted between the two navies wherein a Search and Rescue scenario at sea was exercised.

About BONGOSAGAR

It is an annual exercise. The exercise is aimed at developing a high degree of interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of a wide spectrum of maritime exercises and operations between the two navies.

About CORPAT

CORPATs help build understanding and interoperability between navies and facilitate the institution of measures to prevent and suppress Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU) fishing, drug trafficking, maritime terrorism, armed robbery, and piracy.

PD/January/2024/12

Centre Extends UAPA Ban on Eight Meitei Extremist Organisations

On 13 November, 2023, The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) reportedly issued a notification, declaring eight 'Meitei' extremism organisations as 'unlawful associations' under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) for advocating secession of Manipur from India through armed struggle.

The eight organisations are the Peoples' Liberation Army generally known as PLA, and its political wing, the Revolutionary Peoples' Front (RPF), the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) and its armed wing, the Manipur Peoples' Army (MPA), the Peoples' Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) and its armed wing, the 'Red Army', the Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) and its armed wing, also called the 'Red Army', the Kanglei Yaol Kanba Lup (KYKL), the Coordination Committee (CorCom) and the Alliance for Socialist Unity Kangleipak (ASUK).

The notification collectively referred the outfits as 'Meitei Extremist Organisations'.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)

It was enacted in 1967 and was amended to be modelled as an anti-terror law in 2004 and 2008. In 2019, Act was amended to designate individuals as terrorists on certain grounds provided in the Act.

Provisions of the UAPA :

- **Section 3 :** The government has powers to declare an association 'unlawful'. Declaring an organisation an unlawful organisation includes the criminalisation of its membership and the forfeiture of the properties of the organisation.
- **Section 4 :** The government is mandated to send the notification to the Unlawful Activities Prevention Tribunal within 30 days of issuing the gazette notification to have the ban ratified.
Constitution of the tribunal : The tribunal consists of only one person, who has to be a High Court judge.
- **Section 7 :** The government has power to prohibit the use of funds of an unlawful association.
- **Section 8 :** All places that are used by the unlawful association can be notified and seized.

Reason for the Extension of Ban

According to the Central government the outfits have been engaging in activities :

- Prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India.
- Employing and engaging in armed means to achieve their objectives, attacking and killing the security forces, police and civilians in Manipur.
- Indulging in acts of intimidation, extortion and looting of civilian population for collection of funds.
- Making contacts with sources abroad for influencing public opinion and for securing their assistance by way of arms and training for the purpose of achieving their secessionist objective and maintaining camps in neighbouring countries for the purpose of sanctuaries.
- Training and clandestine procurement of arms and ammunition.

The Central Government believes that the organizations' activities are harmful to India's sovereignty and integrity, and that they are illegal associations.

Separation of Powers in the Constitution of India

Recently, discussing the issue of separation of powers, Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud observed that the Parliament can make new laws to plug loopholes but cannot directly quash a judgment.

Key Points Highlighted by CJI :

- Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud emphasized the separation of powers between the executive, legislature and judiciary and explained that the legislature can create new laws to address legal gaps but cannot directly overrule court judgments.
- He mentioned the example of the Parliament amending the law to introduce reservations in educational institutions following a Supreme Court decision.
- He highlighted the difference between the judiciary's focus on constitutional morality and the elected government's responsiveness to popular morality.
- The CJI addressed issues of gender and marginalized community representation in the judiciary, acknowledging structural barriers in the legal profession and the need for a level playing field.
- He discussed efforts to improve people's access to justice, such as translating judgments into regional languages and using technology for transparency.
- He pointed out that it was a matter for Parliament to determine the retirement age of Supreme Court Judges, which emphasised the importance of protecting future generations from being held responsible.

Doctrine of Separation of Powers

- Separation of powers is the division of the legislative, executive, and judicial functions of government among separate and independent bodies.
- The Legislature is responsible for legislating the law, the Executive for executing laws, and the Judiciary for interpreting and upholding the law.
- By distributing power across multiple branches, it acts as a check and balance against the abuse or concentration of power in a few hands, ensuring protection against arbitrary government authority.

Various Constitutional Provisions Involving Separation of Power :

- **Article 50** : Separation of judiciary from the executive
- **Articles 74 and 163** : Aid and advice tendered by the Council of Ministers to the President and the Governor.
- **Articles 122 and 212** : Restrict the courts from questioning the validity of proceedings in the Parliament and the Legislatures.
- **Articles 121 and 211** : Restrict the Parliament and the State Legislature from discussing the Judicial conduct of a judge of the Supreme Court and the High Courts unless the resolution of removal of the judge is under consideration.
- **Article 361** : Provides immunity to the President or the Governor from being answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of his office.

Bihar Governor's Nod for Bill Raising Quota from 50% to 65%

On 21st November, 2023, the Bihar government issued the gazette notification for the two quota bills after governor assent the Bihar Reservation of vacancies in posts and services (For SC, ST, EBC and OBC) Amendment Bill and the Bihar (In Admission In Educational, Institutions) Reservation Amendment Bill, 2023 paving the way for increase in quota from the existing 50% to 65%.

After the release of Caste Based Survey 2022, the state government has decided to increase the reservation quota for SCs, STs, EBCs and Backward Castes in educational institutions and public jobs in proportion to the increase of their population.

Key Provisions of Bihar Reservation Amendment Bill :

- According to the legislation, named the Bihar Reservation Amendment Bill, quota for Extremely Backward Class (EBC) will be raised from the existing 18% to 25%; for Backward Class (BC) from 12% to 18%; for Scheduled Caste (SC) from 16% to 20%; and for Scheduled Tribe (ST), the quota will be doubled, from 1% to 2%.
- The existing 3% reservation for BC women has been scrapped.
- The 10 per cent EWS quota has been earmarked for the poor among the general category and it has not changed. The total quota limit will be effectively up to 75 per cent now and 25 per cent will remain unreserved.
- The pattern for reservation quota has been fixed as per reservation in government jobs for these castes.

Constitutional Provisions Related to Reservation in India

- **Article 15(4)** : Empowers the state to make special laws for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.
- **Article 16(4)** : This article enables the government to make reservations for appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens, which, in the government's opinion, is not adequately represented in the services under the state.
- **Article 330** : This article reserves seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha.
- **Article 332** : This article reserves seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the State Legislative Assemblies.

Winter Session of Parliament to Start on December 4

The session will have 15 sittings spread over 19 days. Several important Bills are likely to be taken up for consideration and passage during the Winter Session, including three legislations seeking to replace the Indian Penal Code, the Evidence Act, and the Code of Criminal Procedure, as well as a Bill related to the appointment of the chief election commissioner and election commissioners.

Highlights :

- This will also be the first full session to be held in the new Parliament building. A five-day Special Session had been held in September, during which the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha had ceremonially moved their sittings to the new building.
- The historic Women's Reservation Bill was the first legislation to be passed in the new Parliament building. It seeks to provide 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State assemblies.

Old Parliament Building

The 75-year history of the old Parliament building was also commemorated during the Special Session. That building will now be used as an additional space for parliamentary events, and a part of it will be converted into a museum to preserve the history of the iconic structure.

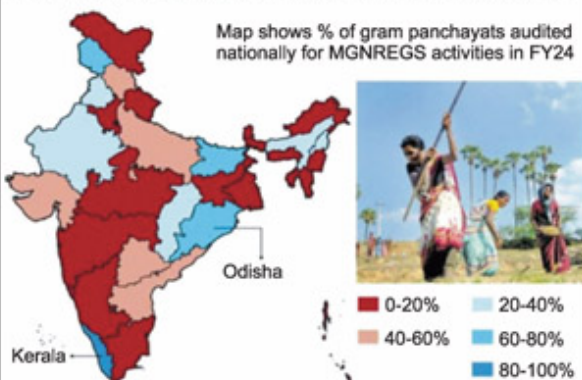
MGNREGS Audit Crosses 50% Local Bodies in Just Six States

On 10th November, 2023, According to the social audits revealed that out of the 34 States and union territories only six have completed social audit of works done under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in more than 50% of gram panchayat. And Kerala is the only State to cover 100% gram panchayats. High rate of corruption is one of the primary complaints against the scheme and social audit is the inbuilt anti-corruption mechanism in the Act.

These statistics are sourced from the Management Information System (MIS) on Social Audit maintained by the Union Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).

Audited panchayats

Kerala is the only State that has completed social audits of all activities done under MGNREGS in each of its Gram Sabhas



Section 17 of the MGNREGA

According to the Section 17, the gram sabha "shall monitor the execution of works". Each State has social audit units which are supposed to work independent of the implementing authorities. The auditing standards lay down by the Comptroller and Auditor General was issued only on December 19, 2016. According to them,

every Social Audit Unit is entitled to funds equivalent to 0.5% of the MGNREGA expenditure incurred by the State in the previous year.

The audit involves quality checks of infrastructure created under the MGNREGA, financial misappropriation in wages, and checking for any procedural deviations.

Key Findings :

- Other than Kerala, the state covers more than 50 per cent of panchayats, i.e., Bihar (64.4%), Gujarat (58.8%), Jammu & Kashmir (64.1%), Odisha (60.42%), and Uttar Pradesh (54.97%).
- States cover less than 50 per cent of panchayats, i.e., Telangana (40.5%), Himachal Pradesh (45.32%), and Andhra Pradesh (49.7%).
- Worst performing states are Madhya Pradesh (1.73%) and Mizoram (17.5%) etc.

About MGNREGS

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, enacted in 2005, aims to provide 100 days of employment annually to adult rural household members engaged in unskilled manual work.

Ministry Asks States to Encourage Use of SATHEE Portal

Recently, the Ministry of Education (MoE) announced that it would write to every state to urge aspirant to use the recently built SATHEE (Self-Assessment Test and Help for Entrance Exams) online portal for JEE and NEET exam preparation.

About the SATHEE (Self-Assessment Test and Help for Entrance Exams) Portal :

- SATHEE is an initiative launched by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with IIT Kanpur.
- SATHEE is an open learning platform available to students at no cost. It aims to bridge the gap for students in society who are not able to afford the costly Private coaching guidance.
- SATHEE's AI Chabot helps students align their learning needs, aligning with the National Education Policy's goal of providing inclusive and high-quality education to remote areas.
- It will have preparation materials for students in English, Hindi, and other regional languages of India so that students can prepare for exams like JEE and NEET.

(Self Assessment, Test and Help for Entrance Exams)

SATHEE is an initiative by the Ministry of Education in association with IIT Kanpur to give students **free learning and assessment platform.**

- It will be useful for candidates who will be preparing for CAT, GATE, UPSC, etc. It will also allow candidates to gain experience in coaching centres.
- Pan India mock tests are held every weekend, with the same look and feel adopted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) for conducting the JEE. "This will entail subject-wise tests, questions not attempted marked in a certain colour, detailed performance analysis.
- The platform will have videos made by the faculty members of IITs and IISC to help students prepare for the competitive examinations. The videos would also help students learn concepts and revise topics they are weak at.

President Droupadi Murmu Suggests All-India Judicial Service

Droupadi Murmu addressed Constitution Day Celebrations, emphasizing the importance of justice accessibility for all citizens. He acknowledged barriers such as cost and language barriers, emphasizing the need for a more inclusive approach to justice.

Points Highlighted in the Speech :

- The President emphasized the importance of diverse representation in India's judiciary, suggesting a merit-based, competitive, and transparent recruitment process for judges.
- An All-India Judicial Service could select talented youngsters from across the country, fostering a larger talent pool and providing opportunities for less-represented social groups.
- The President said that in order to improve the access to justice, we should seek to make the overall system citizen-centric. Our systems have been products of time; more precisely, products of colonialism.
- The President said that as we celebrate the Constitution Day, we should note that the Constitution is after all only a written document. It comes alive and remains alive only if its contents are put into practice. That requires the exercise of interpretation.
- She also appreciated the Supreme Court for playing the role of the final interpreter of our founding document to the perfection.

About All-India Judicial Service

The AIJS is a reform initiative aimed at centralizing the hiring of district judges and additional district judges across the nation. It is suggested that judges of the lower judiciary be hired nationally and distributed to states, much like the Union Public Service Commission recruits candidates centrally and assigns qualified applicants to cadres.

Present Status of Appointment of Judges

Currently, The Appointment of Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Court and the transfer of judges from one High Court to another had to be made in accordance with Articles 124, 217 and 222 of the Constitution of India. The appointment of judges is made by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice and other judges *i.e.*, Collegium system.

Centre Exempts CERT-In from Purview of RTI Act

Recently, The Union government has added the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) among a list of organisations that are exempted from the ambit of the Right to Information Act (RTI).

Key Highlights :

- The Centre has used its powers given under sub-section (2) of Section 24 of the RTI Act to exempt CERT-In from the purview of the transparency law.
- Using those powers, the Centre has included CERT-In at serial number 27 in the Second Schedule of the RTI Act.
- There are 26 other intelligence and security organisations established by the Union government such as the Intelligence Bureau, Research and Analysis Wing, Directorate of Enforcement, National Technical Research Organisation that are exempt under RTI.

About CERT-In

The CERT-In is the national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents as and when they occur. One of its primary objectives is enhancing "security awareness among common citizens". It functions under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

News in Brief

Rice Research Station Named after M.S. Swaminathan

Recently, the Rice Research Station at Mankombu in Kuttanad, Alappuzha, under the Kerala Agricultural University has been renamed M.S. Swaminathan Rice Research Centre.

Key Facts :

- The research centre has played a key role in Kuttanad's agricultural advancements and it was renamed in memory of the contributions made by agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan who had his roots in Kuttanad. Swaminathan died in September this year.
- The Rice Research Centre was established in 1940 with the financial support of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. It was brought under the Kerala Agricultural University in 1972.

FATF Review Team in India

Recently, a Financial Action Task Force (FATF) team arrived in India as part of the process to conduct the country's mutual evaluations to ascertain if the authorities have put in place and effectively implemented the required legal framework against money-laundering and terrorist financing.

About FATF

The FATF, created in 1989 at the behest of the G7 and headquartered in Paris, is an intergovernmental organization promoting policies and standards to combat financial crime, focusing on money laundering and terrorist financing.

It currently consists of 39 members who represent the majority of the world's main financial centres. There are two regional organizations with 39 members : the Gulf Cooperation Council and the European Commission. Indonesia is the only observer country of FATF.

Continued on Page 33



World

This Month

India and Sri Lanka on Debt Treatment

Recently, during a three-day tour to the island nation, the Union Finance Minister of India paid a visit to the President of Sri Lanka. Ranil Wickremesinghe, the President of Sri Lanka, credited India's support for the country's current stability during the Naam 200 event.

Key Highlights :

- India will continue collaborating with Sri Lanka on debt treatment while the island nation attempts to emerge out of last year's grave economic crisis.
- Sri Lanka is required to bring its major creditors, including China, India, and Japan, on board for a debt treatment plan agreeable to all in order to unlock the second tranche of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Extended Fund Facility (EFF).
- They further discussed about cooperation in inter-grid connectivity, aviation, power projects, and oil exploration in the northern town of Mannar. While no new agreements were inked during the visit.
- The revised Memorandum of Understanding between India and the Philippines has been signed, involving a \$ 15 million grant to promote Buddhist ties, with \$ 10 million allocated for solar electrification of religious places.
- Sri Lanka's President Wickremesinghe expressed gratitude to PM and FM Sitharaman for nearly \$ 4 billion in Indian assistance during the country's economic crash, highlighting its stability.
- 12th round of negotiations on the stalled Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) between Sri Lanka and India took place from October 30 to November 1 in Colombo, terming the discussions a 'significant step' towards strengthening the economic partnership between the two countries.

- ➔ India and Sri Lanka on Debt Treatment
- ➔ India-Australia 2 + 2 Dialogue
- ➔ India, Bhutan to Discuss New Routes of Regional Connectivity
- ➔ Severe Earthquake in Nepal
- ➔ India and Japan Converge in Southeast Asia
- ➔ Russia Withdraw Ratification of Global Nuke Test Ban Treaty CTBT
- ➔ Antarctica Research Station by Chinese
- ➔ New Island Emerges After Undersea Volcano Erupts Off Japan
- ➔ Open Doors Report
- ➔ News in Brief

Economic and Technological Cooperation Agreement (ETCA)

India and Sri Lanka have been working on a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) since the mid-2000s, but faced opposition from the business community within Sri Lanka. With increased bilateral ties, India is pushing for an Economic and Technological Cooperation Agreement (ETCA).

ETCA aims to enhance economic, trade, investment, and technology cooperation between the two parties, promote liberalization in goods and services, and establish fair, transparent, and facilitative trading mechanisms.

About NAAM 200 :

The 'NAAM 200' was organized by the Government of Sri Lanka to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Indian Origin Tamils.

India-Australia 2 + 2 Dialogue

On 20th November, 2023, India and Australia held 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue to step up defence cooperation and deepen the strategic relationship in sectors such as critical minerals and trade and investment.

A decision taken during the virtual leaders' summit between Australia and India in June 2020 gave rise to the 2+2 dialogue. Both parties agreed to upgrade their bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership during this summit. The agreement states that at least every two years, the Foreign and Defence Ministers will meet in a '2+2' format to discuss strategic matters.

About 2+2 Dialogue

The 2+2 dialogue facilitates strategic and security discussions between India's foreign and defense ministries and its partners, fostering understanding and consideration of political aspects for a stronger strategic alliance.

Key Highlights :

- The Ministers exchanged views on deepening multi-faceted India-Australia ties in several areas. These include defence and security, trade and investment, critical minerals, energy, climate change, science & technology, space, education and people to people linkages.
- Regional and global issues were also discussed. Both sides also exchanged views on shared priorities for strengthening minilateral and multilateral cooperation.
- The External Affairs Minister emphasized that this has been an exceptional year for India-Australia relationship. The Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement entered into force and its economic implications are unfolding this year.
- They also mention that there is a million-strong Indian community and over a hundred thousand Indian students who form a living bridge between the two countries.
- Minister highlighted that the bilateral relationship has grown rapidly but it has larger implications for the region. A lot of other countries look to India and Australia and the bilateral relationship as a factor of stability and security.
- Collaboration between defence start-ups from both countries, addressing challenges jointly, was discussed as part of strengthening the India-Australia defence partnership for the overall security of the Indo-Pacific region.

About QUAD

The quadrilateral security conversation, or QUAD, is an alliance of four democracies: Japan, Australia, the United States, and India. This organization seeks to guarantee an open, free, and legal international order throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

About Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)

It was signed in 2022 between India and Australia. It aims to provide an institutional mechanism to encourage and improve trade between the two countries.

Significance of ECTA :

- It is the 1st such agreement for India with a developed country in over a decade.

PD/January/2024/17

- The deal has the potential to raise bilateral trade between India and Australia to nearly \$50 billion in the next five years and create at least 10 lakh jobs in the start-up economy.
- Provide a model for future FTA with other developed countries.

Progress of India-Australia ECTA :

Indian exporters have benefited from the India-Australia ECTA. For the first nine months; the utilization rate was 77%. For Indian exporters, sectors that have benefited from the deal include iron and steel products, linens, agro products and electrical conductors.

India, Bhutan to Discuss New Routes of Regional Connectivity

Recently, the decision by India and Bhutan to focus on infrastructure and connectivity during talks between Prime Minister Modi and Bhutan's fifth King Ligme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk is an important marker towards more bilaterally driven regional initiatives.



Key Points of the Discussion :

- India and Bhutan are discussing regional connectivity projects, including a 58 km cross-border rail link between Gelephu and Kokrajhar. There is a plan to explore a second rail link of approximately 18 km between Samtse in Bhutan and Banarhat in the tea gardens area of West Bengal, with discussions on upgrading border and immigration posts.
- Bhutan and Bangladesh have agreed to facilitate trade by allowing Bhutanese goods to be transported from Haldibari in West Bengal to Chilahati in Bangladesh.
- The Darranga-Samdrup Jongkhar border crossing between Assam and Bhutan will serve as an immigration check post, facilitating entry and exit for Indian, Bhutanese, and third-country nationals.
- Bhutan's economy is expected to grow modestly by 4-3% due to COVID pandemic effects and net-out migration by youth. The country's low forex reserves and high public debt, mainly due to debt to India, are causing concerns. The Bhutanese King's plans for Gelephu and the special economic zone aim to boost work and tourism opportunities in Bhutan.
- The Bhutanese King expressed gratitude to the government for its support for Bhutan's 12th Five-Year plan, ending October 31, and reiterated India's commitment to support the 13th Five-Year Plan.

Severe Earthquake in Nepal

Earthquakes are very frequent in Nepal. But on 5th November, 2023, a 6.4-magnitude earthquake, the worst

since 2015, struck Nepal's remote mountainous region, taking the toll of at least 157 people and hundreds more injured.

Highlights :

- Epicentre was at Ramidanda in Jajarkot district, about 550 km from Kathmandu, the tremors were felt in New Delhi and parts of north India too.
- The two districts of Jajarkot and Rukum West were the worst-hit.
- It was the country's deadliest since 2015, when about 8,000 people were killed in two earthquakes, measuring 7.8 and 7.3 on the Richter scale.

About Earthquake

- Earthquakes are simply defined as shakings of the earth. It is a natural phenomenon. It is caused due to release of energy, which causes waves to propagate in all directions. Most of the earthquakes occur at the boundaries where the plates converge. Where two plates meet or converge is called convergent boundary.
- The vibrations called seismic waves are generated from earthquakes that travel through the Earth and are recorded on instruments called seismographs.
- The location below the earth's surface where the earthquake starts is called the hypocentre, and the location directly above it on the surface of the earth is called the epicentre.
- The Richter scale is a scale that seismologists use to measure the amount of ground shaking and energy that is released from earthquakes. The magnitude is expressed in absolute numbers, 0-10.

Nepal Vulnerabilities to Earthquake

- **Convergent Boundary** : Nepal is located at a convergent boundary where the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates collide, leading to the accumulation of stress and strain in the crust. This pressure is eventually released in the form of earthquakes.
- **Subduction Zone** : Nepal is also situated in a subduction zone. This subduction process further amplifies the stress and strain within the crust, contributing to the occurrence of earthquakes in Nepal.
- **Negligence in Construction and Seismic Design** : Many structures in Nepal are constructed with unreinforced masonry, which cannot resist earthquakes and can collapse.

India and Japan Converge in Southeast Asia

Recently, The Philippines is shifting its focus from Chinese-led infrastructure projects to Japan and India as potential sources of development and security.

Key Highlights :

- Based on the authoritative State of Southeast Asian Survey of 2023, Japan and India are the top two choices of Southeast Asian countries for alternative Indo-Pacific strategic partners.

- Under President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the Philippines have secured sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea against China's Indo-Pacific interests. Marcos Jr.'s foreign policy focuses on working with like-minded partners, including Tokyo and New Delhi as important traditional and non-traditional partners.

Bilateral Relation Between India and Philippines

- The Philippines and India's bilateral partnership has seen significant progress as Manila now more actively considers New Delhi in its strategic planning.
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Philippine and Indian Coast Guards, which will allow both sides to improve their interoperability, intelligence sharing, and maritime domain awareness.
- Recently, India offers to supply Philippine Coast Guard with seven indigenously manufactured helicopters on a soft loan agreement, following the delivery of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.

Japan and India's increased engagement in Southeast Asia aligns with the Philippines' interest to mitigate China's economic influence and power projection, particularly in light of intensifying US-China competition, thus enhancing regional hedging strategies.

Russia Withdraw Ratification of Global Nuke Test Ban Treaty CTBT

On 2nd November, 2023, President Putin signed a law revoking Russian ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Russia says it aims to restore parity with the United States, which has signed the 1996 treaty but has never ratified it, and that it will not resume testing until Washington does so.

About CTBT

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is a multilateral treaty opened for signature in 1996 by which states agree to ban all nuclear explosions in all environments, for military or civilian purposes. It was signed by 183 states and ratified by 164 but has not entered into force as eight specific states among 44 states whose signatures are required for the Treaty to enter into force, namely the US, China, Iran, Egypt, Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea have not ratified the Treaty yet. The roots of the CTBT can be traced back to the Cold War era, when the United States and the Soviet Union were engaged in a nuclear arms race and conducted numerous nuclear tests.

Antarctica Research Station by Chinese

The two icebreakers, Xuelong 1 and Xuelong 2 research vessels, the name means 'Snow Dragon' in Chinese set sail for Antarctica on November 1, 2023, to construct China's fifth station on the world's southernmost continent.

Highlights :

- China's largest Antarctic research flotilla will construct a station on Inexpressible Island near Ross Sea, a deep Southern Ocean bay named after a 19th-century British explorer.
- The Ross Sea is located off the coast of Antarctica. It is one of the last intact marine ecosystems in the world.
- China has four research stations in Antarctica: Great Wall(1985), Zhongshan (1989), Kunlun(2009), and Taishan (2014).
- The five-month mission will include a survey on the impact of climate change.
- It will also conduct environmental surveys in the Prydz Bay, the Astronaut Sea in southeast Antarctic, and in the Ross Sea and Amundsen Sea in the west.
- The mission, China's 40th to the Antarctic, will also cooperate with countries including the United States, Britain, and Russia on logistics supply.

Antarctica

- The word Antarctica is derived from the Greek word 'antarktikē', which means 'opposite to north' i.e., opposite to the Arctic.
- Antarctica 'the white continent' is the fifth largest continent in the world with its unique wildlife, extreme coldness, dryness, windiness and unexplored territories.
- It is situated within the Antarctic Circle and is surrounded by Southern Ocean. James cook discovered Antarctica.
- The world's largest ocean current, the Antarctic circumpolar current circumvents the Antarctic continent.
- Of the 14 million-sq.km area, 98% is covered with thick ice sheets that formed 25 million years ago and holds 75% of the earth's fresh water.

National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences responsible for management and upkeep of the Indian Antarctic Research Bases 'Maitri' and 'Bharati', and the Indian Arctic base 'Himadri'.

New Island Emerges After Undersea Volcano Erupts Off Japan

After an underwater volcano erupted late last month, a new island appeared close to Japan's Ogasawara island chain. Phreatomagmatic eruptions, which resulted from the interplay of magma and seawater, produced the island.

Phreatomagmatic eruptions are volcanic events triggered by the interaction of magma with water, typically seawater. These interactions lead to explosive releases of ash and steam.

About Ogasawara Islands

- The Ogasawara Islands are located in the North-Western Pacific Ocean. It is also known as Bonin Islands.
- It is a volcanic arc comprising more than 30 islands and islets.
- It comprises of three main island groups Mukojima, Chichijima and Hahajima.

- The landscape is dominated by subtropical forest types and sclerophyllous shrublands surrounded by steep cliffs.
- It is one of the famous UNESCO World Heritage sites of Japan.

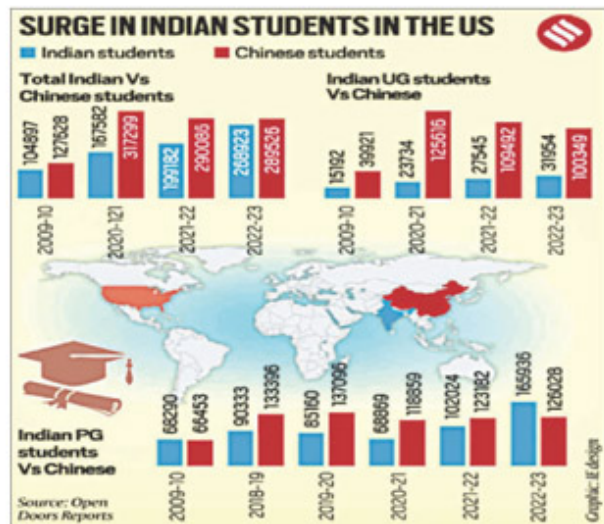


Open Doors Report

According to the latest Open Doors Report released on 13th November, 2023, India surpasses China as the top source of international graduate students in the USA.

Key Findings by the Report :

- Indian postgraduate students in the US increased 63% to 1.65 lakh in 2022-23, surpassing China for the first time in 15 years to become the largest source of international graduate students in America. There were 1.26 lakh Chinese graduate students in the US during the same period.
- China and India together account for 52 per cent of the total international student cohort in America.



About Open Doors Report

The Open Doors Report, an annual survey examining international student exchange activity in the United States, is funded by the US Department of State and conducted by the non-profit Institute of International Education (IIE).

Continued on Page 33



Updates

National and International

ACRONYMS

- CCPA** — Central Consumer Protection Authority
- EPFO** — Employees Provident Fund Organisation
- IPEF** — Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity
- ITLF** — Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (Manipur)
- NCOL** — National Co-operative Organics Limited

APPOINTMENTS

Daniel Noboa President in Ecuador

Businessman Daniel Noboa, 35, was sworn in as the President of Ecuador on November 23, 2023. He is the Youngest President in Ecuador's history.

Noboa term as President will run only through May 2025, which is what remains of former President Guillermo Lasso's tenure. While presidential terms in Ecuador are normally 4 years long, this was an early election triggered by the dissolution of Parliament by outgoing President Guillermo Lasso.



Daniel Noboa

Noboa, who has very little political experience, will face an uphill struggle to tackle security problems and the poorly performing economy of Ecuador.

Javier Milei New President in Argentina

Argentina elected Javier Milei as their new President on November 19, 2023. Milei is known as an economist. He is the author of many books on economics and politics.

For over 21 years, Milei has been a professor of macroeconomics, economics of growth, microeconomics, and mathematics for economists.



Javier Milei

Javier Milei advocates for minimal government, focusing on justice and security, with a philosophy rooted in life, liberty, property, and free-market principles. Milei criticises socialism and communism advocating for economic liberalisation.

Three Judges in Supreme Court

Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, Augustine George Masih, and Sandeep Mehta took oath as judges of the Supreme Court of India on November 9, 2023. Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud administered the oath to them.

Gauhati High Court Chief Justice Sandeep Mehta, Delhi High Court Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma

and Rajasthan High Court Chief Justice Augustine George Masih were appointed as judges in the Supreme Court on the recommendation of the Supreme Court Collegium headed by the Chief Justice on November 6, 2023.

Now the Supreme Court will function with its full strength of 34 judges.

Heeralal Samariya Sworn in as Chief Information Commissioner

Information Commissioner Heeralal Samariya was sworn in as the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) on November 6, 2023. President of India Draupadi Murmu administered the oath of office.

The post was vacant after the term of Y.K. Sinha ended on October 3, 2023.

Heeralal Samariya-an Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer of the 1985 batch-is the first dalit to hold this post of Chief Information Commissioner. He was appointed as Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission on November 7, 2020.

The Chief Information Commissioner is appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of the committee headed by the Prime Minister. The Commission has 1 Chief Information Commissioner and 10 Information Commissioners.

Saima Wazed Elected to WHO Post

Saima Wazed, daughter of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has emerged victorious in the race for the World Health Organisation's South-East Asia (WHO-SEARO) regional director.

Saima has been nominated as the next World Health Organisation Regional Director for South-East Asia by the member states voted during a closed meeting at the seventy-sixth session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia Region from 30 October to 2 November, 2023 was held in New Delhi, India.



Saima Wazed

Nomination of Saima Wazed will be submitted to the WHO Executive Board during its 154th session on January 22-27, 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland. The term of new Regional Director will begin from February 1, 2024. Saima Wazed is an Autism activist

Dr. Sanchit Tyagi Appointed Director of Sports Authority of India

Dr. Sanchit Tyagi, a 2013 batch Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS) officer, was appointed the director of Sports Authority of India (SAI) on November 1, 2023.

Tyagi has been serving as joint director of National Book Trust of India since 2021.

DEATHS

Film Producer Raj Kumar Kohli

Film producer and director Raj Kohli died on November 24, 2023 at the age of 93 in Mumbai. He is father of actor Arman Kohli.

Kohli produced Punjabi films Sapni, Pind Di Kurhi, Main Jatti Punjab Di and Dulla Bhatti. He also made Hindi films Gora Kala and Danka. He was a successful Director of many films such as Nagin, Lootera, Jaani Dushman, Muqabla, Naukar Biwi Ka, Raaj Tilak, Bees Sal Baad, Jeene Nahi Doonga and Virodhi.



Raj Kumar Kohli

Malayali Actor Vinod Thomas

Malayalam actor Vinod Thomas was found dead inside a parked car at a hotel premises near Pampady in Kottayam, Kerala on November 18, 2023. He was 45.

Vinod is best known for his work as a character artist in several popular films. Some of the most celebrated works include Ayyappanum Koshiyum, Bhoothakaalam, Natholi Oru Cheriya Meenalla and Vashi. The last film was Bhagvan Dasante Ramrajyam (2023).

In addition to his work in films, Vinod also worked in several Malayalam television shows and short films.

First Woman Judge of Supreme Court Fathima Beevi

Justice Fathima Beevi, India's first woman judge of the Supreme Court, died in Kollam in Kerala on November 23, 2023 at the age of 96.

Fathima Beevi was appointed as a judge of the Kerala High Court in 1983 and was elevated to a judge of the Supreme Court in 1989. She served as the judge of the Supreme Court from 1989 to 1992.

She also served as a member of the National Human Rights Commission of India from 1993 to 1997 and governor of Tamil Nadu from 1997 to 2001.

Justice Fatima Beevi, whose appointment as the first Muslim woman judge of the Supreme Court had inspired women to pursue the legal profession.

Justice Fathima Beevi was honoured with Kerala Prabha Award in 2023, the second highest honour given by the Government of Kerala.

Dr. S.S. Badrinath Founder of Sankara Nethralaya

Dr. S.S. Badrinath died at the age of 83, on November 21, 2023 in Chennai.

Dr. Badrinath founded Sankara Nethralaya, a non-profit eye hospital, in Chennai with the objective of offering free eye care to the economically disadvantaged. The hospital is one of India's largest charitable eye hospitals.



Fathima Beevi

Sankara Nethralaya stands as a testament to Dr. Badrinath's dedication. Around 1200 patients receive care, and approximately 100 surgeries are performed daily, all free of charge. The hospital also educates and offers training programs for aspiring ophthalmologists.

Dr. Badrinath was recipient of many awards like Padma Shri (1996), Padma Bhushan (1996), Dr. B.C. Roy National Award (1991) and Lifetime Achievement Award, Vitreo Retinal Society, India.

Former US First Lady Rosalynn Carter

Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter died at the age of 96 on November 19, 2023 in her home in plains, Georgia, US.

Eleanor Rosalynn Carter served as the First Lady of the United States of America from 1977 to 1981 as the wife of President Jimmy Carter. She got married to Jimmy Carter in 1946.

Carter helped her husband Carter in the elections of the governor of Georgia and the President of the US. She supported her husband's public policies as well as his social and political life.

Rosalynn and Jimmy founded The Carter Centre, a private, non-profit institution based in Atlanta, Georgia. She created and served as the chair of The Carter Centre Mental Health Task Force, an advisory board of experts, consumers and advocates promoting mental health.

Rosalynn wrote many books including her autobiography-First Lady From Plains and Within Our Reach : Ending the Mental Health Crisis.

Booker Prize-Winning British Author A.S. Byatt

Britain's most renowned novelist and Booker Prize - winning author A.S. Byatt died on November 16, 2023. She was 87.

A.S. Byatt won the Booker Prize for her 1990 novel "Possession: A Romance. Her short story collection The Djinn in the Nightingale's Eye received the 1995 Aga Khan Prize for Fiction. The Children's Book was shortlisted for the 2009 Booker Prize and won the 2010 James Tait Black Memorial Prize.

A.S. Byatt was a critic, novelist, short story writer and poet. Her books have been translated into more than 38 languages.

She was awarded the Shakespeare Prize in 2000 and Erasmus Prize in 2016, the Park Kyong-in Prize in 2017 and the Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award in 2018.

Eminent Art Historian B.N. Goswamy

Art historian and world authority on miniature paintings, Brijinder Nath Goswamy died on November 17, 2023 at the age of 90 in Chandigarh.

Goswamy quit the prestigious civil services for less than three years to pursue a career in academics and research. He was Professor emeritus of art history in Punjab University, he had been a visiting professor at various universities across the world.



A.S. Byatt

He authored 27 books on art with his last book "The Indian Cat : Stories, Paintings, Poetry and Proverbs" was released by him only a few days ago on October 24, 2023.

Goswamy has special knowledge of Pahari Painting, a genre of traditional miniature painting oriented in the hills of Punjab region. He was recipient of Padma Shri (1998) and Padma Bhushan (2008).

Telugu Film Actor Chandra Mohan

Popular Telugu film actor Chandra Mohan died in Hyderabad on November 11, 2023 at the age of 80. His original name is Mallampalli Chandra-sekhara Rao.

He acted in 932 films including the main lead in 150 movies. Rangula Ratnam was his first film in 1966 for which he bagged the state government's Nandi award for best actor. Since then he had acted in several films such as Padaharella Vayasu, Seethamaalakshmi, Radha Kalyanam, and Chandamama Raave.



Chandra Mohan

Cinematographer John Bailey

Hollywood cinematographer and Film Director John Bailey died on November 10, 2023 at the age of 81 in Los Angeles.

Bailey earned his first credit as director of photography for Boulevard Nights, followed by Ordinary People and American Gigolo. He also directed films such as The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe, China Moon, Via Dolorosa and Mariette in Ecstasy. John served two terms from 2017 to 2019 as president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

As a member of the American Society of Cinematographers since 1985, he received a lifetime achievement award from the group in 2015.

Journalist K.A. Francis

Former Editor-in-charge of the Malayala Manorama Weekly and painter K.A. Francis passed away on November 9, 2023 in Thrissur, Kerala. He was 76.

He was Chairman of Kerala Lalit Academy and founder of the Universal Arts of Kozhikode. He also served as President of the Kerala Chitrakala Parishad.

Francis joined Manorma in 1970 and was the Chief of the Kannur unit from 1999 to 2002. Following this, he assumed charge of the weekly until he retired on December 31, 2021.



K.A. Francis

He won several awards including Kerala Lalithakala Academy award for best landscape painting and the Newspaper Layout and Design National Award in 1971 for a page designed by him.

Communist Leader N. Sankaraiah

Freedom fighter and one of the founding members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) passed away on November 15, 2023 in Chennai. He was 102.

He was the Tamil Nadu CPI(M) state secretary from 1995 to 2002. He was also the Central Committee member of Communist Party of India (Marxist).

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N. Sankaraiah was the member of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly from Madurai West constituency from 1967 to 1971 and from Madurai East constituency from 1977 to 1980 and from 1980 to 1984.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Nita Ambani Gets USISPF Global Leadership Award 2023

The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) on October 29, 2023 awarded Nita Ambani, Founder and Chairperson of Reliance Foundation, with the 2023 Global Leadership Award for Philanthropy and Corporate Social Responsibility. In her award acceptance speech on stage, Nita Ambani said, "Today, I accept this award with humility and gratitude on behalf of my entire team. I represent the beating heart of Reliance, our beacon of hope and empowerment—Reliance Foundation, through which we have touched the lives of over 71 million people. At Reliance, doing good and giving back has always been a way of life. Long before CSR became a norm, Reliance has been fulfilling our CMR, our Corporate Moral Responsibility. It has now transformed into our philosophy of WE CARE. We care for the planet. We care for humanity. And we care for our nation."

Vihaan Talya Vikas from Bengaluru Wins Wildlife Photography Award

10-year-old Vihaan Talya Vikas from Bengaluru was on November 1, 2023 awarded the best photographer in his category at the prestigious Wildlife Photographer of the Year (WPY) competition held in London. Organised by the Natural History Museum, London, the competition showcases the finest wildlife photography from around the world. The event is also considered as the 'Oscars of Photography'. Vihaan's photo of a spider along with Krishna's carving clicked on the outskirts of the city and helped him bag the award. A total of 50,000 images were submitted, out of which the top 100 were considered for the competition and 11 were chosen in different categories, with Vihaan winning the under-10 category award.



Vihaan's award-winning photograph

Prof. Nandini Das Gets British Academy Book Prize 2023

Professor Nandini Das was on November 1, 2023 awarded the 11th British Academy Book Prize for global cultural understanding for her book Courting India: England, Mughal India and the Origins of Empire. The announcement was made by Chair of the Book Prize judging panel, Professor Charles Tripp FBA, at a celebration at the British Academy.

Professor Das, who is Professor of Early Modern Literature and Culture, presents an important new pers-

pective on the origins of empire through the story of the arrival of the first English ambassador in India, Sir Thomas Roe, in the early 17th century. The British Academy Book Prize, formerly known as the Nayef Al-Rodhan Prize, was established in 2013 to reward and celebrate the best works of non-fiction that demonstrate rigour and originality and have contributed to public understanding of other world cultures and their interaction. It is a leading international non-fiction prize worth GBP 25,000.

Sheynnis Palacios from Nicaragua Crowned Miss Universe 2023

Sheynnis Palacios from Nicaragua was crowned Miss Universe 2023 on November 18, 2023 at the Jose Adolfo Pineda Arena in San Salvador, El Salvador. She is the first winner from Nicaragua to win the international beauty pageant. Miss Universe 2022 USA's R'Bonney Gabriel decorated Palacios with the Miss Universe crown as per the tradition of the event. Palacios pipped



Palacios : Miss Universe 2023

contestants from 83 countries including Miss India Shweta Sharda, who was called into the list of top 20 contestants :

- It was the 72nd edition of the Miss Universe beauty pageant.
- Miss Thailand Anntonia Porsild emerged as the first runner-up and Miss Australia Moraya Wilson was named the second runner-up at the event.
- Born as Sheynnis Alondra Palacios Cornejo, the queen of the jewelled crown of Miss Universe 2023 hails from Managua in Nicaragua. She pursued her degree in Mass Communication from Universidad Centroamericana.

RBI Gets Businessline's Changemaker of the Year Award 2023

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was honoured with the Changemaker of the Year Award 2023 by the Hindu Businessline on November 3, 2023 in New Delhi. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das received the award on behalf of the entire RBI team from R.K. Singh, Union Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy in the presence of Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson of The Hindu Group.

Argentina's Lionel Messi Wins Record-Extending 8th Ballon d'Or; Aitana Bonmati Wins Women's Honour

Argentina's football star Lionel Messi on October 30, 2023 won the prestigious Ballon d'Or award for record-extending 8th time in Paris after fulfilling his life's ambition by leading Argentina to the FIFA World Cup title in Qatar last year. He had won this coveted honour of the best footballer of the world in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019, 2021 before this one in 2023. Messi won ahead of Manchester City forward Erling Haaland and his former PSG teammate Kylian Mbappe. Messi's award was

announced by David Beckham, a co-owner of Messi's current club, Inter Miami.

Spain's Aitana Bonmati emerged winner of the Women's Ballon d'Or award for guiding Spain to victory at the Women's World Cup in August this year. She also helped Barcelona win the Women's Champions League and Spanish league. Bonmati won ahead of Sam Kerr and Salma Paralluelo.

In other awards, the best under-21 player was Jude Bellingham, while Haaland won the Gerd Müller award for the best striker of the year. The Lev Yashin award for best goalkeeper went to Emiliano Martinez.

The humanitarian prize named after the late Brazil midfielder Socrates went to Vinicius Junior, for his involvement in the foundation he set up for underprivileged children.

Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development 2022

The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development 2022 was, on November 19, 2023 jointly awarded to the Indian Medical Association and the Trained Nurses Association of India as representatives of the COVID-19 warriors in the country. Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari presented the award to Dr. Sharad Kumar Agarwal, president, Indian Medical Association, and Professor (Dr.) Roy K. George, president, Trained Nurses Association of India in presence of Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, who heads the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust. The award symbolizes a tribute to the relentless efforts of the COVID-19 warriors in India.

51st International Emmy Awards 2023

The 51st International Emmy Awards 2023, one of the most prestigious awards for television were conferred in different categories on November 21, 2023 in New York, the USA. Actor-comedian Rhys Darby hosted the awards ceremony. India managed to bring home two Emmy awards. Vir Das, who won an Emmy for his Netflix comedy special 'Vir Das : Landing', shared the award with 'Derry Girls Season 3'. Ekta Kapoor was honoured with the International Emmy Directorate Award.

Vir Das has made his country proud as he won an Emmy in the Unique Comedy Special category. 'The Empress' won an Emmy award in the Best Drama Series category. "The International Emmy for Best Performance by an Actress goes to Karla Souza in La Cada [Dive]."

54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2023; Endless Borders Wins Best Film Honour

The 54th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2023 was successfully organized in November, 2023 in Goa. Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting (I&B), Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur inaugurated the nine-day grand cinematic festival on November 20, 2023 at the Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium in Panaji, Goa in presence of Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant, Minister of State (MoS) for I&B Dr. L. Murugan, MoS for Tourism Shripad Naik, actor and MP Sunny Deol, and other dignitaries. Several prominent Indian and international film personalities also

graced the event. Indian screen icon Madhuri Dixit Nene was felicitated with the first-ever 'Special Recognition for Contribution to Bharatiya Cinema' award at opening ceremony of the festival.

The 'international section' of the 54th IFFI witnessed participation of 198 films and the festival had 13 World Premieres, 18 International Premieres, 62 Asia premieres, and 89 India Premieres. The 'Indian Panorama' section showcased 25



Michael Douglas (Middle) being felicitated by Pramod Sawant

feature films and 20 non-feature films from India—with the opening films in the feature selection and the non-feature selection to be the Malayalam film 'Aattam' and the Manipuri language film 'Andro Dreams' respectively.

- Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur was the jury head for the 54th edition of IFFI at Goa. Meanwhile, the five-member jury panel included Spanish cinematographer Jose Luis Alcaine, and producers Jerome Paillard, Catherine Dussart, and Helen Leake.
- Filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani headed the five-member jury for the best web series (OTT) category, which is a new category this year at IFFI.
- British film 'Catching Dust' was the opening film of the 54th IFFI this year.
- Robert Kolodny directed American film 'Featherweight' was the closing film of IFFI this year.

The 54th IFFI came to a successful conclusion on November 28, 2023 with a grand closing ceremony at Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium in Panaji. Veteran Hollywood actor and producer Michael Douglas was honoured with the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award at the closing ceremony. The award was presented by Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.

Persian film **Endless Borders** directed by Abbas Amini won the Golden Peacock award for the Best Film in the 54th IFFI 2023. The film is set against the backdrop of an Iranian teacher's odyssey amidst the turmoil ignited by the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan. It delves into the complexities of prejudice, moral dilemmas, and forbidden love. Actor-director Rishab Shetty bagged the Special Jury Award for his film Kantara. Iranian actor Pouria Rahimi Sam bagged the award for best actor (Male) for his performance in the movie Endless Borders. French actress Melanie Thierry was honoured with Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Female) for Party of Fools.

54th IFFI 2023 : Major Award Winners

- **Best Film** : Endless Borders directed by Abbas Amini
- **Best Web Series** : Panchayat Season 2
- **Best Actor (Male)** : Pouria Rahimi Sam for the film Endless Borders
- **Best Actor (Female)** : Melanie Thierry for the film Party of Fools
- **Special Jury Award** : Rishab Shetty for the film Kantara

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- **Best Director** : Stephan Komandarev for the film Blaga's Lessons
- **Best Debutant Director** : Reger Azad Kaya for the film When The Seedlings Grow
- **Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award** : Michael Douglas

Irish Author Paul Lynch's 'Prophet Song' Wins Booker Prize 2023

Irish author Paul Lynch's 'Prophet Song' was declared the winner of the Booker Prize 2023 on November 26, 2023 in London. Set in Dublin, Paul's novel 'Prophet Song' tells the story of a family grappling with a terrifying new world in which the democratic norms they are used to begin to disappear. Prophet Song pipped London-based Indian-origin author Chetna Maroo's debut novel 'Western Lane' to win the 2023 Booker Prize which fetched £50,000 and a trophy for Paul.

'Prophet Song' was the bookies' favourite to win this year's Booker Prize and makes Lynch the fifth Irish author to win the prestigious prize after Iris Murdoch, John Banville, Roddy Doyle and Anne Enright. Lynch received his trophy from Sri Lankan author Shehan Karunatilaka, last year's Booker winner for "The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida", at the awards ceremony held at Old Billingsgate in London. The Dublin-based author Paul Lynch's first novel 'Red Sky in Morning' was published in 2013 to critical acclaim. His second work 'The Black Snow' (2014) won the French booksellers' prize Prix Libr'à Nous for Best Foreign Novel and the inaugural Prix des Lecteurs Privat. Lynch's other two novels 'Grace' (2017) and 'Beyond the Sea' (2019) brought him equal international accolades.

Sarah Bernstein's 'Study for Obedience', Jonathan Escoffery's 'If I Survive You', Paul Harding's 'The Other Eden', and Paul Murray's 'The Bee Sting' and Chetna Maroo's debut novel 'Western Lane' were the other novels shortlisted for the Booker Award this year besides award-winning Prophet Song.



International Conference-cum Exhibition on 'Aerospace and Aviation in 2047'

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated a two day international conference and exhibition on 'Aerospace and Aviation in 2047' in New Delhi on November 18, 2023.

The Aeronautical Society of India organised an International Conference-cum-Exhibition on November 18 and 19.

The event showcased the Technical Growth in the last 75 years and futuristic Road map for 2047.

The conference focused on Flying machines in Military and Aero Engine technologies, Hypersonic Technologies, Space Exploration Technologies and Launch of Advanced Rockets in India, Automation with Multi-Sensor Data Fusion. Artificial Intelligence and Robotics, Civil Aviation development, Green Initiatives by Aero Industry and Startup's.

World Hindu Congress

World Hindu Congress 2023 was held on November 24 and 25, 2023 in Bangkok, Thailand. The theme of the congress was 'Jayasya Aayatnam Dharmah', meaning 'Dharma, Abode of Victory'.

The conference provided space to discuss and deliberate upon the opportunities and challenges facing Hindus across the world and how to address them valiantly.

Hindus are a 1.2 billion strong community, comprising 16% of the world's population with presence in around 200 countries. Bharat and Southeast Asia share common Dharmic and cultural values that find expression in language, arts, architecture and tradition.

The conference focused on areas of strategic importance to Hindus and provided avenues for collaboration among Hindu leaders, activists and thinkers for the Hindu resurgence.

The world Hindu Congress is a global platform for Hindus to connect for common good, prosperity and progress. The inaugural World Hindu Congress was held in Delhi in 2014, followed by in Chicago in 2018.



SPACE/AVIATION



Earth Received First Laser Message From 16 Million Km

Earth received laser-beamed communication from a distance of 16 million km on November 14, 2023 making it the longest demonstration of optical communications. This link is known as the first light.

The experiment was made possible by the Deep Space Optical Communications (DSOC) tool which was travelling on board NASA's Psyche Spacecraft. The Psyche spacecraft established a communication link with the Hale Telescope at the Palomar Observatory in California on November 14.

At present, communications with spacecraft in deep space are received through radio signals, sent and received from vast antennas on Earth. Their bandwidth is limited. With this experiment hopes to use lasers to send information between Earth and spacecraft using light instead of radio waves. This new system is capable of beaming information 10 to 100 times faster than current space communications equipment.

China Launched New Cartographic Satellite

China launched a cartographic satellite Tianhui-5 from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in northern China's Shanxi Province on November 1, 2023. The Satellite was a modified version of the Long March-6 carrier rocket.

The satellite will undertake tasks including land resource survey, geographic information mapping and scientific experiments.



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NASA's Juno Mission Detects Salts on Jupiter's Moon Ganymede

US Space Agency NASA said on October 31, 2023 that Juno mission has for the first time detected mineral salt and organic compounds on the surface of Jupiter's moon Ganymede.

Data for this discovery was collected by the Jovian InfraRed Auroral Mapper (JIRAM) spectrometer aboard the spacecraft during a flyby of the icy moon on June 7, 2021.

Juno scientists achieved an unprecedented spatial resolution for infrared spectroscopy. They analyse and detect the spectral features of non-water-ice materials, including hydrated Sodium Chloride, Sodium Bicarbonates, Ammonium Chloride and possibly Aliphatic Aldehydes.

Juno is a NASA space probe orbiting the planet Jupiter. The spacecraft was launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on August 5, 2011. Juno entered a polar orbit of Jupiter on July 5, 2016.



DEFENCE



Indo-Nepal Military Joint Exercise Surya Kiran

The 17th edition of Indo-Nepal joint Military Exercise Surya Kiran was conducted from November 24 to 07 December, 2023 in Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand, India. It is an annual event and conducted alternatively in the two countries.

The Indian Army contingent comprised of 354 personnel was led by a Battalion from the Kumaon Regiment. The Nepal Army contingent is represented by Tara Dal Battalion.

The exercise will focus on employment of drones and counter drone measures, medical training, aviation aspects and also environment conservation.

India-US Joint Exercise Vajra Prahar

The 14th edition of the Indo-US Joint Special Forces exercise, VAJRA PRAHAR 2023 was held at the Joint Training Node in Umroi, Meghalaya in India on November 21 to December 11, 2023.

The American contingent from the 1st Special Forces Group (SFG) of the Special Forces and Indian Army contingent led by special Forces personnel from the Eastern Command participated in the joint exercise.

The key highlights of the Vajra Prahar included Airborne insertion and sustenance of troops, water-borne insertion of troops, combat air controlling of fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft and combat free fall insertion of troops.

The inaugural edition took place in India in 2010. Vajra Prahar has grown into a vital platform for the exchange of ideas and best practices between the Special Forces of both nations.

Russian Naval Exercise with India in Bay of Bengal

According to the Russian defence ministry Russia held a joint naval exercise with India in the Bay of Bengal in November 2023.

The purpose of the exercise was to comprehensively develop and strengthen naval cooperation between Russia and India.

The joint drills will help the two navies jointly counter global threats and ensure the safety of civilian shipping in the Asia-Pacific region.

Successful Flight Trials of First Indigenous Naval Anti-Ship Missile

The Indian Navy and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted Guided Flight Trials of the first indigenously developed Naval Anti-Ship Missile on November 21, 2023. The missile was launched from a Seaking 42B helicopter.

This success of the missile marks a crucial step towards attaining self-reliance in niche missile technology, showcasing advancement in seeker and guided technologies. This second successful trial came after its initial trials in May 2022.

India and European Union First Naval Exercise

The first ever India-EU joint naval exercise was conducted in two phases; which included a sea phase on October 24, followed by a harbour phase from October 25 to 26, 2023 at Tema, Ghana.

The joint exercise at sea and professional exchange in the harbour enhanced interoperability to undertake maritime operations in the Gulf of Guinea. The exercise also reaffirmed India-EU navy's ability to operate together and highlighted their shared and firm commitment to maritime security.

INS Sumedha, an indigenously built Naval Offshore Vessel, participated in the joint naval exercise.

India-Sri Lanka Joint Military Exercise

The 9th edition of India-Sri Lanka Joint Military exercise 'Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2023' was conducted from November 16 to 29, 2023 in Aundh, Pune.

The contingent of 120 personnel from India primarily representing the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment participated in the exercise. Additionally, 15 members from the Indian Air Force and 5 from the Sri Lankan Air Force also participated in this joint exercise.

The primary objective of the exercise is to collectively practice and focus on coordinated responses during counter-terrorist operations, Tactical activities, including raids, search and destroy missions.

The drill incorporated the utilisation of drones, counter unmanned aerial systems and helicopter manoeuvres. The objective is to enhance troop interoperability while minimising risks to life and property, aligning with the UN's peacekeeping agenda.

Fourth Anti-Submarine Warfare Craft 'Amini' Launched

Amini, the fourth in a series of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) projects built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata for the Indian Navy, was launched on November 16, 2023 at Kattupalli in Tamil Nadu.

The ship was named to signify the strategic maritime importance of the island of Amini at Lakshadweep, located about 400 km west of Kochi.

The Arnala class of ships will replace the in-service Abhay class ASW Corvettes of the Indian Navy and are designed to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, as well as Low-Intensity Maritime Operation (LIMO) and Mine Laying Operations.

Indian Armed Forces Exercise Trishakti Prahar

Joint Military exercise of all three forces of India Tri Shakti took place near western border with Pakistan in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan from November 13 to 25, 2023.

In this exercise the Indian Air Force participated with the Indian Navy and Army in mutual understanding and coordination. The joint exercise involved over 25000 troops.

The joint military exercise showcased various activities like integrated air, land and combined arms operations, fast mobility and deep strike offensive capabilities.

Apart from this specific technologies like automatic spectrum monitoring system, communication systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, precision guided missile systems and counter attack drone-systems were tested in this exercise.

Indian Airforce Exercise Poorvi Akash

Eastern Air Command of (EAC) of Indian Air Force conducted its annual Command level exercise-Poorvi Akash from October 30 to November 4 along the China border

The aim of the exercise Poorvi Akash was to showcase operational readiness and capabilities of Eastern Air Command with high-tech weapons. The exercise encompassed both defensive and offensive operations conducted day and night. It also focused on enhancing the synergy between Indian Army and the Indian Air Force in joint operations.

The Eastern Air Command plays a pivotal role in controlling air operations over a vast area spanning 12 states, including the northeastern states of India.

The exercise was at large scale and featured various ranges of platforms, such as Prachand Light Combat helicopters, Rafale and Tejas fighter jets, and S-400 air defence missile systems.

The exercise included maintenance activities and administrative tasks to assess operational preparedness and conducted a realistic training.

Crest of Fourth Guided Missile Destroyer 'Surat' Unveiled

The crest of the latest guided missile destroyer warship 'Surat' was unveiled in Surat city of Gujarat on November 6, 2023.

Surat is the first warship to be named after a city of Gujarat. This is the first time the unveiling of the crest of a warship was held in the same city after which it has been named.

Warship Surat is under construction at Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) in Mumbai. It is slated to join the active services in the Indian Navy next year. The ship 'Surat' is the fourth and last of the stealth destroyers under the project 15 B program.

The Visakhapatnam-class destroyers are also classified as the P-15 Bravo Class, or simply P-15 B. INS Visakhapatnam, Mormugao and Imphal are the other three warships.

Pralay Missile Test-fired

India successfully test-fired surface to surface short range ballistic missile (SRBM) 'Pralay' on November 7, 2023 from Abul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast.

Missile Pralay developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has a short range 350 km to 500 km and is capable of carrying a payload capacity of 500-1000 kg.

Pralay will be for deployment along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with Pakistan and China.

BrahMos-ER Missile Test-fired from a Naval Ship INS Imphal

The Indian Navy's latest indigenous guided missile destroyer INS Imphal scored Bulls Eye in her maiden firing BrahMos extended range missile at sea on November 22, 2023. It is the first ever test-firing of the extended-range BrahMos missile by a warship before its commissioning.

Imphal is the third ship of the Visakhapatnam-class stealth guided missile destroyer of the Indian Navy. The Indian Navy received Imphal on October 20, 2023.

The Imphal is equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors, including surface-to-air-missiles, anti-ship missiles and torpedoes.

The extended-range variant of the BrahMos Missile can strike land and sea targets at a maximum range of 400 to 500 km with supersonic speed all throughout the flight.



GEOGRAPHY



Scientists Solved the Mystery of an Ancient Continent Argoland

For decades, scientists have been puzzled by the disappearance of a huge 3000-Mile-long landmass, known as Argoland, that once bordered northwestern Australia some 153 million years ago, during the Jurassic era.

Geologist Eldert Advokaat and Douwe Van Hinsbergen from Utrecht University in Netherlands, suggested that Argoland's crust began to splinter into what they called an 'Argopelago' of smaller islands as early as 300 million years ago, when Antarctica, South America, Africa, Australia and India were part of a supercontinent called Gondwana. Both scientists proposed that the continent was already a dynamic mix of islands and ocean basins when it split from Australia in the Jurassic era.

They have now identified the fragments of Argoland according to a study published in Gondwana Research in October 2023.



DISASTER/ACCIDENT



Earthquake in Iceland

A swarm of intense earthquakes in the Reykjanes Peninsula, Iceland began on October 24, 2023, due to a magmatic intrusion underneath the area. The frequency

and intensity of the earthquakes dramatically increased on November 10 with 20000 tremors, the largest of which exceeded magnitude 5.2.

This year earthquakes came near the volcanic mountain Porbjorn near the town of Grindavik on Reykjanes peninsula. It is located in the area of the Reykjanes Volcanic Systems and enclosed by Holocene lava fields.

Following the tremor on November 10, a state of emergency was declared and evacuation plans were put into effect for Grindavik. The management of Blue Lagoon announced the site's closure to visitors from November 9-30, 2023 as a precaution following the earthquakes.

Cyclone Midhili in Bay of Bengal

The deep depression over Bay of Bengal intensified into a cyclonic storm Midhili on November 16, 2023. Mizoram, Tripura and Assam witnessed rainfall of varied intensity through. Meanwhile, the first day of the three day Meghalaya's Cherry Blossom Festival was cancelled due to bad weather conditions.

The cyclone also affected northeast of Paradip in Orissa, east-southeast of Digha in West Bengal.

Cyclone Midhili made a landfall on the Bangladesh coast on November 17 and 18. Cyclone Midhili was the second cyclone to hit the Bangladesh coast in quick succession after cyclone Hamoon.

The name Midhili for cyclone was suggested by Maldives. Countries affected by the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal cyclones rotationally give names of cyclones in a sequence,

Turkish Cargo Ship Sank in Black Sea

A Turkish cargo ship with 12 crew onboard sank off Turkey's Black Sea coast during a storm on November 19, 2023 and authorities have been unable to make contact with the crew. The region was hit by powerful storms. The Turkish-flagged Kafkametler sank after hitting a breakwater outside the harbour off the town of Eregli, some 200 km east of Istanbul. The ship was on its way to the western Turkish port of Izmir.



PLACES IN THE NEWS



Srinagar

The 4th Annual Conference of the Indian Economics & Allied Sciences Association was organized at the University of Kashmir in Srinagar from October 27 to 29, 2023. Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated the conference on October 27. In his address, the Lt. Governor appreciated the endeavour of the Indian Economics & Allied Sciences Association for deliberation on India's development strategy of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat, Development issues of J&K, Ladakh and Tribal population in India and comprehensive analysis of policy measures towards the achievement of Viksit Bharat by 2047. Comprehensive discussion and analysis was done on policy measures aimed at realizing the vision of a developed India by the year 2047. Prof Sudhakar Panda, President Indian Economics & Allied Sciences Association (IEASA) and Dr. Alok Kumar, Secretary of IEASA also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the key features of the annual conference.

Buckinghamshire (UK)

The first AI Safety Summit was successfully organized on November 1 and 2, 2023 at Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire in United Kingdom (UK). This two-day Summit, organized by the UK Government, brought together Ministers and representatives from various countries, including the UK, US, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, the Netherlands, South Korea, among others. Union Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Electronics & IT, Mr. Rajeev Chandrasekhar represented India in the summit. Over 25 countries, including the United States, China, and the EU, participated and jointly endorsed the 'Bletchley Declaration', which underscores the necessity for collaborative efforts and the establishment of a shared oversight framework. This declaration sets a dual agenda: identifying common AI risks and fostering a deeper scientific understanding of these risks, while simultaneously developing cross-country policies to mitigate them.

Shillong (Meghalaya)

A green tourism conclave was held in Shillong on October 19, 2023, a groundbreaking initiative of Indian Express Online Media, focused on the promotion of green and responsible tourism in India, with a particular emphasis on the Northeastern region and Odisha.

The Green Tourism India conclave, which was held in Shillong's state convention centre, saw the partnership of Meghalaya Tourism, Incredible India, Odisha Tourism and Arunachal Tourism. It also witnessed guests, delegates and participants engaging in discussions and presentations, followed by a cultural performance. Meghalaya's Tourism Minister Bah Paul Lyngdoh was the chief guest of the event.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

1. **Baba and Me : A Journey of Self-Discovery and Spiritual Awakening** —Dr. Soma Ghosh
1. **Be Useful : Seven Tools For Life** —Arnold Schwarzenegger
2. **Shakespeare : The Man Who Pays The Rent** —Judi Dench
3. **The Lords of Wankhede : Tales of Two Titles** —W.V. Raman and R. Kaushik
4. **Farooq of Kashmir** —Ashwani Bhatnagar, R.C. Ganjoo

IMPORTANT DAYS/WEEKS/YEARS

January 2024

National

- January 9 Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day
 January 12 National Youth Day (Birth Day of Swami Vivekanand)
 January 15 Army Day
 January 23 Parakram Diwas (Birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose)

- January 24 National Girl-Child Day
 January 25 National Tourism Day, National Voters Day
 January 26 Republic Day
 January 30 Martyrs' day (Mahatma Gandhi's Martyrdom Day)

International

- January 1 Global Family Day
 January 26 International Customs Day
 January 30 World Leprosy Eradication Day (Last Sunday of January)

Pitambar

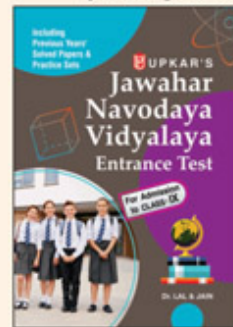
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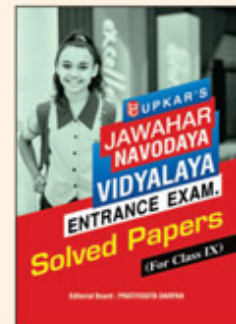
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treatment to heart attack patients in rural areas—will now be called the *Puneeth Rajkumar Hrudaya Jyothi Scheme*.

The scheme is being implemented on a 'hub and spoke' model and through installation of Automated External Defibrillator (AED) devices in public places.

85 hospitals at the district and taluk level will function as 'spoke' centres and ten 'hubs' will be created in 16 super-specialty hospitals, including Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research.

While BPL cardholders will get free treatment in 'hubs' of super specialty hospitals, APL cardholders can avail treatment under Ayushman Bharat Arogya Karnataka Health Scheme.

50 Automated External Defibrillator (AED) devices will be installed in public places including bus stands, railway stations, airport, Vidhana Soudha and High Court in Bengaluru and public places in other major cities.

KERALA

Kerala Becomes First State to Have Hallmarking Centres in All Districts

With the inauguration of a hallmarking centre in Idukki on October 30, 2023, Kerala became the first state in India to have hallmarking centres in all 14 districts. The opening of hallmarking centres across the districts will make Kerala a hub of gold business and further strengthen its claim to being the most reliable market in the country to buy gold ornaments. This achievement has solidified Kerala's position as the first state in India to establish hallmarking centres in all of its 14 districts. The inauguration of these hallmarking centres is a significant step in ensuring the quality and reliability of gold ornaments for consumers.

As per 2022 data, the gold business in Kerala is worth more than ₹ 1 lakh crore with annual sales of around 250 tonnes. There are about 12,000 gold merchants in the State with majority holding BIS registration. Though BIS hallmarking was applicable only to pieces above 2 grams in weight, gold merchants gave hallmarking and hallmarking unique identification numbers even for pieces with weight below two grams. The Bureau of Indian Standards made hallmarking compulsory with a view to protect customers, especially those not aware of the market, from being taken for a ride by jewellers. Hallmarking ensures accurate determination and official recording of the proportionate content of precious metal in the jewellery, artefacts or bullion, and coins.

Mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery/artefacts was successfully implemented under the Hallmarking of Gold Jewellery and Gold Artefacts Order, 2020 in 256 districts across the country from June 23, 2021, and this has gone up to 350 districts. The number of hallmarking centres also increased from 945 to 1500, and the number of licenses availed by jewellery outlets rose to 2 lakh from 34,647 in the beginning.

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Kerala Govt. Announces its State Awards; Eminent Writer T. Padmanabhan Gets Kerala Jyothi Award

Eminent writer T. Padmanabhan was selected for the coveted Kerala Jyothi Award on November 1, 2023 for his great contribution in the field of Malayalam literature. The Kerala Jyothi is the highest civilian award given by the Kerala government.

Justice (Retired) M. Fathima Beevi and Nataraja Krishnamurthy (Soorya Krishnamurthy) have been selected for the 'Kerala Prabha' award considering contributions in the field of social service and civil service and in the field of arts respectively. Others who won the 'Kerala Sree' award include Punalur Somarajan (social service sector), V.P. Gangadharan (health sector), Ravi DC (industry and commerce sector), K.M. Chandrasekhar (civil service sector), Pandit Ramesh Narayan (art, music).

It has been decided to give the 'Kerala Jyothi' award to one person a year, the second highest State award 'Kerala Prabha' to two persons a year, and the third highest State award 'Kerala Shree' to five persons a year considering their contributions in various fields.

Kerala Forms Organic Farming Mission to Boost Climate-Smart farm Practices

The Kerala Government has formed Organic Farming Mission to encourage the adoption of sustainable organic and climate-smart farming practices in the State.

The objective of the mission is to expand organic farming to 5,000 hectares in the State in the next five years through an annual target of 1,000 hectares.

In farms run by the State Agriculture Department, at least 10 per cent of the area will be set aside for organic farming. Another mandate of the mission is to make sure that selected beneficiaries or farms of organic farming schemes pursue the system at least for five years.

In 2010, the Kerala Government had announced the Organic Farming Policy.

The mission will take steps to expand the system for certification, branding and marketing of organic agricultural products from Kerala. An organic farming protocol, which is in sync with protocols prevalent at the national and international levels, will be implemented as part of the activities for improving the marketing potential. The mission will also focus on value addition of organic products.

The mission will also take the initiative to formulate organic farming schemes in every Assembly constituency in Kerala in collaboration with the Krishikootam collectives and farmer producer organisations. A governing council chaired by the Agriculture Minister and an executive committee with members drawn from the heads of government departments and farm sector institutions will manage the affairs of the mission.

MAHARASHTRA

Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Its First Export Promotion Policy

With an objective to create employment opportunities by promoting export in the state, the Maharashtra cabinet

chaired by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on November 8, 2023 approved its first export promotion policy which is to be implemented from the current financial year till 2027-28. The policy is designed to generate an investment of approximately ₹ 25 thousand crore in the state. This policy will benefit about 5000 industries in the state, and also create 40000 employment opportunities and help increase the exports of the state by up to 14%. This policy includes setting up export centers at the district level by promoting export-oriented industries.

The policy aims at increasing exports of the state from 72 billion dollars to 150 billion dollars, to develop 30 export-oriented infrastructure development projects in the state in the next five years and to achieve 22 per cent participation of the state in the target of one-trillion-dollar exports by 2030. Around 5,000 MSMEs and large industrial units in the state will benefit from through the incentives given through the policy, an official said, adding it will also help increase the state's exports to 14 per cent from the current seven per cent by creating 40,000 employment opportunities.

Suresh Wadkar Named for Maharashtra's 'Lata Mangeshkar Award' 2023

Renowned playback singer and national award winner Suresh Ishwar Wadkar was on November 11, 2023 selected for the coveted 'Gansamragini Lata Mangeshkar Award' for 2023 of Maharashtra government. The announcement was made by Cultural Affairs Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar, recognizing Wadkar's remarkable contribution to the world of music. Wadkar's earliest hit numbers were "Sona Kare jhilmil jhilmil" (film 'Paheli'), 'Seene Me Jalan' ('Gaman'), which caught Lata Mangeshkar's attention and she recommended him to other top music composers of the day. Over the years, Wadkar sang for top Hindi and Marathi directors giving memorable hits for 'Krodhi', 'Hum Paanch', 'Pyaasa Sawan', 'Prem Rog', 'Henna', 'Prem Granth', 'Ram Teri Ganga Maili', 'Parinda', and 'Sadma', among others. The award includes a cash prize, a commendation, and a memento, to be presented at a ceremony later.

ODISHA

President Droupadi Murmu Launches "New Education for New India" Campaign in Odisha

President Droupadi Murmu on November 22, 2023 launched a National Education Campaign, titled, "New Education for New India" organized by Brahma Kumari Iswariya University, Sambalpur in her home state Odisha. Focusing on the National Education Policy, Smt. Murmu stressed on teaching in the mother language which she said, can help in the intellectual development of children.

This campaign is envisaged to inculcate values and uplift the consciousness of the students for better society. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that education has always played an important and transformative role in society building. She highlighted that moral and human values like service, equality and sympathy are the

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foundation of our culture and youth should be familiar with these great ideals. They should take care of their elderly parents and people from the deprived sections of society to make a better society. She added that positive attitude towards these values should be created in the minds of children through education.

RAJASTHAN

Handicraft Exports from Rajasthan Likely to Surge Over 10% This Year

Handicraft exports from Rajasthan, a leading contributor to India's handicrafts exports, are expected to see a jump of over 10 per cent this year, according to the industry experts.

The state's blue pottery, marble handicrafts, hand-crafted brass items, miniature paintings, wooden artefacts and hand-printed textiles are famous all over the world.

It exports blue pottery mainly to the Middle East and America, and miniature paintings and wooden handicraft items to the US and Europe.

In the year 2023-24, exports from the state between April to August were higher at around ₹ 750 crore against ₹ 679 crore clocked during the same period last year.

TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu Implements 'Project Dolphin' to Boost Marine Ecology

The Tamil Nadu Government on November 6, 2023 issued an order to implement 'Project Dolphin' to strengthen the marine ecology and overall health of the marine environment under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat programme of the government of India. The scheme to conserve the highly endangered marine mammal will be implemented at a cost of ₹ 8-13 crore. More than nine species of marine dolphins are found in the coastal waters of Tamil Nadu with the major habitats of the dolphins found in the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve.

Dolphins play an important role in keeping the marine environment in balance, it was noted that they face various natural and human-induced threats which include hunting, entanglement in fishing nets, overfishing, climate change, ship strikes, tourism activities, toxic contamination, noise pollution, oil and gas development and habitat degradation. In 2022, seven dolphins were successfully rescued by the state department and released back into the sea at the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve, an area of high productivity with rich marine biodiversity, including marine mammals such as dugongs.

UTTAR PRADESH

Uttar Pradesh Government Eyes 10-12% Share in India's Pharma Sector

The Uttar Pradesh (UP) government has earmarked 2,350 acres of land for setting up mega drug parks as part of its ambitious bid to boost manufacturing and make the

state a market leader in pharmaceutical and medical devices production.

The proposed manufacturing parks will come up in Lalitpur, Pilibhit, and Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida) districts.

The government has roped in top scientific institutions, including the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), as knowledge partners to develop low-cost drugs and medical devices.

UP has signed memorandums of understanding with more than 80 CSIR and DRDO labs for research and development on affordable drugs.

The 2,000-acre Lalitpur park is the flagship project of the government. It will be dedicated to bulk drugs, starting from raw materials and active pharmaceuticals under the state's new pharma policy. The state has signed up Adani Gas for supplying piped natural gas to this park.

Another medical devices park in Sector 28 of the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) in Greater Noida is also proposed to position UP as a leading medical hub in south Asia.

The third medical project entails a modern biotech park in Pilibhit to aid in cutting down on import of fermentation-based goods. Under its pharma sector road-map, UP aims to increase its contribution to India's pharma industry from 2 per cent to 10-12 per cent. India is the global leader in generic medicines by volume, commanding a 20 per cent market share. The domestic pharmaceutical industry, valued at \$ 42 billion in 2021, is estimated to touch \$ 130 billion by 2030. The pharma shipments from India, ranked among top three globally in terms of producing medicines by volume, are valued at \$ 25 billion.

New Initiatives for Expanding Expressway in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is leaving no stone unturned to boost the growth pattern of the state. The focus is on the interlinking of Yamuna Expressway, Agra-Lucknow Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway, Poorvanchal Expressway and last but not the least Ganga Expressway. Uttar Pradesh has got a new identity as an 'Expressway Pradesh' in the last six and a half years. After dedicating the Purvanchal Expressway, and Bundelkhand Expressway to the nation, currently Ganga Expressway, Ballia Link and Gorakhpur Link Expressway are currently being constructed. It is imperative to ensure these projects are completed within stipulated timelines while upholding the highest standards of quality.

- The Chief Minister underlined the need of a link expressway to connect the Agra-Lucknow Expressway and Purvanchal Expressway. "With this project, all the expressways will be connected. He directed the authorities to prepare and present a detailed action plan regarding this link expressway of approximately 60 km."
- CM Yogi highlighted the importance of connecting Farrukhabad district to the Ganga Expressway, urging a study and proposal preparation for the same.

- Bundelkhand Expressway is to be developed as a Solar Expressway. Necessary action should be expedited in this regard.
- Similarly, plantation should be done on the northern slope of Purvanchal Expressway and solar energy projects should be developed on the southern slope. With these efforts, this expressway will be presented as a model on the national stage.
- UP CM said that the budget for the Chitrakoot Link Expressway has also been provisioned. The four-lane (expandable to six-lane) Chitrakoot Link Expressway will be of approximately 14 km. The process of developing industrial clusters on both sides of the Purvanchal-Bundelkhand Expressway, Ganga Expressway, Agra-Lucknow Expressway, and Gorakhpur Link Expressways should be expedited.
- Along the Ganga Expressway, 11 industrial corridors will be developed, six in Bundelkhand, five in Agra-Lucknow, six in Purvanchal, and two in the Gorakhpur Link Expressway.
- The land required for the Ganga Expressway connecting Meerut to Prayagraj has been acquired. Its work has started in November 2022. The aim is to make this expressway available to the general public by December 2024, so that devotees from across the country and the world can take advantage of the journey on the Ganga Expressway in Prayagraj Kumbh 2025. Speed up the work of Ganga Expressway by reviewing it with departmental ministers.

Uttar Pradesh Govt. to Leverage Network of Rivers for Cargo Movement

The Uttar Pradesh government will leverage the network of rivers for low-cost passenger and cargo movement in a bid to achieve merchandise exports of ₹ 3 trillion in 2-3 years. According to experts, since inland waterway terminals are directly connected with sea-ports and dry-ports, they could play a vital role as cheaper transport mediums to boost exports of perishable and non-perishable items at reduced costs.

Of the 111 inland waterways in India, UP has a dozen waterways in major rivers including the Ganga, Yamuna, Saryu, Betwa and Chambal. Currently, the Varanasi-Haldia inland waterway, operated by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), is operational in UP.

Uttar Pradesh government intends to harness the potential of cargo movement through inland waterways to boost exports of farm and dairy produce, as well as micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) items.

The state is now exploring to develop/redevelop other waterways to facilitate passenger and cargo movement since they offer economical routes for intrastate and interstate transportation with little investment.

The state will constitute **UP Inland Waterways Authority** to catalyse the movement of cargo and passengers apart from water sports and tourism. The authority will promote water transport and trade, and offer a viable

medium to export the state's products to other states and countries. The authority would be headed by the UP transport minister with domain experts as members.

In India, inland waterways cargo movement increased from 16 million tonnes (MT) in 2016 to 109 MT in 2021-22. While the operational cost of waterways is much lower compared to train and road transport, it is ecologically amenable too.

In fact, UP has earmarked ₹ 55,000 crore for investing in transport infra projects including roads, expressways and metro rails in the year 2023-24. This is in line with UP's goal of becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2027.

Safe City Project To Enhance Women's Safety Launched By Uttar Pradesh Govt.

The government of Uttar Pradesh in November 2023 launched a Safe City Project to enhance the safety of girls and women in the state. Through the Safe City Project, the government will ensure surveillance through CCTV at the entry and exit points of 17 municipal corporations along with government and non-government schools, madrasahs, colleges and universities in Gautam Buddha Nagar. In the initial phase under the Safe City Project, 17 municipal corporations and 2500 schools of Gautam Buddha Nagar were identified by the state government for installation of CCTV cameras. Out of these, CCTVs are being installed in 1,692 schools while the work of installing them in the remaining schools is going on war footing.

A total of 26,568 CCTVs have been installed in these institutions. These include 68 recognised government schools, 646 aided schools and 1786 unaided schools. CCTVs have been installed in these schools' classrooms, corridors, and entry and exit gates. Under the project, 5,505 cameras were installed in 162 higher educational institutions. These include 21 state degree/PG colleges, 85 aided degree/PG colleges, 49 unaided degree/PG colleges and 7 state universities. This does not include the regional office of Lucknow and colleges under Lucknow University.

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News in Brief

G-20 Virtual Summit

On 22nd November, 2023, The Virtual G20 Summit held under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister Modi. He had proposed a virtual session in November before the end of India's presidency—Brazil will take over the G20 presidency from December 1.

Key Points :

- India holds the G20 Presidency until the 30th of November, 2023.
- The G20 Troika during the Brazilian G20 Presidency in 2024 will comprise India, Brazil, and South Africa.
- The G20 Leaders' Summit declared key features including accelerating progress on SDGs, reforming multilateral development banks, addressing debt vulnerabilities, climate finance, and utilizing digital public infrastructure for financial inclusion.

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Israel Lists Lashkar-e-Taiba as Terror Organisation

Recently, ahead of the 15th anniversary of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, Israel has listed Pakistan-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba as a 'terror organization'.

Israel has announced its intention to list Hamas as a terrorist organization, aligning with its global war on terror efforts and military operation in Gaza Strip. This move follows Israel's request for India to recognize Hamas as a terrorist organization.

USA, UK, **European Union**, Canada, Australia, Japan are among the countries and groupings that have designated Hamas as a terror outfit.

Pakistan and China Navies to Carry Out Maiden Joint Sea Patrol

China and Pakistan are conducting the 3rd edition of the Sea Guardian-3 bilateral naval exercise in the Northern Arabian Sea. China and Pakistan will conduct their first joint maritime patrol. The two sides will also exchange observers.

PB Menon—World's Longest Serving Lawyer

P.B. Menon, a civil lawyer from Palakkad, Kerala, has set a new Guinness World Record for the longest-serving lawyer in the world. He has been a practicing attorney for 73 years and 60 days, making him 97 years old. A lawyer for the Gibraltar government named Louis Triay was listed on the prior record. He spent 70 years and 311 days in practice. After completing his studies at Government Victoria College in Palakkad in 1947, P. B. Menon enrolled at Madras Law College. After working at the Madras High Court for two years, Menon moved his profession to Palakkad.

China Begins Nationwide Population Survey Amid First Drop in Six Decades

China is conducting a population survey of 1.4 million people to gauge population changes amid a declining birth rate and the first population drop in over six decades.

China is experiencing a declining birth rate and a population drop for the first time in over 60 years, with a decrease of approximately 850,000 people in 2022. The 2022 population decline is the first since 1961, which was the last year of China's Great Famine.

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About Grey and Black Lists of the FATF

A nation is placed on a list of 'jurisdictions under increased monitoring' or 'grey list' if its anti-money laundering/combating the financing of terrorism appears to have significant flaws, and on a list of 'high-risk jurisdictions' or 'black list' if it neglects to address FATF concerns.

Government Issued Directives on Deep Fakes

On 8th November, 2023, Indian government instructed Social Media Intermediaries to remove morphed videos or deep fakes within 24 hours of complaint filed, in accordance with IT rules 2021.

About Deep Fake 4

In deep fake Images, Audio, videos are created using Artificial intelligence using a machine learning technique called Generative Adversarial Network (GAN). India's IT rules, 2021 require that all content reported to be fake or produced using deep fake to be taken down by intermediary platform within 36 hours. Deep fakes is being increasingly used by cybercriminals and scammer in recent times.

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Employment And Career News

Staff Selection Commission

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for 'Constable (GD) in Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), SSF, and Rifleman (GD) in Assam Rifles Examination, 2024'.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications—December 31, 2023.

Age Limits—The age of the candidates should not be less than 18 years and not more than 23 years as on January 1, 2024. Candidates should not have been born earlier than January 2, 2001 and not later than January 1, 2006 in normal course. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be conceded as per the government norms.

Essential Educational Qualifications—The candidates must have passed Matriculation or 10th Class Examination from a recognized Board/University.

Scheme of Examination—The Computer Based Examination (CBE) will consist of one objective type paper containing 80 questions carrying 2 marks each. All questions will be of Objective Multiple Choice Type. Successful candidates in the CBE will be invited for the Physical Standard Test (PST) and Physical Efficiency Test (PET).

How to Apply—Applications must be submitted in online mode at the official website of the Commission *i.e.*, <https://ssc.nic.in>.

State Bank of India (SBI)

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for appointment as Circle Based Officer in State Bank of India.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications—December 12, 2023.

Age Limits—Not below 21 years and not above 30 years as on October 31, 2023 *i.e.*, candidates must have been born not later than October 31, 2002 and not earlier than November 1, 1993 (both days inclusive). Relaxation in the upper age limit will be conceded as per the government norms.

Essential Educational Qualifications—Graduation in any discipline from a recognized University or any equivalent qualification recognized as such by the Central Government including Integrated Dual Degree (IDD). Candidates possessing qualifications such as Medical, Engineering, Chartered Accountant, Cost Accountant would also be eligible.

Selection Procedure—The selection process consists of Online Test, Screening and Interview. Online Test will consist of Objective Tests for 120 marks and Descriptive Test for 50 marks. The Descriptive Test will be administered immediately after conclusion of the Objective Test and candidates will have to type their

FORTHCOMING COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS

2023

- Bihar Sipahi (Constable) Recruitment Exam., 2023 (2-30 Dec.)
- UGC-NET/JRF Exam. December 2023 (6-22 Dec.)
- All India Bar Exam., 2023 (10 Dec.)
- Madhya Pradesh P.S.C. State Service Preliminary Exam., 2023 (17 Dec.)
- Madhya Pradesh P.S.C. State Forest Services Preliminary Exam., 2023 (17 Dec.)
- Uttarakhand Review Officer/ Assistant Review Officer (RO/ARO) Preliminary Exam., 2023 (17 Dec.)
- SSC CAPFs/Delhi Police Sub-Inspectors Exam., 2023 (Paper-II) (22 Dec.)
- CSIR-UGC NET/JRF Exam., Dec. 2023 (26, 27, & 28 Dec.)
- IDBI Bank Ltd. Junior Assistant Manager Grade O and Executive (Sales and Operations), 2024-25 (30-31 Dec.)
- IBPS Bank Specialist Officer Preliminary Exam., 2024-25 (30 Dec.)
- State Bank of India P.O. (Main) Exam., 2023 (Dec.-Jan.)
- Rajasthan SSC Information Assistant Direct Recruitment Exam., 2023 (21 Jan.)
- All India Sainik School Entrance Exam., 2024-25 (21 Jan.)
- (Online Closing Date : 16 Dec., 2023)
- Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET) Jan. 2024 (21 Jan.)
- IBPS Bank Specialist Officer Main Exam., 2024-25 (28 Jan.)
- State Bank of India Junior Associates (Customer Support & Sales) Preliminary Exam., 2023 (Jan.)
- SSC Central Armed Police Forces, SSF Constables (GD) and Rifleman (GD) Assam Rifles Exam., 2024 (Feb.-March)
- (Online Closing Date : 31 Dec., 2023)
- State Bank of India Junior Associates (Customer Support & Sales) Mains Exam., 2023 (Feb.)
- Rajasthan SSC Contract Women Health Worker Recruitment Exam., 2023 (3 Feb.)
- Rajasthan SSC Junior Accountant and Tahsil Revenue Accountant Combined Direct Recruitment Exam., 2023 (11 Feb.)
- Rajasthan SSC Computer Direct Recruitment Exam., 2023 (3 March)

2024

- Bihar Sipahi (Constable) Recruitment Exam., 2023 (6-7 Jan.)
- Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Entrance Exam., 2024 (For Class-VI) (20 Jan.)
- Madhya Pradesh P.S.C. State Service Main Exam., 2023 (11-16 March)
- Rajasthan S.S.C. Animal Attendant Direct Recruitment Exam., 2023 (April-June)

Descriptive Test answers on the computer. Successful candidates in the Online Test will move forward to Screening phase of the Selection Procedure.

How to Apply—Candidates can submit their applications in online mode only using the Bank's website <https://bank.sbi/web/careers/current-openings>.

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for appointment as Junior Associate (Customer Support & Sales) in clerical cadre in State Bank of India.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications—December 7, 2023.

Age Limit—Not below 20 years and not above 28 years as on April 1, 2023, *i.e.*, candidates must have been born not earlier than April 2, 1995 and not later than April 1, 2003 (both days inclusive). Relaxation in the upper age limit will be conceded as per the government norms.

Essential Educational Qualifications—Graduation in any discipline from a recognised University or any equivalent qualification recognised as such by Central Government. Candidates having Integrated Dual Degree (IDD) certificate should ensure that the date of passing the IDD is on or before 31.12.2023.

Those who are in the final year/semester of their graduation may also apply provisionally subject to the condition that, if provisionally selected, they will have to produce proof of having passed the graduation examination on or before 31.12.2023.

Selection Procedure—The selection process will consist of online test (Preliminary & Main exam) and test of specified opted local language. Online Preliminary Exam consisting of Objective Tests for 100 marks will be conducted online. This test would be of 1-hour duration consisting of 3 Sections- English Language, Numerical Ability and Reasoning Ability. Successful candidates in the Preliminary Part will move forward to the Mains Part.

How to Apply—Candidates can submit their applications in online mode only using the Bank's website <https://bank.sbi/web/careers/current-openings>.

Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for 'State Service Examination-2023'.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications—December 30, 2023.

Age Limit (January 1, 2023) — The age of the candidate should not be less than 21 years and not more than 30 years as on January 1, 2023 for all posts except Deputy Superintendent of Police post for which the upper age limit is 28 years. Relaxation in the upper age limit will be conceded as per the government norms.

Essential Educational Qualifications—Bachelor's Degree from a Govt. recognized University or Educational Board.

Scheme of Examination—The Selection Procedure will comprise Preliminary Test, Mains Examination and Interview. The Preliminary Test will carry two papers of Objective type multiple choice questions. Successful candidates will be invited for the Mains Examination.

How to Apply—Candidates can submit their applications in online mode only using the website www.psc.cg.gov.in.

Intelligence Bureau

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for Assistant Central Intelligence Officer Grade-II/Executive Examination-2023.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications—December 15, 2023.

Age Limit—The age of the candidate should not be less than 18 years and not more than 27 years as on December 15, 2023.

Essential Educational Qualifications—Graduation or equivalent from a recognized university.

Scheme of Examination—There will be a Written Examination of 100 Objective Type Multiple Choice questions of one mark for each question. There will be a Descriptive Written Examination also. Successful candi-

dates in the Written Part will be invited for the Interview.

How to Apply—Candidates can submit their applications in online mode only using the website www.mha.gov.in or NCS portal www.ncs.gov.in.

Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board

Invites online applications from eligible candidates for 'Welfare Officer / Probation Officer / Prison Welfare Officer Combined Examination -2023'.

Last Date for Submission of Online Applications—January 3, 2024.

Age Limit (As on January 3, 2024)—Not exceeding 30 years.

Essential Educational Qualifications—Master's Degree in Social Work

Or

Master's of Art (Sociology)

Or

Post Graduate Degree in Criminology from a recognized University/Institute.

How to Apply—Eligible candidates may apply online through the Website <https://dsssonline.nic.in>.



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Sports World



Aravinda de Silva, Virender Sehwag and Diana Edulji Inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on November 13, 2023 inducted legendary Sri Lankan batsman Aravinda de Silva, Indian opener Virender Sehwag and Diana Edulji from India into its Hall of Fame list. Former ICC ODI World Cup winners Arvinda and Virender Sehwag have been inducted as part of the Class of 2023 along with pioneering Indian women's cricketer Diana Edulji. De Silva, Edulji and Sehwag will join as inductees number 110, 111 and 112 respectively.

The three legends were honoured during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup semi-final between India and New Zealand at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on November 15.

Former captain Diana Edulji became the first Indian woman cricketer to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. She played 54 matches for India across three decades (between 1976 and 1993) and made her mark as a slow left-arm orthodox spinner taking more than 100 wickets. Edulji played 20 Tests, scoring 404 runs, and taking 63 wickets at an average of 25.77. From 34 ODIs, she scored 211 runs, and bagged 46 wickets at an average of 16.84. But, it is perhaps off the field that Edulji has had an even greater impact, having played a major role as a trailblazer for India's women's cricketers for many decades.

Sehwag scored a total of 23 Test centuries during his illustrious career – the fifth most by an India men's player. His highest score of 319 against South Africa in Chennai in 2008 the best of any Indian player ever. He accumulated 8,586 runs from 104 Tests at an average of 49.34. He also took 40 wickets during his Test

career which spanned from 2001-2013. He totaled 8,273 runs for India in 50-over cricket at an average of 35.05 and his 219 against the West Indies in Indore in 2011 remains the third-highest score achieved by a male cricketer in ODI.

He also has 96 wickets in his kitty from the 251 ODIs he played between 1999 and 2013. Sehwag also played a pivotal role in helping India claim their second World Cup title in 2011, with his 380 runs for the tournament, the seventh-best for any player during the tournament. In the 19 T20 Internationals he played, Sehwag scored 394 runs at an average of 21.88.

De Silva enjoyed a 19-year international career for Sri Lanka, notably playing a starring role in their memorable run to victory at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup in 1996.

Punjab Emerges Champion of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2023-24

Punjab emerged champion of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2023-24 as it prevailed over Baroda by 20 runs in the final on November 6, 2023 at the IS Bindra stadium in Mohali. Batting first, Punjab set the target of 224 runs for Baroda to win the coveted T20 domestic cricket title in India. Punjab's Anmolpreet Singh hit

fabulous ton (113 runs off 61 balls) to help Punjab set such a massive target for Baroda. In reply Baroda could score 203 runs and lost the final by 20 runs. It was Punjab's maiden Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

- Anmolpreet Singh was adjudged the Player of the final match for his 113 runs knock.
- Abhishek Sharma from Punjab was declared Player of the Tournament.
- Mandeep Singh led Punjab to the title glory as the skipper.
- Punjab defeated Delhi in the semi-final while Baroda beat Assam in another semi-final of the event.



India Wins Jharkhand Women's Asian Champions Trophy Ranchi 2023

Host India emerged champion of the Women's Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2023, officially known as Jharkhand Women's Asian Champions Trophy Ranchi 2023 beating defending champion Japan 4-0 in the final on November 05, 2023 at the



Jubilant Indian Women's hockey team in Ranchi

Marang Gomke Jaypal Singh Mundha AstroTurf Hockey Stadium in Ranchi, Jharkhand. Sangita Kumari (17th min), Neha Goyal (46th), Lalremsiami (57th) and Vandana Katariya (60th) were the scorers for the champions in the final as India claimed the continental crown for the second time, having won it in 2016 at Singapore. In this edition of the tournament, India won all seven matches they played, securing a flawless title victory. Sangita Kumari emerged as the top scorer for India, netting a total of six goals throughout the tournament. China's Jiaqi Zhong was the top scorer overall, scoring seven goals.

- India defeated South Korea in the semi-final while Japan pipped China in another semi-final of the Women's continental event in Ranchi.
- In the bronze medal match, China defeated Korea 2-1 to secure the third position.
- The tournament featured a total of six teams, including hosts India, along with China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand. After the round-robin league stage, the top four teams qualified for the semifinals. India had previously won the title in 2016 and secured silver medals in 2013 and 2018.
- Sangita Kumari, the highest goal scorer for India with six goals in the tournament, also won the Rising Star of the Tournament Award.
- Jharkhand's Salima Tete was presented with the Player of the Tournament Award for her performance. Salima not only scored five goals in the tournament but also created crucial opportunities for India inside the circle.

Germany Emerges Champion of the Sultan of Johor Cup 2023; India Claims Bronze

Germany emerged champion of the Sultan of Johor Cup 2023, beating Australia 3-1 in a penalty shootout in the final on November 7, 2023 at the Taman Daya Hockey Stadium in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. Both teams were unable to score during regular playtime, leading to the match being

decided by penalties. This victory marks Germany's second win in the Sultan of Johor Cup with their first victory coming in the 2012 edition. In the penalty shootout, German goalkeeper **Joshua Onyekwue Nnaji** emerged as the hero of the team. He saved three penalty shots taken by Australia's Cooper Burns, Liam Henderson, and Nathan Czinner, securing the victory for Germany. The German team's goals in the shootout were scored by Florian Sperling, Matteo Poljaric, and Michel Struthoff, while Australia's lone goal came from Craig Marais.

Germany's victory in the SOJC 2023 allows them to maintain a perfect record, having won the tournament in both of their appearances in 2012 and 2023.

- It was the 11th edition of Sultan of Johor Cup 2023 in which total 8 junior hockey teams participated.
- Champion Germany defeated India in the semi-final while Australia pipped Pakistan in another semi-final to set the final encounter with Germany.
- In the third-place playoff, India emerged victorious against traditional rivals Pakistan. The match ended in a 3-3 draw, leading to a penalty shootout, which India won 6-5.
- **Matteo Poljaric** of Germany was named the tournament's best player, while Amandeep Lakra of India emerged as the top scorer.



Iga Swiatek Wins WTA Finals 2023 Singles Title; Siegemund and Zvonareva Take Doubles

Poland's Iga Swiatek clinched the WTA Finals 2023 Singles title, the season-ending WTA event on November 7, 2023 in Cancun, Mexico, beating USA's Jessica Pegula in straight sets (6-1,6-0) in the final. It was Swiatek's maiden WTA Finals title triumph. Swiatek did not lose a single set en route to her sixth title of the season and the 17th of her career.

The 22-year-old from Poland is the youngest champion since Petra Kvitova (21) in 2011. Pegula pipped her compatriot Coco Gauff in the semi-final while Swiatek defeated Aryna Sabalenka in another semi-final to secure her seat in the final.

Laura Siegemund of Germany and Vera Zvonareva of Russia won the WTA Finals 2023 doubles title by beating Nicole Melichar-Martinez of the US and Ellen Perez of Australia 6-4, 6-4 in the final.

Novak Djokovic Wins ATP Finals 2023 Singles Crown

Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic emerged champion of the season-ending ATP Finals 2023 Singles title as he trounced local lad Jannik Sinner in straight sets (6-3, 6-3) in the final on November 19, 2023 in Turin, Italy. It was Novak's record 7th ATP Finals Singles title and he got better Roger Federer in terms of number ATP Finals title triumph. Novak defeated Carlos Alcaraz in the semi-final while Sinner beat Daniil Medvedev in another semi-final.

Novak started 2023 with a record-extending 10th Australian Open title and went on to claim his 23rd Grand Slam singles trophy at the French Open, breaking Rafael Nadal's mark. Djokovic, who lost the Wimbledon final to Carlos Alcaraz, also won the US Open. Then he ended the season in champion style with ATP Finals title.



Novak celebrates with his ATP Finals 2023 Singles title in Turin.

Defending champion Rajeev Ram and his British partner Joe Salisbury defeated Marcel Granollers from Spain and Horacio Zeballos from Argentina 6-3,6-4 in the final to retain their ATP Finals Doubles title this year.



BWF French Open 2023; Jonatan Christie and Chen Yufei Win Singles Titles

Jonatan Christie from Indonesia clinched the BWF French Open 2023 Men's Singles title beating Li Shi Feng from China 16-21, 21-15, 21-14 in the final on October 29, 2023 at Glaz Arena, Rennes in France for his first BWF World Tour Super 750 triumph and became Indonesia's first French Open men's singles winner since Taufik Hidayat in 2010. It was the 26-year-old's third title of 2023 after victories in the Super 500 Indonesia Masters and Hong Kong Open. Jonatan Christie defeated Singapore's former world champion Loh Kean Yew in the semi-final of the French Open 2023.

Chinese shuttlers dominated the BWF French Open 2023 by sweeping three major titles including the Women's Singles title. Olympic champion Chen Yufei won back-to-back BWF Tour women's singles titles, easing past Chinese Taipei's Tai Tzu-ying 21-17, 22-20 in the Women's Singles final in the French Open 2023 after she triumphed in the Denmark Open last week against Rio Olympics champion Carolina Marin of Spain. Chinese duo Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin won the French Open 2023 Mixed Doubles title as they prevailed over Tang Chun-man and Tse Ying-suet of Hong Kong, China 21-17, 15-21, 21-12 in the final. Liu Shengshu and Tan Ning from China overcame Jongkolphan Kititharakul and Rawinda Prajongjai of Thailand 26-24, 21-19 in the final to win the women's doubles title.

In the men's doubles final, Denmark's Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen emerged victorious over Indonesian duo Muhammad Shohibul Fikri and Bagas Maulana 21-14, 10-21, 21-18.



Max Verstappen Wins Mexican Grand Prix 2023

Red Bull's triple world champion Max Verstappen became the first

Formula One driver to take 16 victories in a season when he won the Mexican Grand Prix 2023 on October 30, 2023 in Mexico City. Verstappen finished the race fastest in 02 hours, 02 minutes and 30.814 seconds, beating runner-up Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes team by whopping more than 13 seconds. It was Verstappen's third consecutive victory in Mexican GP this year. With this 51st F1 career victory, Verstappen tied Alain Prost for fourth most in F1 history. Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton leads with 103.

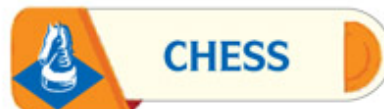
Max Verstappen Wins Brazilian Grand Prix 2023

Extending his single season F1 victory record to 17, Red Bull's star driver Max Verstappen won his fifth race in a row and earned his 17th checkered flag of 2023 on November 5, 2023 at the Interlagos race track in Sao Paulo. Verstappen dominated the Brazil GP race from the pole position to the victory mark as he finished the race fastest in 01 hour, 56 minutes and 48.894 seconds. McLaren's Lando Norris finished runner-up in the race. It was Verstappen's 52nd F1 victory.

Max Verstappen Wins Las Vegas Grand Prix 2023

Reigning F1 World champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull team continued his dominant performance by winning the Las Vegas Grand Prix 2023, the penultimate event of the 2023 season on November 19, 2023 at Las Vegas Street Circuit, the USA. He completed the race in 01 hour, 29 minutes and 08.289 seconds, about 2 seconds faster than the runner-up Charles Leclerc of Ferrari team. Sergio Perez of Red Bull team finished third in the race. It was the 53rd F1 victory of Verstappen's career and 18th of this season so far.

Leclerc was the pole position holder in the race.



R. Vaishali and Vidit Gujrathi Win Titles at FIDE Grand Swiss Chess Tournament 2023

Indian grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi beat Serbia's Alexandr Predke in the 11th round to win Fide

Grand Swiss Chess Tournament 2023 with 8.5 points, happening at the Isle of Man (UK) on November 5, 2023. Vidit Gujrathi beat Alexandr Predke of Serbia to record his seventh victory in the event and take the top spot in open section to win the title

R. Vaishali drew her last-round game against Mongolia's Batkhuyag Munguntuul to win FIDE Women's Grand Swiss 2023 at the Isle of Man in UK on November 5. With their respective title triumphs, both Indian chess players also qualified for the prestigious Candidates tournament to be played in April next year in Canada. Vidit became the second Indian after R. Praggnanandhaato qualify for this tournament. Both Vaishali and Vidit ended with identical 8.5 points apiece and stayed a half point clear of nearest rivals. While Vaishali got richer by over ₹ 20 lakh, Vidit took home a whopping prize purse of over ₹ 66 lakh. Vaishali became the first Indian to win the Grand Swiss.



Pankaj Advani Wins IBSF World Billiards Championship 2023

Pankaj Advani from India emerged champion of the IBSF World Billiards Championship 2023 in Doha, Qatar on November 21, 2023 as he prevailed over compatriot Sourav Kothari with 1000-416 margin in the final. Pankaj clinched the IBSF world title for a staggering 26th time with this impressive victory. He had won his first world title in this competition way back in 2005. While Advani has won the 'long format' for the ninth time, he triumphed in the 'point format' championship on eight occasions, besides winning the World Team Billiards Championship once. In this tournament, Advani defeated fellow Indian cueist Rupesh Shah 900-273 in the semi-finals.



4th Asian Para Games Organized Successfully in Hangzhou, China

4th edition of the Asian Para Games was successfully organized in

Hangzhou, China from October 22 to October 28, 2023. Around 3000 para athletes from 44 countries took part in the 4th Para Asian Games in Hangzhou. The Games officially opened on October 22 with a spectacular opening ceremony themed 'Hearts Meet, Dreams Shine', at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Center, or 'Big Lotus'. The Asian Para Games were declared open by China's Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang in presence of Majid Rashed, President of the Asian Paralympic Committee. With more than 400 athletes, China has the biggest team at the fourth edition of the Asian Para Games, held three years after the country topped the medals table at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. The cauldron of the Games was lit by Para swimmer Xu Jialing.

India had sent its 303 athletes - 191 men and 112 women to the fourth edition of the Asian Para Games making it the country's largest contingent to the continental event. At the 2018 Asian Para Games, India had sent 190 athletes.

China emerged the overall champion of the 4th Asian Para Games in Hangzhou by securing the top spot on the medal tally with total 521 medals including 214 gold medals. Iran finished second on the medal tally with total 131 medals including 44 Golds.

In the Asian Para Games at Hangzhou, India's overall medal haul surged to an impressive 111 comprising 29 gold, 31 silver, and 51 bronze. This remarkable feat superseded India's previous best of 72 medals, which was recorded in the 2018 edition of the Asian Para Games in Indonesia with a contingent of 190 athletes who participated in 13

sporting events. India finished fifth in the Asian Para Games 2023 behind hosts China, Iran, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. Out of the 111 medals, female paraathletes have contributed 40 medals for India.

The 4th Asian Para Games mascot Fei Fei, unveiled online on April 16, 2020, draws inspiration from the divine bird in Liangzhu culture. It symbolizes local legends of happiness. 'Fei', her first 'fly', represents the flight of a bird, signifying a spirit of tolerance, respect, and friendship in society. The second 'fly' signifies the determination of disabled athletes who are pursuing their dreams.

The Games came to a successful conclusion on October 28, 2023 in Hangzhou. The next games are scheduled to be held in Nagoya, Japan, between October 14 and October 22, 2026.

79th National Squash Championships 2023 : Velavan Senthilkumar and Anahat Singh Win Titles

Velavan Senthilkumar from Tamil Nadu and Anahat Singh from Delhi won their maiden men's and women's titles, respectively in the 79th National Squash Championships at the Indian Squash and Triathlon Academy (ISTA) in Chennai on November 23, 2023. The 15-year-old Anahat is the second youngest ever to have won the women's title. Joshna Chinappa was 14 when she won the first of her 19 titles in 2000. Anahat defeated Tanvi 11-09, 11-04 in the final to win her maiden national squash title. Local favourite Velavan Senthilkumar bagged the men's title, beating Abhay Singh 12-10, 11-3, 12-10 in the final.

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4th Asian Para Games Medal Tally : Top 10 Countries

Rank	Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	China	214	167	140	521
2	Iran	44	46	41	131
3	Japan	42	49	59	150
4	South Korea	30	33	40	103
5	India	29	31	51	111
6	Indonesia	29	30	36	95
7	Thailand	27	26	55	108
8	Uzbekistan	25	24	30	79
9	Philippines	10	04	05	19
10	Hong Kong	08	15	24	47

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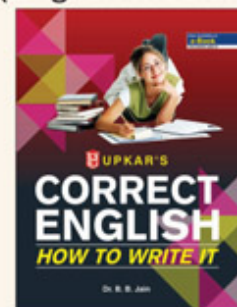
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UPKAR PRAKASHAN, AGRA-5



Australia Wins ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023 for Record-Extending 6th Time

The ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023, the 13th edition of the international cricket event, was successfully organized from October 5 to November 19, 2023 in different venues in India. Total 10 countries took part in this mega event, comprising total 48 matches in this world cup including the final. First match of the ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023 was played between 2019 champion England and New Zealand on October 5, 2023. New Zealand won the first match of the World Cup.

After league matches, New Zealand, South Africa, Australia and host India secured their places in the semi-final of the event. In the first semi-final, India emerged victorious against New Zealand by 70 runs in Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai while Australia defeated South Africa by 3 wickets in the second semi-final in Eden Gardens, Kolkata. India came into the final with 10 wins on the trot.

Australia emerged champion of the ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023, beating host India by 6 wickets on November 19, 2023 at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad. Australia won the toss in the final and asked Team India to bat first. Indian batting collapsed miserably in the final and set just 241 runs target before Australia which chased down the target at its 4 wickets cost with 7 overs to spare. Australia's Travis Head scored fabulous 137 runs knock off 120 deliveries and helped his team win the title easily. He was later adjudged the Player of the Final. It was Australia's record-extending 6th ICC Men's ODI World Cup 2023. Australia won their first ODI World Cup in 1987 (India) and followed it up with titles in 1999 (England), 2003 (South Africa), 2007 (West Indies), 2015 (Australia) and now, 2023 (India again).

● Apart from the four semi-finalists, England, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Netherlands and Afghanistan were the

other participating teams in the 2023 ICC Men's ODI World Cup.

- Rohit Sharma was the skipper of the Indian team while Pat Cummins was the captain of the champion Australian team.
- India's Virat Kohli ended as the top-scorer at the 2023 ODI World Cup with 765 runs while his teammate Mohammed Shami, with 24 wickets, was the top wicket-taker in the 2023 ODI World Cup.
- Virat Kohli was declared Player of the Tournament. He finished with 765 runs in 11 games with an average of 95-62.
- Sri Lanka all-rounder Angelo Mathews scripted an unwanted record as he became the first ever batter to be timed out in the history of international cricket during the World Cup 2023 group match against Bangladesh in New Delhi on November 6.
- India's Virat Kohli scripted history by becoming the first batsman to score 50 centuries in ODI cricket, breaking the record of 49 ODI centuries of Indian legend Sachin Tendulkar. Kohli scored his record-setting 50th ODI century in the first semi-final of the World Cup against New Zealand on November 15.



Champion Australian team in Ahmedabad

ICC Announces Its World Cup 2023 Team; India's Rohit Sharma Chosen as Captain of the Squad

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on November 20, 2023 declared its World Cup 2023 team soon after the conclusion of the ICC Men's

World Cup 2023 a day earlier. Despite finishing the World Cup as the captain of the runner-up team, India's Rohit Sharma was named captain of ICC's World Cup 2023 XI which has as many as six Indians in it. Apart from captain Rohit, the other Indians who made it into the team of the tournament which has players from five teams, are Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami. The other five members of the World Cup XI were from champions Australia (2), semi-finalists South Africa (1) and New Zealand and Sri Lanka (1). All-rounder Glenn Maxwell and leg-spinner Adam Zampa were the only Aussies in the XI.

The selection panel consisted of Ian Bishop, Kass Naidoo, Shane Watson (Commentators), Wasim Khan (ICC General Manager, Cricket) and Sunil Vaidya (Journalist, Ahmedabad Mirror). India captain Rohit had a terrific World Cup with the bat, scoring 597 runs - the second-most after teammate Virat Kohli - in 11 matches at a dominating strike rate of 125.

The team of the ICC Men's World Cup 2023 (in batting order) :

- Quinton de Kock (wk) (South Africa) —594 runs at 59-40
- Rohit Sharma (c) (India)—597 runs at 54-27
- Virat Kohli (India) —765 runs at 95-62
- Daryl Mitchell (New Zealand) —552 runs at 69
- KL Rahul (India)—452 runs at 75-33
- Glenn Maxwell (Australia)—400 runs at 66-66 and six wickets at 55
- Ravindra Jadeja (India) —120 runs at 40 and 16 wickets at 24-87
- Jasprit Bumrah (India)—20 wickets at 18-65
- Dilshan Madushanka (Sri Lanka)—21 wickets at 25
- Adam Zampa (Australia)—23 wickets at 22-39
- Mohammed Shami (India)—24 wickets at 10-70
- 12th player : Gerald Coetzee (South Africa) —20 wickets at 19-80

Pisapan

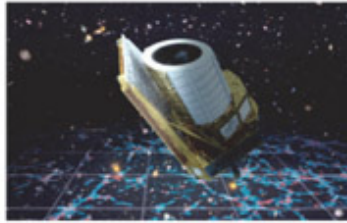


Science & Technology

Euclid Telescope Launched to Search the World of Dark Matter

Euclid space telescope is designed to explore the evolution of the dark universe. It will make a 3D-map of the Universe (with time as the third dimension) by observing billions of galaxies, out to 10 billion light years, across more than a third of the sky.

While dark energy accelerates the expansion of the Universe and dark matter governs the growth of cosmic structures, scientists remain unsure about what dark energy and dark matter actually are.



Euclid Space Telescope

By observing the Universe, evolving over the past 10 billion years, Euclid will reveal how it has expanded and how structure has formed over cosmic history, and from this, astronomers can infer the properties of dark energy, dark matter and gravity to reveal more about their precise nature.

This addresses two core themes of ESA's Cosmic Vision programme : What are the fundamental physical laws of the Universe ? How did the Universe originate and what is it made of ?

Key Questions :

Euclid is designed to tackle some of the most important questions in cosmology.

- What is the structure and history of the cosmic web ?
- What is the nature of dark matter ?
- How has the expansion of the Universe changed over time ?
- What is the nature of dark energy ?
- Is our understanding of gravity complete ?

The Euclid spacecraft is approximately 4.7 m tall and 3.7 m in diameter. It consists of two major components : the service module and the payload module.

The payload module comprises a 1.2-m-diameter telescope and two scientific instruments : a visible-wavelength camera (the Visible instrument, VIS) and a near-infrared camera/spectrometer (the Near-Infrared Spectrometer and Photometer, NISP). The service module contains the satellite systems : electric power generation and distribution, attitude control, data processing electronics, propulsion, telecom and telemetry and thermal control.

Its operational orbit will be halo around a point known as the Sun-Earth Lagrange point 2 (L2), at an average distance of 1.5 million km beyond Earth's orbit. This special location keeps pace with Earth as we orbit the Sun (and also hosts ESA's Gaia and Webb space telescopes).

Euclid will take images in optical and near-infrared light; these images will eventually cover more than one-third of the extragalactic sky, outside the Milky Way, and depict billions of cosmic targets out to a distance where light has taken up to 10 billion years to reach us.

Euclid's image quality will be at least four times sharper than that achieved by ground-based sky surveys.

In addition, Euclid will perform near-infrared spectroscopy of hundreds of millions of galaxies and stars over the same sky. This will allow scientists to investigate the chemical and kinematical properties of many targets in detail.

Euclid will build up a large archive of unique data, unprecedented by volume for a space-based mission, enabling research over all disciplines in astronomy.

Euclid's mass in orbit is 2 tonnes (including 800 kg of payload module, an 850 kg service module, 40 kg of balancing mass and 210 kg of propellant).

Euclid is a fully European mission, built and operated by ESA with contributions from NASA. The Euclid Consortium, consisting of more than 2000 scientists from 300 institutes in 13 European countries, the US, Canada and Japan—provided the scientific instruments and scientific data analysis.

MRI Data Reveal Connection Between Heart and Brain Health

Multiorgan MRI from over 40,000 U.K. Biobank participants reveal the intertwined nature of heart and brain health (Science). The findings provide insights into a multiorgan perspective on human health and could help identify new potential therapeutic targets. Cardiovascular diseases have been implicated in the pathology of several brain diseases and patients with mental and cognitive problems show an increased incidence of cardiovascular disease.



Brain and Heart

Astronomers Find a Planet, Halla, that should not Exist

When our sun reaches the end of its life, it will expand to 100 times its current size, enveloping the earth. Astronomers have now discovered a planet's survival after what should have been certain demise at the hands of the sun. The Jupiter-like planet Halla orbits the red giant star, Baekdu, at only half the distance separating the earth and the sun. But, Halla has managed to persist in the immediate vicinity of a giant star that would have otherwise engulfed it.

Global Photosynthesis Rate has Slowed Despite Increase in Carbon Dioxide

A team of Earth scientists of U.S. has found evidence that the rise in photosynthesis rates, around the world caused by increase of carbon dioxide, has slowed dramatically. In their research, reported in the journal *Science*, the group measured changes in global photosynthesis rates over the past several decades.

During photosynthesis, plants convert CO₂ and water into carbohydrates and release oxygen. Therefore, they are considered to be carbon sinks. Prior research has shown that as levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere rose over the past century, plants have taken advantage of the increase in the gas by speeding up photosynthesis and have been taking more carbon out of the atmosphere.



To learn more about the global rate of photosynthesis, the researchers studied data collected by ground monitors around the world during the years 1982 to 2016. Such monitors collect environmental statistics, such as the amounts of CO₂ and water in the air.

The team also collected satellite images of regions covered by foliage. They then trained multiple machine-learning applications with the images to find difficult-to-see changes, such as colours of leaves, that reveal rates of photosynthesis.

Next, the team created models with the resulting data to graphically illustrate changes in global synthesis rates since the year 2000 to the present. They then used the models to predict future changes.

The researchers found that as CO₂ levels rose over the last century, global rates of photosynthesis rose along with them accordingly. But starting in the year 2000, things changed. The rise of photosynthesis rates began to slow, and they may stop rising altogether in the near future as the planet grows warmer and drier.

Billion-light-year-wide 'Bubble of Galaxies' Discovered

Astronomers have discovered the first "bubble of galaxies", an almost unimaginably huge cosmic structure thought to be a fossilized remnant from just after the Big Bang sitting in our galactic backyard. The bubble spans a billion light years, making it 10,000 times wider than the Milky Way Galaxy.

This giant bubble, which cannot be seen by the naked eye, is a relatively close 820 million light years away from our home galaxy, in what astronomers call the nearby universe. The bubble can be thought of as "a spherical shell with a heart," Daniel Pomarede, an astrophysicist at France's Atomic Energy Commission, said. Inside that heart is the Bootes supercluster of galaxies, which is surrounded by a vast void sometimes called "the Great Nothing". The shell contains several other galaxy superclusters already known to science, including the massive structure known as the Sloan Great Wall.

Pomarede said the discovery of the bubble, which is described in research, he co-authored and that was published in *The Astrophysical Journal* was "part of a very long scientific process". It confirms a phenomenon first described in 1970 by US cosmologist and future physics Nobel winner—Jim Peebles. He theorized that in the primordial universe—then a stew of hot plasma—the churning of gravity and radiation created sound waves called baryon acoustic oscillations (BAOs). As the sound waves rippled through the plasma, they created bubbles. Around 380,000 years after the Big Bang, the process stopped as the universe cooled down, freezing the shape of the bubbles. The bubbles then grew larger as the universe expanded, similar to other fossilized remnants from the time after the Big Bang.

Astronomers previously detected signals of BAOs in 2005 when looking at data from nearby galaxies. But the newly discovered bubble is the first known single baryon acoustic oscillation, according to the researchers. It may be the first, but more bubbles could soon be spotted across the universe. Europe's Euclid space telescope, which launched in July, takes in a wide view of the universe, potentially enabling it to snare some more bubbles. Massive radio telescopes called the Square Kilometre Array, being built in South Africa and Australia, could also offer a new image of galaxies from the viewpoint of the Southern Hemisphere, Pomarede said.

Study Reveals Population Decline in Human Ancestors

Between 8,000,000 and 9,000,000 years ago, the human ancestor population crashed. The study suggests that there were only about 1,280 breeding individuals then, and the population bottleneck lasted for about 1,17,000 years. About 98.7% of the ancestral population was lost at the beginning of the bottleneck. This decline coincided with climate changes that turned glaciations into long-term events, a decrease in marine surface temperatures, and a possible long period of drought in Africa and Eurasia.



Data Reveal Homo Adaptation to Highly Fluctuating Environments

Homo species particularly *Homo sapiens* were uniquely equipped to adapt to diverse environments (Science), which may have enabled our species and that of our closely related ancestors to survive in highly fluctuating Pleistocene environments. Whether this is because our species was uniquely successful at adapting to Pleistocene environments, because we outcompeted other contemporary *Homo* species, or because we simply outlived others by chance, remains largely unknown.





Memorable Points

NATIONAL

- Who has been appointed as the 'UPI Safety Ambassador' by NPCI? —Pankaj Tripathi
✎ National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on November 7, 2023 announced the appointment of acclaimed Bollywood actor Pankaj Tripathi as its 'UPI Safety Ambassador' to strengthen safety awareness on digital payment platforms. This strategic partnership aims to address growing concerns about the safety of digital payment systems, particularly the United Payments Interface (UPI). In a video, the acclaimed Bollywood actor shed light on various initiatives by NPCI, including UPI, RuPay and IMPS, aimed at simplifying digital payments and ensuring their security.
- Who has been sworn in as the Chief Information Commissioner of India? —Heeralal Samariya
✎ Information Commissioner Heeralal Samariya was on November 6, 2023 sworn in as the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) in Central Information Commission by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. After it, Mr. Heeralal administered the oath of office to Information Commissioners Smt. Anandi Ramalingam and Mr. Vinod Kumar Tiwari at a swearing-in ceremony organized in Central Information Commission. A 1985 batch officer of the Telangana cadre, Mr. Heeralal was appointed as an information commissioner on November 7, 2020. Samariya, 63, takes over as CIC after the retirement of Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha who retired in October this year.
- Who has been announced as the Brand Ambassador of West Bengal? —Sourav Ganguly
✎ West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on November 21, 2023 announced former Indian cricket captain Sourav Ganguly as the brand ambassador for the state at the Bengal Global Business Summit 2023 in Kolkata, acknowledging his popularity and 'his potential to positively influence the younger generation. The Bengal Global Business Summit 2023 an annual event, was organized in Kolkata on November 21 and 22. It has attracted participation from several hundred companies across 17 countries, including the UK, US, Australia, Korea, Japan, Germany, and France.
- Perumal Murugan won the 2023 JCB Prize for Literature for his book —Fire Bird
✎ Eminent Tamil writer Perumal Murugan's novel 'Fire Bird', translated into English by Janani Kannan, won the 2023 JCB Prize for Literature in New Delhi on November 18, 2023. The chair of the five-member jury of the JCB Prize, author Srinath Perur, said, "In 'Fire Bird', Murugan takes a universal story of lives that are tied to land and tells it with astonishing particularity. The award was announced virtually by Lord Bamford, Chairman of JCB Group, and awarded in person by Deepak Shetty, CEO and Managing Director, JCB India Limited. The JCB Literary Prize award carries ₹ 25 lakh to the author and an additional ₹ 10 lakh to the translator.
- Which state won the first prize for best state in Inland Fisheries (plain areas)? —Uttar Pradesh
✎ Uttar Pradesh won the best state award in the inland fisheries category On November 21, 2023 in Ahmedabad during the Global Fisheries Conference 2023. November 21 is celebrated as World Fisheries Day. Uttar Pradesh has produced 26-44 lakh MT of fish during the last four years. It is the visionary thought process of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath that the state has bagged the top spot in inland fish rearing. Last year, the fish production was 8-09 lakh metric tonnes, while it is 9-15 lakh metric tonnes this year.
- How many cities from India have been included in UNESCO's Creative Cities Network this year? —Two Cities-Gwalior and Kozhikode
✎ Kozhikode in Kerala and Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh were included in the prestigious UNESCO Creative Cities Network, adding to the list of 55 new cities worldwide by UNESCO on October 31, 2023. Kozhikode, the venue of choice for the Kerala Literature Festival and several book festivals, was named the 'City of Literature' by the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) making it the first such city in India. Gwalior was declared the 'City of Music' by UNESCO. This is a fitting honour for the city that produced the legendary musician Tansen and where the Scindia Gharana has preserved and propagated music for centuries. UNESCO has shared the full list of the new 55 cities, which include Bukhara (Crafts and Folk Art), Casablanca (Media Arts), Chongqing (Design), Kathmandu (Film), Rio de Janeiro (Literature), and Ulaanbaatar (Crafts and Folk Art). World Cities Day, designated by the United Nations, falls on October 31.
- President launched a National Education Campaign, titled, "New Education for New India" in —Odisha
✎ President Droupadi Murmu on November 22, 2023 launched a National Education Campaign, titled, "New Education for New India" organized by Brahma Kumari Iswariya University, Sambalpur in her home state Odisha. Focusing on the National Education Policy, Smt. Murmu stressed on teaching in the mother language which she said, can help in the intellectual development of children.
- India successfully test-fired its surface-to-surface short-range ballistic missile named —Pralay
✎ India on November 7, 2023 successfully test-fired its surface-to-surface short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) 'Pralay' from the Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast. The missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is a 350-500 km short-range, surface-to-surface missile with a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg. The solid-fuel, battlefield missile is based on the Prithvi Defence Vehicle.

- Which team clinched Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2023-24 recently ? —Punjab
 - ✎ Punjab emerged champion of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2023-24 as it prevailed over Baroda by 20 runs in the final on November 6, 2023 at the IS Bindra stadium in Mohali. Punjab defeated Delhi in the semi-final while Baroda beat Assam in another semi-final of the event. Abhishek Sharma from Punjab was declared Player of the Tournament.

INTERNATIONAL

- Which countries were removed from FATF's Grey List recently ? —Panama, Jordan, Albania and Cayman Islands
 - ✎ The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter-governmental body that sets anti-money laundering standards removed offshore tax haven Cayman Islands, Panama, Jordan and Albania from its 'grey list' on October 27, 2023. However FATF added Bulgaria in its Grey list. Such steps are taken to ensure that countries strengthen their Anti-Money Laundering (AML), Counter Terrorism Financing (CFT) and proliferation of financing systems.
- Luc Frieden becomes the new Prime Minister of —Luxembourg
 - ✎ Luxembourg's former finance minister Luc Frieden became new Prime Minister of Luxembourg in November 2023 leading a government coalition of his Christian democratic party and the liberal party of former Prime Minister Xavier Bettel. The coalition led by Frieden holds a majority of 35 seats in the 60-seat Luxembourg parliament. In the new government, Bettel took the role of foreign affairs minister, after leading Luxembourg for 10 years. Gilles Roth (CSV) was named as new finance minister.
- Which country became the 95th member of the International Solar Alliance ? —Chile
 - ✎ Chile joined the International Solar Alliance as its 95th member on November 6, 2023 as Chile was handed over the ISA instrument during the meeting of Chilean Ambassador Juan Angulo and the Ministry of External Affairs, Joint Secretary (Economic Diplomacy) Abhishek Singh in New Delhi. The ISA is an alliance of more than 120 signatory countries that aims to reduce the dependence on non-renewable sources of energy like fossil fuels. It was conceived as a joint effort by India and France. Currently, 116 countries are signatories to the ISA Framework Agreement.
- Which country inaugurated the world's largest single-site solar power plant ? —The UAE
 - ✎ The 2-gigawatt Al Dhafra Solar Photovoltaic Independent Power Project, the world's largest single-site solar power plant was inaugurated by Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Ruler of Abu Dhabi on November 17, 2023. The plant is located 35 kilometers from Abu Dhabi city and will generate enough electricity to power almost 200,000 homes. The plant is expected to displace 2-4 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually. Al Dhafra Solar PV spans more than 20 square kilometers of desert and created 4,500 jobs during the peak of the construction phase. It uses almost 4 million solar panels which deploy innovative bi-facial technology, ensuring sunlight is captured on both sides of the panels to maximize yield.
- Which Pakistan-based cleantech startup won 'Climate Launchpad Asia-Pacific' competition ? —She-Guard
 - ✎ Pakistan-based cleantech startup She-Guard has been named the winner at the 'Climate Launchpad Asia-Pacific' finals in November 2023 with its innovative biodegradable and plastic-free sanitary product. The She-Guard startup aims to turn banana crop waste into biodegradable, plastic-free, and affordable sanitary napkins, helping to solve the entangled challenges of climate change, health issues, and solid waste that Pakistan is facing. She-Guard competed with 172 other teams from six countries in the Asia-Pacific in the finals, hosted by the national partner Centre for Creativity & Sustainability and funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland (Irish Aid).
- Who has been crowned Miss Universe 2023 ? —Sheynnis Palacios from Nicaragua
 - ✎ Sheynnis Palacios from Nicaragua was crowned Miss Universe 2023 on November 18, 2023 at the Jose Adolfo Pineda Arena in San Salvador, El Salvador. She is the first winner from Nicaragua to win the international beauty pageant. Miss Thailand Anntonia Porsild emerged as the first runner-up and Miss Australia Moraya Wilson was named the second runner-up at the event. It was the 72nd edition of the Miss Universe beauty pageant.
- Which cricket body was suspended by the ICC recently ? —Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC)
 - ✎ The International Cricket Council (ICC) suspended the Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) from its membership with immediate effect on November 10, 2023 because of extensive government interference in the SLC administration. The development comes days after the sports minister of Sri Lanka sacked the entire SLC board over the allegations of corruption. Later, the decision was overturned by Sri Lanka's Court of Appeals as it reinstated all the officials pending a full hearing. The suspension will not have any immediate serious impact on Sri Lankan cricket. SLC is the second Full Member to be suspended by ICC in the last four years after Zimbabwe Cricket was suspended in 2019 for similar reasons.
- Which team emerged champion of the Sultan of Johor Cup 2023 ? —Germany
 - ✎ Germany clinched the Sultan of Johor Cup 2023, beating Australia 3-1 in a penalty shootout in the final on November 7, 2023 at the Taman Daya Hockey Stadium in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. Both finalists were unable to score during regular playtime, leading to the match being decided by penalties. This victory marks Germany's second win in the Sultan of Johor Cup with their first victory coming in the 2012 edition. In the penalty shootout, German goalkeeper **Joshua Onyekwue Nnaji** emerged as the hero of the team. It was the 11th edition of Sultan of Johor Cup 2023 in which total 8 junior hockey teams participated.

Florian



Economic Scenario

Schemes for Achieving Gender Equality and Emancipation of Rural Women

Government of India is implementing various schemes/programmes for achieving gender equality and emancipation of women including rural women such as :

1. **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)** : to address the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of empowerment of women over a life-cycle continuum. It is a tri-ministerial effort of Ministries of Women and Child Development, Health & Family Welfare and Human Resource Development.
2. **Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)**, (erstwhile Maternity Benefit Programme) to contribute towards better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and nursing mothers.
3. **Scheme for Adolescent Girls** aims at girls in the age group 11-14, to empower and improve their social status through nutrition, life skills, home skills and vocational training.
4. **National Nutrition Mission (NNM)** : aims to attain a 'Suposhit Bharat' and has also the objective of improving the nutritional status of pregnant women and lactating mothers and reducing anaemia among women along with children.
5. **Rastriya Mahila Kosh (RMK)**, for extending micro-finance services to bring about socio-economic upliftment of poor women.
6. **Mahila e-Haat**, a unique direct online digital marketing platform for women entrepreneurs/SHGs/NGOs.
7. **Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra**, which will empower rural women through community

participation to create an environment in which they realize their full potential,

8. The Ministry also conducts **Training of Trainers of Elected Women Representatives of Panchayati Raj** to deliberate upon issues related to empowerment of women and functioning of PRIs; describe processes of participatory planning in local governance; and enable women to identify their own leadership potential to contribute effectively as change agents.
9. **PM-Jan dhan Yojna**, started on 28 August, 2014, provided opportunity to poor and marginalized people, particularly the women to open zero balance accounts in banks. This is the largest financial inclusion initiative in the world. Women are the largest group of beneficiaries under this programme.
10. **PM SVANidhi Scheme**. The share of females in the PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme at 43 per cent indicates the empowerment of entrepreneurial capabilities among urban women. This empowerment of urban females makes the scheme a gender equalize.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing various schemes/programmes for **combating all forms of discrimination and violence against women** in the country including rural women such as :

1. **One Stop Centres (OSCs)** : For facilitating access to an integrated range of services including police, medical, legal, psychological support and temporary shelter to women affected by violence.
2. **Women Helpline** : To provide women with a 24x7 service, Women Helplines with the uniform code 181 have been set up across the country. These Helplines provide 24 hour emer-

gency response to women affected by violence, and also provide counselling through phone and awareness about government schemes.

3. **Mahila Police Volunteers** : The Ministry, in collaboration with MHA has recently started the engagement of Mahila Police Volunteers (MPVs) in States/UTs. These MPVs will act as a link between police and community and facilitate women in distress.
4. **Swadhar Greh** : This scheme caters to primary needs of women in difficult circumstances.
5. **Ujjawala** : A comprehensive scheme to prevent trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual exploitation, to facilitate rescue victims and placing them in safe custody, to provide rehabilitation services by providing basic amenities/needs, to facilitate reintegration of victims into the family and society, to facilitate repatriation of cross border victims.

India is Keen to have a Free-Trade Agreement with Eurasian Economic Union

Eurasian Economic Union comprises five countries—the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan. Russia is not only the largest country in the bloc but also the biggest trade partner, with a share of 9.8 per cent in 2022-23. India showed its keenness to have a free-trade agreement with EAEU. The pact, if materialised, will strengthen the bilateral commercial relationship between India and Russia.

The Eurasian Economic Union is an international organization for regional economic integration. It has international legal personality and is established by the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union. The Treaty was signed on May 29, 2014 and came into force on January 1, 2023.

INDIA-EAEU TRADE IN FY23

Country	Exports (in \$ mn)	Growth (%)	Imports (in \$ mn)	Growth (%)	Total trade
Kazakhstan	436.5	85.6	205.1	-37	641.6
Kyrgyzstan	52.4	59.2	4.2	133.6	56.6
Armenia	62.4	123.4	72.9	46	135.3
Belarus	43.91	-32.8	67.9	-82.2	111.81
Russia	3,146.9	-3.31	46,212.7	368.2	49,359.6

Source: Department of Commerce

The EAEU provides for free movement of goods, services, capital and labor, pursues coordinated, harmonized and single policy in the sectors determined by the Treaty and international agreements within the Union.

The initial stage of discussions on free trade pact between India and EAEU is underway. India has sought the latest trade data from all the five countries for its own assessment. Discussions have been going on for some time, but it is taking time.

During 2022-23, India's total trade with the EAEU was \$50.3 billion, of which trade with Russia was \$49.3 billion, followed by Kazakhstan (641.6 million), Armenia (\$135.3 million), Belarus (\$111.8 million), and Kyrgyzstan (\$56.6 million).

FATF Removes Offshore Tax haven Cayman Islands from its 'Grey List'

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter-governmental body that sets anti-money laundering standards, has removed offshore tax haven Cayman Islands from its 'grey list'. Besides Cayman, Panama, Jordan, and Albania have been removed from the list, which requires jurisdictions to be placed under increased monitoring until the identified deficiencies are resolved in their framework. In its review published on October 27, FATF has added Bulgaria in the grey list.

Such steps are taken to ensure that countries strengthen their anti-money laundering (AML), counter terrorism financing (CTF) and proliferation of financing systems.

Cayman was added to the grey list in 2021. The Caribbean Island was in the news during the probe into charges made by Hindenburg Research against the Adani group. Some foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) linked to the investigations were domiciled there.

Fincare SFB to Merge with AU Small Finance Bank

AU Small Finance Bank announced the merger of Fincare Small Finance Bank with itself on October 29, 2023. The AU Small Finance Bank will acquire Fincare Small Finance Bank in an all-stock transaction valued at ₹4,411 crore. The move is aimed at extending the bank's footprint in southern India and entering the microfinance sector.

The scheme of merger is subject to approval of the respective shareholders of the AU SFB and Fincare SFB, the Reserve Bank of India and the Competition Commission of India (CCI). According to AU SFB's exchange filing, the merged entity should take effect from February 1, 2024, suggesting that the deal should conclude in FY24 subject to regulatory approvals.

The share exchange ratio for the amalgamation shall be 579 equity shares of face value of ₹10 each of AU SFB for every 2,000 equity shares of face value of ₹10 each of Fincare SFB.

AU Small Finance Bank Limited has total assets of ₹95,977 crore, net worth of ₹11,763 crore as on September 30, 2023, and Turnover of ₹9,240 crore, profit after tax of ₹1,428 crore for the year ended on March 31,

2023 and ₹789 crore for the half year ended September 30, 2023.

Fincare Small Finance Bank Limited has total assets of ₹14,777 crore, net worth of ₹1,539 crore, turnover of ₹1,360 crore and profit after tax of ₹219 crore as on September 30, 2023, and Total Assets of ₹12,467 crore, net Worth of ₹1,314 crore, turnover of ₹1,970 crore, profit after tax of ₹104 crore for the year ended on March 31, 2023

One Nation, One Student ID : APAAR

APAAR, an acronym for Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry, is a specialized identification system designed for all students in India, beginning from an early age.

- Under this program, every student will receive a lifelong APAAR ID, streamlining the process of tracking academic progress from pre-primary education to higher education for students, schools, and government authorities.
- The introduction of APAAR aims to simplify the educational process and reduce the burden of carrying physical documents for students.
- This initiative has been launched as a component of the National Education Policy 2020 by the Ministry of Education.
- Each individual will possess a unique APAAR ID, linked to the Academic Bank Credit (ABC), a digital repository housing information about the credits earned by students throughout their educational journey.
- With the APAAR ID, students can digitally store all their certificates and credits, whether obtained through formal education or informal learning.
- When a student completes a course or accomplishes a milestone, it receives digital certification and is securely stored by authorized institutions.
- In the event of a student transferring to a different school, either within the state or to another state, all their data in the ABC will seamlessly migrate to

the new school simply by sharing the APAAR ID. There is no need to present physical documents or transfer certificates.

- To enroll in the APAAR system, students must provide basic information including their name, age, date of birth, gender, and a photograph. This data will be cross-verified using their Aadhar number.
- The Aadhar number is used exclusively for verification to match the name and date of birth. APAAR will not utilize or share these details with any other entity during registration.
- Students have the choice to either accept or decline the sharing of their Aadhar number and demographic information with the Ministry of Education for the purpose of creating the APAAR ID.
- For minors, parental consent is necessary, allowing the Ministry to use the student's Aadhar number for authentication through UIDAI.
- Registration for the creation of the APAAR ID is voluntary and not mandatory.
- The information provided by students will remain confidential and will not be shared with any third party, except for entities involved in educational activities, such as the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) database, which contains data related to schools, teachers, and students.
- Students have the option to cease sharing their information with these entities at any time, and data processing will cease upon withdrawal of consent, although any personal data already processed will remain unaffected.

PM Modi & Sheikh Hasina Inaugurate Three Indian-Assisted Development Projects

Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina on November 1, 2023 jointly inaugurated three Indian-

assisted development projects via a video conference call.

The three projects are :

1. **Akhaura-Agartala Cross-Border Rail Link** : The project has been executed under the Government of India grant assistance of ₹ 392-52 crore extended to Bangladesh. The length of the rail link is 12-24 km with a 6-78 km Dual Gauge rail line in Bangladesh and 5-46 km in Tripura.
2. **Khulna-Mongla Port Rail Line** : This project has been implemented under the Government of India's concessional Line of Credit with a total project cost of \$ 388-92 million. The project entails the construction of approximately 65 km of broad gauge rail route between Mongla Port and the existing rail network in Khulna. With this, Mongla, the second largest port of Bangladesh, gets connected with the broad-gauge railway network.
3. **Unit-II of the Maitree Super Thermal Power Plant in Rampal, Bangladesh** : The thermal power project will be carried out under an Indian Concessional Financing Scheme loan of \$ 1-6 billion, a 1320 MW (2x660) Super Thermal Power Plant (MSTPP) is located in Rampal in Khulna Division of Bangladesh. The project has been implemented by the Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Private) Limited (BIFPCL), which is a 50 : 50 Joint Venture company between India's NTPC Ltd. and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB).

Core Sector Output Growth Stood at 7-8 Per cent against 9-8 Per cent in the First Half of FY 23

For the April-September 2023 period, the core sector output growth stood at 7-8 per cent against 9-8 per cent in the first half of FY23. The eight core industries-Crude oil, Natural Gas, Petroleum Refining, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Power-account for 40-27 per cent of weighting of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

Growth of Production of 8 Core Industries (%) in H1 of FY 2023-24

Sector	Weight	April-Sep. 22-23	April-Sep. 23-24*
Coal	10-33	21	12-2
Crude Oil	8-98	-1-3	-0-4
Natural Gas	6-88	1-8	4-3
Refinery Products	28-04	10-1	4
Fertilizers	2-63	11-5	7
Steel	17-92	6-9	14-2
Cement	5-37	11	11-5
Electricity	19-85	10-8	6
Overall Growth	100	9-8	7-8

Growth of Index of Industrial Production during H1 (April-September 2023) Decelerated to 6-0 Per cent

Growth Rate of Index of Industrial Production During April-September 2023

Sectors	Weight	2022-23	2023-24
Mining	14-37247	4-3	8-7
Manufacturing	77-63321	6-9	5-7
Electricity	7-994318	10-8	6-1
General	100	7-1	6
Primary Goods	34-0486	9-2	6-3
Capital Goods	8-223043	16-9	6-7
Intermediate Goods	17-221487	6-7	4-2
Infrastructure/construction Goods	12-338363	7-8	12-1
Consumer Durables	12-839296	10-1	-0-7
Non-durable consumer goods	15-329199	-2-5	6-8

Jal Diwali : "Water for Women, Women for Water Campaign" Launched

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) unveiled a progressive initiative "Women for Water, Water for Women Campaign" under its flagship scheme—Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), in part-

nership with the Ministry's National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM). is the knowledge partner. This campaign celebrated 'Jal Diwali' during 7-9 November, 2023.

The campaign aimed to provide a platform for inclusion of women in water governance. They were given first-hand knowledge about water treatment processes through visits to Water Treatment Plants (WTPs) in their respective cities. These visits elucidated the vital procedures involved in delivering clean and safe drinking water to households. Additionally, women gained insight into water quality testing protocols which ensure that citizens get water of the required quality. The overarching goal of the campaign is to instill a sense of ownership and belonging among women towards water infrastructure.

India has more than 3,000 Water treatment plants, with a designed water treatment capacity of more than 65,000 MLD and operational capacity of more than 55,000 MLD. During the said campaign, women Self Help Groups (SHGs) visited more than 550 water treatment plants, with a combined operational capacity of more than 20,000 MLD (more than 35% of the country's total).

The phase I of "Water for Women, Women for Water Campaign", 'Jal Diwali' witnessed participation from all States/UTs (barring the 5 States under Model Code of Conduct), with an expected participation of more than 15,000 SHG women, nationwide. The focus areas of the campaign include :

1. Familiarizing the women with functioning of Water Treatment Plants & water testing facilities
2. Promote inclusivity & involvement through souvenirs and articles created by Women SHGs
3. Familiarizing & educating the women about AMRUT scheme & its impact on water infrastructure.

World Bank Updated International Poverty Line

The World Bank updated the global poverty lines in September 2022. The decision, was announced in

May 2023 follows the release in 2020 of new purchasing power parities (PPPs)—the main data used to convert different currencies into a common, comparable unit and account for price differences across countries. The new extreme poverty line of \$ 2.15 per person per day, which replaces the \$ 1.90 poverty line, is based on 2017 PPPs.

The rise in the international poverty line reflects an increase in the costs of basic food, clothing, and shelter needs in low-income countries between 2011 and 2017, relative to the rest of the world. In other words, the real value of \$2.15 in 2017 prices is the same as \$1.90 was in 2011 prices.

The International Poverty Line (IPL) of \$1.90, which was used until fall 2022, was derived as the mean of the national poverty lines of 15 poor countries in the 1990s, expressed in 2011 PPPs. The selection of these 15 poor countries was based on limited data at the time. With the gathering and analysis of new data from other low-income countries, the World Bank has expanded the reference group. The IPL is now derived as the median of the national poverty lines of 28 of the world's poorest countries, expressed in 2017 PPPs.

The new global poverty lines of \$ 2.15, \$ 3.65, and \$ 6.85 reflect the typical national poverty lines of low-income, lower-middle-income, and upper-middle-income countries in 2017 prices. New nowcast estimates at the US \$ 2.15 poverty line is available since October 2022.

IMF's Executive Board Approves 50% Quota Increase

The executive board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on November 7, 2023 approved a proposal to make a 50 per cent increase in the quota allocated to members in proportion to their current quotas. The proposal will now be considered and made effective by the board of governors as part of concluding the 16th general review of quotas.

- The proposal follows the guidance from the International Monetary and Financial Committee at the 2023 annual meetings.

- The quota increase would enhance the IMF's permanent resources and strengthen the quota-based nature of the Fund by reducing the reliance on borrowing and thus ensuring the primary role of quotas in fund resources.
- Currently, India has a quota of special drawing rights (SDR) 13,114.4 million which denotes a share of 2.75 per cent, making it the eighth-largest quota-holding country in the IMF. Based on the quota, India has 132,063 votes, which denotes a share of 2.63 per cent.
- Quotas are the building blocks of the IMF's financial and governance structure.
- An individual member country's quota broadly reflects its relative position in the world economy.
- Quotas are denominated in SDRs, the IMF's unit of account.
- These determine the maximum amount of financial resources a member is obliged to provide to the IMF.
- They are also key determinants of voting power besides the maximum amount of loan a member can avail of.
- The IMF's board of governors conducts general quota reviews at least every five years.
- Any changes in quotas require approval by 85 per cent of the total voting power.
- A member's own quota cannot be changed without its consent.

'Bharat Organics' Brand Launched

Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on November 8, 2023 launched the 'Bharat Organics' brand of the newly launched National Cooperative Organics Ltd. (NCOL). He declared that NCOL would have as many as 20 organic products in the market by December 2023 and over the years emerge as the most trusted brand for 'organic' products from India.

The six organic products launched on November 8, 2023 were tur dal, chana dal, sugar, rajma, basmati rice, and Sonamasoori rice. These will initially be sold through

Mother Dairy's 150 Safal outlets and online platforms. A network of retail outlets is being created across the country. Initially, NCOL will sell the organic products in India and later it will market them in other countries.

NCOL is part of three new cooperatives set up by the government in various sectors with an initial capital of ₹ 500 crore, already has 950 members under its fold and will target 25,000 members by next year. Gujarat-headquartered NCOL, with the National Dairy Development Board (NDDDB) being the chief promoter, was registered under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002, on January 25 this year.

Organic agriculture is practised in 190 countries on 749,000 hectares of land, and India ranks 4th globally in organic agricultural land and first in the number of producers as per 2020 data. India has 2.7 million hectares of land under certified organic certification, including cultivable and wild harvest areas. The country produced 2.9 million tonnes of certified organic products in 2022-23.

The export of organic produce reached 3,12,000 tonnes in 2022-23, valued at ₹ 5,525 crore, mainly to the US, EU, Canada, and other countries. Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and the north-eastern region are some states which are leading in certified organic land.

UGC Announces Regulations for Establishment and Operations of Campuses by Foreign Universities in India

The University Grants Commission (UGC) on November 8, 2023 notified the regulations for foreign universities to set up and operate their campuses in India.

Aims & Objectives

- The regulations aim to facilitate the entry of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions (FHEIs) into India, in line with the NEP recommendations and to provide an international dimension to higher education in India.
- These regulations aim to ensure that the education imparted in the (India) campus is at par with

that of the main campus in the country of origin and that its operations comply with the applicable laws and regulations. Key guidelines are following—

- Foreign institutions intending to establish campuses in India should have secured a position within the top 500 in the overall category of global rankings, as decided by the commission from time to time, or should have secured a position within the top 500 in the subject-wise category of global rankings and should possess outstanding expertise in a particular area, as decided by the commission from time to time.
- In case an FHEI desires to receive or utilise foreign contributions, it will have to obtain registration or prior permission under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010 and comply with legal requirement under the FCRA, the UGC stated.
- In their Indian campuses, foreign universities will be allowed to offer study programmes leading to the award of certificates, diplomas, degrees, research and other programmes at the undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral and post-doctoral levels.
- Foreign universities cannot open learning centres, study centres, or franchises that may act as representative offices of the parent entity to undertake promotional activities for their programmes in their home jurisdiction or any other jurisdiction outside India. They are required to seek prior approval from the UGC before starting any new programme in their campus in India.
- No programmes can be offered in online or in Open and Distance Learning modes under these regulations. However, lectures in online mode not exceeding 10 per cent of the programme requirements are allowed.
- Two or more than two universities can collaborate to set up campuses in India, provided each institution meets the eligibility criteria individually.

- Each foreign university can set up more than one campus in India. However, they shall make a separate application for each proposed campus to the commission.
- Foreign institutions need not pay any annual fee to the UGC other than the one-time application fee.
- They shall set up their campuses using their own infrastructure, land, physical resources and human resources.
- Foreign universities may provide in their Indian campuses full or partial merit-based or need-based scholarships and fee concession to Indian students.
- Foreign Higher Educational Institutions can admit students and collect fee in their campuses in India only after a notification has been issued by the UGC permitting them to commence their campus operations in India under these regulations.
- Campuses of foreign universities in India shall have autonomy to recruit faculty and staff as per their recruitment norms.
- Foreign universities setting up campuses in India will be required to seek prior approval from the UGC before starting new courses.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Launched the ₹ 24,000 Crore PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan PM-JANMAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 15, 2023 launched at Khunti (Jharkhand) PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan PM-JANMAN with a budget allocation of the ₹ 24,000 crore. This initiative is the new name of **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) Mission**, which was announced in Union Budget 203-24.

PVTGs were earlier known as primitive tribal groups. PVTGs are a sub-classification of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) or a section of STs who are considered more vulnerable than regular STs. The PVTG list has been created by the Central government

with the aim to improve on priority the living standards of endangered tribal groups. According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 75 PVTGs are spread across 15 states and Union Territories.

Under PM JANMAN, the government will reach out to tribal groups and primitive tribes most of whom still dwell in the forests. The 75 PVTGs, with a population of about 28 lakh, live in 22,544 villages across 18 states and Union Territories in India. "Earlier governments did the work of connecting the figures, but now the government wants to connect the lives, not the figures. The central government is going to spend ₹ 24,000 crores on this mega campaign.

The norms of certain central sector schemes will be relaxed to cover remote habitations of PVTGs. In addition to the 11 interventions, saturation of other government schemes such as PMJAY health insurance scheme, the Sick Cell Disease Elimination programme, TB Elimination programme, Universal immunisation, PM Surakshit Matrutva to ensure free of cost antenatal care to all women, PM Matru Vandana Yojana for cash benefit to mothers, PM Poshan, and PM Jan Dhan Yojana.

India, US, 12 Other IPEF Members Ink Supply Chain Resilience Agreement

India, the US and 12 other members of the IPEF grouping have signed a supply chain resilience agreement that would provide benefits like potential shifting of production centres in critical sectors and mitigating risks of economic disruptions from supply chain shocks.

The agreement was signed in San Francisco, where Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is attending the ministerial meeting of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF).

The agreement would help member countries like India to reduce its dependence on China.

The COVID outbreak had severely disrupted the global supply chain, as most countries were depen-

dent on China for various products, like pharma raw materials.

Members of the bloc concluded the negotiations on this agreement, one of the four pillars of the IPEF, on May 27, this year in Detroit.

The other benefits of the pact include supply chain diversification, mobilisation of investments, deeper integration of India in global value chains, support to MSMEs and creation of a seamless regional trade ecosystem, which would facilitate the flow of Indian products.

IPEF was launched jointly by the US and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region on May 23, 2022 in Tokyo.

The framework is structured around four pillars relating to trade, supply chains, clean economy and fair economy (issues like tax and anti-corruption). India has joined all the pillars except the trade one.

The members are expected to announce the conclusion of talks for clean economy and fair economy pillars also during this week.

Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the US and Vietnam are members of the bloc.

It would come into force after the implementation of the agreement by any of the five member countries.

Under the agreement, IPEF partners seek to provide a framework to build their collective understanding of significant supply chain risks; improve crisis coordination and response to supply chain disruptions; facilitate cooperation, mobilise investments, promote regulatory transparency in sectors and goods critical to national security and public health and safety.

The critical sectors would be identified by the member countries.

To implement and monitor the agreement, the bloc would set up The IPEF Supply Chain Council.

The council will meet every year and all the members would have to report on the progress of implementation of the agreement.

Besides the council, the block would set up The IPEF Supply Chain Crisis Response Network and The IPEF Labor Rights Advisory Board.

The network would deal with emergency issues and help partners to seek support during a supply chain disruption and to facilitate information sharing and collaboration among IPEF partners during a crisis, enabling a faster and more effective response that minimises negative effects on their economies.

On the other hand, the advisory board would help members in promoting labour rights in their supply chains.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit, 2023

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, 2023 was hosted by the US in San Francisco from November 11 to 17, 2023. APEC, a regional economic forum, was established in 1989. Its stated aim was to "leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific and create greater prosperity for the people of the region through regional economic integration". APEC has always championed free trade, the lowering of trade tariffs, and economic liberalisation.

The 21 members of APEC are termed 'economies' (rather than countries or member states) because trade and economic issues are the focus of the grouping. In a reflection of the idea, Taiwan and Hong Kong attend APEC meetings as distinct entities, even though China claims they are parts of China and not independent entities.

The APEC economies are Australia, Brunei, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong (as part of China), the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, Chinese Taipei (Taiwan), China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Peru, and Chile. India is not a member of APEC.

Netherlands to Saudi Arabia : India's Key Export Hubs Witness High Growth

India's exports to countries such as the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and Indonesia have witnessed

consistent growth during the past five years (2018–19 through 2022–23) and are set to emerge as major growth destinations for the country's out-bound shipments, according to a report prepared by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Withdrawal of ₹ 2000 Denomination Banknotes— Status

1. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had announced the withdrawal of ₹ 2000 denomination banknotes from circulation.
2. The facility for deposit and/or exchange of the ₹ 2000 banknotes was available at all bank branches in the country initially upto September 30, 2023, which was later extended upto October 7, 2023.
3. The facility for exchange of the ₹ 2000 banknotes was also available at the 19 Issue Offices of the Reserve Bank (RBI Issue Offices) from May 19, 2023. From October 9, 2023, RBI Issue Offices, in addition to exchanging ₹ 2000 denomination banknotes across the counters, were also accepting ₹ 2000 banknotes from individuals / entities for deposit to their bank accounts. Further, members of the public from within the country could send ₹ 2000 banknotes through India Post from any post office in the country, to any of the RBI Issue Offices for credit to their bank accounts in India.
4. The total value of ₹ 2000 banknotes in circulation, which amounted to ₹ 3-56 lakh crore as at the close of business on May 19, 2023 when the withdrawal of ₹ 2000 banknotes was announced, has declined to ₹ 0-10 lakh crore as at the close of business on October 31, 2023. Thus, more than 97% of the ₹ 2000 banknotes in circulation as on May 19, 2023, has since been returned.
5. The window for deposit and / or exchange the ₹ 2000 banknotes continues to be available at the 19 Issue Offices of RBI. Members of the public are requested to avail the facility of sending the ₹ 2000 banknotes through post offices of India Post. This will obviate the need for travel to RBI Offices for deposit / exchange of the ₹ 2000 banknotes.
6. The ₹ 2000 banknotes continue to be legal tender.

These countries have showcased a high average growth rate with India, even amidst the global economic slowdown. Overall, the top 10 highly growing export destinations include Togo (73 per cent), the Netherlands (36 per cent), Brazil (28 per cent), Israel (27 per cent), Indonesia (24 per cent), Türkiye (22 per cent), Australia (20 per cent), South Africa (19 per cent), Saudi Arabia (16 per cent), and Belgium (13 per cent).

On the other hand, some of India's key export destinations, such as the United Arab Emirates, China, Singapore, the UK, Germany, and Vietnam, have showcased an average growth rate of less than 10 per cent, indicating that they are moderately growing export destinations.

As far as commodities are concerned, high-growth export commodities such as sugar and confectionery, mineral fuel and oils, aluminium and articles, inorganic chemicals, ships, boats, and floating structures, rubber and articles, and optical, photographic, and medical apparatus would enhance India's export growth to new heights.

Instruments of Monetary Policy

There are several direct and indirect instruments that are used for implementing monetary policy.

- **Repo Rate** : The interest rate at which the Reserve Bank provides Liquidity under the liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) to all LAF participants against the collateral of government and other approved securities.
- **Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) Rate** : The rate at which the Reserve Bank accepts uncollateralised deposits, on an overnight basis, from all LAF participants. The SDF is also a financial stability tool in addition to its role in liquidity management. The SDF rate is placed at 25 basis points below the policy repo rate. With introduction in SDF in April 2022, the SDF rate replaced the fixed reverse repo rate as the floor of the LAF corridor.
- **Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate** : The penal rate at which banks can borrow, on an overnight

basis, from the Reserve Bank by dipping into their Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) portfolio up to a predefined limit (2 per cent). This provides a safety valve against unanticipated liquidity shocks to the banking system. The MSF rate is placed at 25 basis points above the policy repo rate.

- **Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF)** : The LAF refers to the Reserve Bank's operations through which it injects/absorbs liquidity into/from the banking system. It consists of overnight as well as term repo/reverse repos (fixed as well as variable rates), SDF and MSF. Apart from LAF, instruments of liquidity management include outright open market operations (OMOs), forex swaps and market stabilisation scheme (MSS).
- **LAF Corridor** : The LAF corridor has the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate as its upper bound (ceiling) and the standing deposit facility (SDF) rate as the lower bound (floor), with the policy repo rate in the middle of the corridor.
- **Main Liquidity Management Tool** : A 14-day term repo/reverse repo auction operation at a variable rate conducted to coincide with the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) maintenance cycle is the main liquidity management tool for managing frictional liquidity requirements.
- **Fine Tuning Operations** : The main liquidity operation is supported by fine-tuning operations, overnight and/or longer tenor, to tide over any unanticipated liquidity changes during the reserve maintenance period. In addition, the Reserve Bank conducts, if needed, longer-term variable rate repo/reverse repo auctions of more than 14 days.
- **Reverse Repo Rate** : The interest rate at which the Reserve Bank absorbs liquidity from banks against the collateral of eligible government securities under the LAF. Following the introduction of SDF, the fixed rate reverse repo operations will be at the discretion of the RBI for purposes specified from time to time.

Continued on Page 55



Environment, Ecology, Biodiversity and Climate Change Round-up

The 8th India Water Impact Summit (IWIS)

On 22nd November, 2023, the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India, inaugurated the 8th Edition of the India Water Impact Summit (IWIS) at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi, organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and the Center for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (Ganga). It concluded on 24th November, 2023. It aimed at uniting scientific experts, stakeholders, and government representatives to address dynamic challenges and opportunities in India's water sector.

The theme of IWIS 2023 is 'Development vis-à-vis Land, Water and Rivers'.



About The Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA)

A special session titled "Global River Cities Alliance - A Global Step Forward (GRCA)" was also held in the Summit and was attended by delegates from Ethiopia, Denmark, Mexico, the Federal Republic of Germany, Bhutan, United Kingdom, Nepal and Japan and announced the upcoming launch of the Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA) in COP28 on

December 10, 2023, in Dubai (UAE). This global mission is to unite cities and leverage joint efforts for transforming rivers into catalysts for urban water management.

Key Highlights :

- The government of India has made substantial investments in drinking water and sanitation through flagship programs like the Jal Jeevan Mission and Swachh Bharat Mission.
- 60% of the drinking water systems established by the Jal Jeevan Mission rely on groundwater". Climate change exacerbates these issues, impacting the water cycle with extreme precipitation and prolonged dry spells in various regions. To address these challenges.
- Three key areas of focus are :
 - (i) Efforts to improve river health to ensure rivers can sustain riverine systems, provide water for irrigation and drinking, and support the economy.
 - (ii) There is a focus on enhancing water use efficiency in agriculture.
 - (ii) Managing storage involves not only dams and reservoirs, but also sedimentation management and local-level storage, such as ponds, pokhars, and groundwater.
- The organization NMCG has implemented advanced technologies, ensuring that treated water does not seep into rivers. Furthermore, he said that this achievement is a result of NMCG's innovative River Basin

Management Plan, guided by the principles of Nirmal (clean), Aviral (continuous flow), Gyan (knowledge), and Jan (public participation). In 2019, the Prime Minister introduced a new pillar, Arth Ganga, underlining the need to connect rivers and people through economic bridges.

- The MoU signed by India with the Republic of Slovenia in 2019 and NMCG entered into a partnership aimed at facilitating flood mapping and other technical endeavors within the Ganga basin, bringing together expertise from both nations to address complex challenges in river management.
- Significant achievements of NMCG :
 - (i) Pollution abatement,
 - (ii) Effective river basin management, and
 - (iii) The enhancement of people-river connectivity and biodiversity in the Ganga. Recognizing the Ganga's cultural significance as a lifeline for 40% of India's population.

Botanical Survey of India Discovers New Species of Epiphytic Plant

The Botanical Survey of India (BSI) have discovered a new species of epiphytic plant *Lysionotus namchomii* from Pakke-Kessang district of Arunachal Pradesh, published in the international peer reviewed journal, *Turczaninowia*. It

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is epiphytic in nature and grows another plant. Epiphytic plants are mostly found in tropical and subtropical forests. The species is named in honour of the late Chau Phunkyoo Nomchoon, a well-known social reformer from Arunachal Pradesh's Khapti community. Mr. Nomchoon was also a well-known nature lover who worked to promote education and healthcare in the community. The specimens used to describe the species were situated at two different locations, with a small population comprising a total of 60-100 individuals.



Habitat of the Genus Lysionotus

The native range of the genus Lysionotus is the Himalayas to Japan and Indo-China, and about 50% of the species found are endemic. Species of the genus are mostly epiphytic, lithophytic, or terrestrial evergreen erect or climbing shrubs.

Special Features

- Thick leaves and
- Attractive purple flowers.

The Conservation Status of this New Species

The conservation status of this new species is provisionally assessed as 'Critically Endangered', in accordance with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. The specimens were collected from about 1,299 metres above sea level.

Number of Species at Risk of Extinction Doubles to 2 Million : UN

UN estimated that two million species are at risk of extinction which is doubling previous. The decline of species of plants and vertebrates are

in rapid rate, significant uncertainty over insects, with the UN making a 'tentative estimate' of 10% threatened with extinction in 2019. Since then, more data has been collected on insects, showing the proportion at risk of extinction is much higher than previously estimated. Because there are so many insect species, this doubles the global number of species at risk. The team looked at all European species on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list of threatened species. This is considered the most comprehensive source of information on species at risk. They found a fifth of European species were at risk of extinction, with 24% of invertebrates at risk, as well as 27% of all plants and 18% of vertebrates.



Insects with eggs

The global insect populations have been challenging because of the lack of data but 97% of all animals are invertebrates. About 90% are classified as insects. They provide vital ecosystem services : pollinating crops, recycling nutrients into soils, and decomposing waste.

Key Highlights of the Study :

- Apart from insects, estimates remained more or less the same as those made by the UN's Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (Ipbes) in 2019.
- Soil estimated to be home to 90% of world's fungi, 85% of plants and more than 50% of bacteria, making it the world's most species-rich habitat.
- This comprehensive analysis of 14,669 continental red list assessments for European animal and plant species suggests that 2 million plant and animal species are threatened with extinction.

- The causes of these declines are well documented, and are driven by human activity: the expansion of agriculture resulting in the loss of natural habitats is the most significant driver, followed by overexploitation of natural resources, pollution, and residential and commercial development.
- The finding of agricultural land-use change as a major threat to biodiversity has often been reported. However, our analysis is the most comprehensive and unequivocal to date reaffirming the magnitude of the impact of this threat at a continental scale."

Two Giant Pandas Begin Return to China from Smithsonian's National Zoo

On 8th November, 2023, the two giant pandas - Mei Xiang and Tian Tian - at the Smithsonian's National zoo officially began their return to China with Their three-year-old cub Xiao Qi Ji. The two panda bears had been in the United States on loan from China for more than two decades as part of a research agreement set to expire early next month. The giant pandas forklifted in a crate out of the zoo and then transported on a 19-hour flight to a panda reserve in Chengdu (in China's Sichuan province). The bears will travel on a 777F plane called the 'FedEx panda express'.

Panda Diplomacy between the US and China

The US received its first pandas from China in 1972 after Richard Nixon told the Chinese premier at the time, Zhou Enlai, that he loved the animals. Their continued presence in the US has come to be understood as a symbol of goodwill between China and the US, or what some call 'panda diplomacy'. The pandas remain in the United States under an agreement with their Chinese counterparts.

The animals (Panda) had reached the age when they should return to China. "They are at the age when they should be in China. The departure of Mei Xiang, Tian Tian and Xiao Qi Ji means that the Atlanta zoo will be the only zoo in the US with giant pandas, and they are set to return to China next year. The National zoo plans to ask Chinese officials for a new pair of pandas

Pitrapan

“Consistency, perseverance and focused hard work are the secrets of my success.”

Jyoti Kumari

Topper—67th Bihar Civil Services Exam. (77th Rank)

‘Pratiyogita Darpan’ arranged an exclusive interview with Ms. Jyoti Kumari who has been selected in Bihar Civil Services Examination. She deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on her glorious success. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

PD—Achieving top slot in the coveted Bihar Civil Services Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

Ms. Jyoti—Thank you so much. I feel really grateful to Pratiyogita Darpan for giving me this opportunity to share my experience with aspirants.

PD—What preference in services have you opted for and any particular reason for that priority?

Ms. Jyoti—My top 3 preferences were BAS, BPS, BRS in which I got BPS.

PD—What was your optional subject?

Ms. Jyoti—Optional Subject : My optional subject was sociology

PD—Give the basis of selecting the optional subject?

Ms. Jyoti—I have given importance to these criteria for selecting my optional :

1. My interest
2. The benefit of my optional in my whole preparation
3. Materials and resources available

PD—As the optional subject goes qualifying, how will it affect the candidates?

Ms. Jyoti—As BPSC doesn't provide scaling for humanities subjects I think it's a good initiative. Candidates have a level playing field now.

PD—How will the new pattern of BPSC change the way of preparation of candidates?

Ms. Jyoti—I think the new pattern of BPSC addresses the earlier concern of the students. As earlier the paper was little on the factual side. Now it's less factual and more orien-

ted towards comprehensive knowledge. So, I think candidates have to devote themselves to a comprehensive understanding of topics.



PD—In how many attempts have you achieved this success?

Ms. Jyoti—It's my second attempt. I had given 66th BPSC and I missed it by 3 marks in PT. By God Grace I cleared it in my 2nd attempt.

PD—‘Success is sweet’ were you confident of your success with top rank and how did you react to this news?

Ms. Jyoti—Honestly, I was not much confident. Although I gave my best, I was really nervous about the result. When I came to know that I got 77th rank. I was over-whelmed.

PD—Today, IAS/BPSC Toppers are icons and lots of media coverage makes them popular. Before your success, what was your opinion about these toppers?

Ms. Jyoti—I think it's a great source of inspiration. Before clearing this examination, I used to watch these kinds of interviews and it motivated me a lot.

PD—Can you recall the exact moment when you realized the importance of Civil Services?

Ms. Jyoti—I don't think so I can point out the exact moment but after I started throughout the process I learnt the importance of civil services.

PD—Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in ‘Civil Services’?

Ms. Jyoti—During corona pandemic I have seen the important role these services played in the whole management of pandemic. I got inspired and wanted to contribute for the development of society. After that I decided to prepare for civil services.

PD—Did you keep in mind some time-frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts?

Ms. Jyoti—I had not kept the exact time frame because I think it adds extra pressure. One thing that I kept in my mind is whatever time I devote to this preparation, I should give my best.

PD—‘Time Management’ is a key factor while making preparations as well as in writing examination papers, be it Prelims or Main Examination. How did you manage things?

Ms. Jyoti—Time management is the key. As this exam has different stages, we have to devote a specific time period for every section. Every stage of this examination needs different strategies and I have allotted required time and preparation to each stage.

PD—The first step is the most difficult; from where did you get the right advice?

Ms. Jyoti—I agree with it. It's very difficult to take that first step, but I had the support of my family specially my mother. In addition to that Aastha IAS guided me towards my preparation.

Bio-Data

Name—Jyoti Kumari
Father's Name—Shri Sarvjeet Kumar Dev
Mother's Name—Mrs. Kiran Devi
Educational Qualifications—
10th—2011, CBSE, JNV, Muzaffarpur (95%)
12th—2013, CBSE, Public School, Bela, Darbhanga (80%)
B.Sc.—2017, BL. N.M.U. Darbhanga (68-5)

PD—What was your approach towards Preliminary Examination preparation ?

Ms. Jyoti—Prelims of BPSC was factual till 67th and I kept that in mind. While preparing the syllabus, I always took keen interest in fact collection and its constant revision.

PD—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Main Examination (Written) ?

Ms. Jyoti—Preparation of mains depends a lot on analysis of previous year papers. I put emphasis on consistent practice via mock tests, its analysis and special focus towards inclusion of Bihar in answer writing.

PD—What was your strategy for Essay Paper ?

Ms. Jyoti—Reading is my hobby and this helped me a lot during my essay preparation. I also read toppers' notebooks for the right approach and attempted mock tests to analyze my performance.

PD—How did you prepare yourself for Interview (Personality Test) ?

Ms. Jyoti—Interview preparation is not a time bound thing, it's a test of your personality which is constantly in the making. I think the whole process of examination prepares you slowly for the interview. In addition to that I have given mock test and took guidance from Coaching Institute.

PD—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal i.e., Career in Civil Services ?

Ms. Jyoti—This is a very unpredictable examination; so, to keep my mind peaceful, I had a backup plan i. I have done my B.Ed and cleared CTET.

PD—While the changing economic environment offers immense

lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Civil Services ?

Ms. Jyoti—I think civil services provide you that platform in which one can contribute to the development of the society and positively impact many lives. Other jobs provide us only financial stability, but civil services provide us emotional satisfaction that we are serving the society.

PD—In your opinion at which Educational Level should one start preparing for Civil Services and what should be the minimum period of time required to prepare for BPSC Examination ?

Ms. Jyoti—I think there is no fixed time to start preparation. I started it in 2021 without any previous knowledge or planning. The only thing we need to keep in mind is that whatever time we devote to this we do it honestly.

PD—How do you find Pratiyogita Darpan ? Do you find it close to your expectations ?

Ms. Jyoti—I felt a little nostalgic while answering this because my father brought Pratiyogita Darpan when I started preparing and today. It helped me a lot in covering current affairs.

PD—What is the secret of your success ?

Ms. Jyoti—Consistency and perseverance throughout the preparation.

PD—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

Ms. Jyoti—I want to thank God for providing me strength, my family, friend and the whole team of Coaching Institute for constant support.

Personal Qualities

Favourite Person—My mother and my friend. Both of them constantly supported me throughout my preparation as mentor, guide and provided me strength

Strong Points—I always try to change any crisis into opportunity

Weak Points—I have a stubborn attitude sometimes, but I think that somewhere helped me to develop a never give up attitude.

Hobbies—2 hobbies which I constantly enjoyed is dancing and reading books.

PD—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

Ms. Jyoti—Adaptation is needed according to the changing pattern. Only advice I want to give is to maintain consistency during the preparation. Consistency is the key for success in any examination with right approach.

PD—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

Continued from Page 51

- **Bank Rate** : The rate at which the Reserve Bank is ready to buy or rediscount bills of exchange or other commercial papers. The Bank Rate acts as the penal rate charged on banks for shortfalls in meeting their reserve requirements (cash reserve ratio and statutory liquidity ratio). The Bank Rate is published under Section 49 of the RBI Act, 1934. This rate has been aligned with the MSF rate and, changes automatically as and when the MSF rate changes alongside policy repo rate changes.
- **Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)** : The average daily balance that a bank is required to maintain with the Reserve Bank as a per cent of its net demand and time liabilities (NDTL) as on the Friday of the second preceding fortnight that the Reserve Bank may notify from time to time in the Official Gazette.
- **Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)** : Every bank shall maintain in India assets, the value of which shall not be less than such percentage of the total of its demand and time liabilities in India as on the last Friday of the second preceding fortnight, as the Reserve Bank may, by notification in the Official Gazettee, specify from time to time and such assets shall be maintained as may be specified in such notification (typically in unencumbered government securities, cash and gold).
- **Open Market Operations (OMOs)** : These include outright purchase/sale of government securities by the Reserve Bank for injection/absorption of durable liquidity in the banking system.

“Firm belief in myself, patience, dedication and immersing myself in deep study are the secrets of my success.”

Neha Kumari

Topper—67th Bihar Civil Services Exam.

‘Pratiyogita Darpan’ arranged an exclusive interview with Ms. Neha Kumari who has been selected in Bihar Civil Services Examination. She deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on her glorious success. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

PD—Achieving top slot in the coveted Bihar Public Services Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

Ms. Neha—Thank you so much.

PD—What preference in services have you opted for and any particular reason for that priority?

Ms. Neha—1. Bihar administrative service (because of diverse and better career opportunities), 2. Bihar police, 3. Bihar finance service.

PD—What was your optional subject?

Ms. Neha—Optional Subject : Hindi language and literature

PD—Give the basis of selecting the optional subject?

Ms. Neha—It is scoring, completely static and I can study this subject for long hours without getting bore because of stories etc.

PD—In how many attempts have you achieved this success?

Ms. Neha—This was my third attempt in which I got selected as Bihar administrative Service Officer, in my second attempt I got selected as Block Panchayati Raj Officer (BPRO) & in my first attempt I couldn't clear prelims by 1 mark.

PD—‘Success is sweet’ were you confident of your success with top rank and how did you react to this news?

Ms. Neha—I was very happy that I got my first preference & my parents, especially my father, was so happy and proud that means a lot to me. No body can be confident in this examination that one can get top rank.

PD—Today, IAS/BPSC Toppers are icons and lots of media coverage makes them popular. Before your success, what was your opinion about these toppers?

Ms. Neha—It is true that toppers are source of motivation & inspiration, but one should not run behind popularity because we are bureaucrats not celebrities.



Genius means the infinite capacity of taking pains.

—Neha Kumari

PD—Can you recall the exact moment when you realized the importance of Civil Services?

Ms. Neha—As far as I am able to recollect I was in 12 standard when in a school function SP sir (Sagar, Madhya Pradesh) Sachin Atulkar came to school and in his speech I heard about Civil Services Exams & from there I made my aim/goal that I would join Civil Service.

PD—Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in ‘Civil Services’?

Ms. Neha—Since I had made my mind for Civil Services in my 12th class only, I preferred general gradua-

tion to engineering. But during the preparation, I regretted that I did not have plan B or other technical degree, so plan B is also very important in this preparation.

PD—Did you keep in mind some time-frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts?

Ms. Neha—Yes in my mind I had decided to devote 3-4 years for Civil Services preparation but number of attempts was not fixed.

PD—‘Time Management’ is a key factor while making preparations as well as in writing examination papers, be it Prelims or Main Examination. How did you manage things?

Ms. Neha—Time management in this preparation can be managed only & only by practice/mock test. I did not take any prelims & mains mock test for BPSC in all my attempts, but I practiced 10 thousand plus objective questions for prelims & wrote model answers for each and every question which helped me a lot.

PD—The first step is the most difficult; from where did you get the right advice?

Ms. Neha—Initially, I followed some toppers advice from YouTube because no one from my contact was in this field. Latter on, I was guided by some of my friends. They always guided me in a right direction which worked for me I would like to thank them.

PD—What was your approach towards Preliminary Examination preparation?

Ms. Neha—I kept my resource limited and after covering whole syllabus, I focused on multiple revisions and practicing questions.

Bio-Data

Name—Neha Kumari

Father's Name—Shri Ravi Singh

Mother's Name—Mrs. Rekha Devi

Educational Qualifications—

10th—2012, MP Board, Little Star Shailesh Memorial School (82%)

12th—2014, MP Board, Little Star Shailesh Memorial School, Sagar Madhya Pradesh (90%)

BA/B.Sc.—Dr. Hari Singh Gour University, Sagar, Madhya Pradesh

MA/M.Sc. (Political Science)—IGNOU

Previous Selections—66th BPSC (Block Panchayati Raj Officer)

PD—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Main Examination (Written) ?

Ms. Neha—I made my own hand written notes in the question answer form for each paper which helped me in two ways. I was writing daily 7-8 answers. My answers were different from the coachings printed notes.

PD—What was your strategy for Essay Paper ?

Ms. Neha—In 67th BPSC, there was no essay paper.

PD—How did you prepare yourself for Interview (Personality Test) ?

Ms. Neha—I gave 4-5 mocks and had discussion with friends which helped me.

PD—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal i.e., Career in Civil Services ?

Ms. Neha—No, I was preparing for UPSC even while I appeared for BPSC.

PD—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Civil Services ?

Ms. Neha—The respect and prestige associated with this service always motivated me & I find this field more attractive than others because of the nature of the job it provides. The opportunities it provides you to make a difference in the society which matches with my dream job expectation.

PD—In your opinion at which Educational Level should one start preparing for Civil Services and what should be the minimum period of time required to prepare for BPSC Examination ?

Ms. Neha—In my opinion one should start preparation during their graduation which will save 2-3 years of aspirants. 3-4 year duration is more than enough to clear any competitive examination but it is also true you can not decide time in this preparation. Sometimes it takes only 2 years and single attempt and sometime 6 attempts is not enough. I will only say one should not lose their faith and everything will happen at their own time.

PD—How do you find Pratiyogita Darpan ? Do you find it close to your expectations ?

Ms. Neha—I used to study for BPSC and I found very helpful.

Personal Qualities

Favourite Person—I would say my father.

Strong Points—In this preparation : 1. Writing habit, 2. Objective question practice.

Weak Points—I am the person who struggles with the revision.

Hobbies—Cooking, going long walks.

PD—What is the secret of your success ?

Ms. Neha—In my opinion my ability to sit continuously for long hours for study is my strength & of course consistency was the key.

PD—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?

Ms. Neha—My parents who always supported me, my friends & my hard work.

PD—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

Ms. Neha—Trust yourself and your hard work. It will pay one day and never compare yourself with others.

PD—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

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“Enthusiasm, patience, dedication and extensive practice of mock papers are the secrets of my success.”

Shiwani Shrestha

Topper—67th Bihar Civil Services Exam.

‘Pratiyogita Darpan’ arranged an exclusive interview with Ms. Shiwani Shrestha who has been selected in Bihar Civil Services Examination. She deserves high admiration and our heartiest congratulations on her glorious success. This important, thought-provoking and highly inspiring interview is being presented here in its original form.

PD—Achieving top slot in the coveted Bihar Public Service Examination is no small feat; accept our heartiest congratulations on your splendid success.

Ms. Shiwani—Thank you so much.

PD—What preference in services have you opted for and any particular reason for that priority?

Ms. Shiwani—My preference was Bihar administrative service first, then Bihar police service and then Bihar revenue services. I got my second preference and I am thankful to God for this blessing.

PD—What was your optional subject?

Ms. Shiwani—Optional Subject : Labour and social welfare.

PD—Give the basis of selecting the optional subject?

Ms. Shiwani—I have pharmacy background and none of the pharmacy subjects is included in subject list of BPSC civil services. So, while choosing optional I opted for one in which I had really good interest. Also, I was looking for any practical subject which will be helpful for me in performing my duty as officer in Bihar. Since Bihar is a labour dominant State I decided to go for this.

PD—How you read the new pattern for BPSC; how will it change the way candidates prepare for BPSC?

Ms. Shiwani—There are a lot of difference in old pattern and new pattern now. Earlier one liner was very frequently asked along with PYQs of BPSC; but now it's more like UPSC i.e., in depth analysis of topic is very important.

NCERT books are more important and newspaper is also crucial. Also, negative marking has been introduced, so one needs to be more careful in taking attempts. More work is needed to improve the accuracy now.



Trained and organized commonsense wins the race.

—Shiwani Shrestha

PD—In how many attempts have you achieved this success?

Ms. Shiwani—This was my third attempt. Prelims had been my biggest hurdle. I couldn't clear prelims itself in my first two attempts. In third attempt I qualified prelims and fortunately got into final merit as DySP.

PD—‘Success is sweet’ were you confident of your success with top rank and how did you react to this news?

Ms. Shiwani—Yes, success is definitely sweet, but it's sweetest when you have seen failures. I always had this inner feeling telling me I can make it happen. I followed my intuition and with my hard work I made it possible.

When the news of my final selection as DySP came, I felt overwhelmed. I had tears in my eyes. The cycle of preparation was over for me and I was able to make my parents feel proud of me. I am really feeling very thankful to God for giving me this day. The result day will always stay in a corner of my heart.

PD—Finally, at what point of time did you make up your mind to make career in ‘Civil Services’?

Ms. Shiwani—Actually, there were various instances that made me think about getting my steps into civil services. I remember once I visited a government hospital and the situation of hospital was worst. Patients were lying on floor because of lack of beds and doctor was absent. I felt furious because of this mis-management. I thought that an inspection by an administrative authority can put these things at right place.

Again the incidences of rape, murder, domestic violence against women used to make me think of police service. Being a woman, I feel I must uplift the condition of those women who aren't able to uplift themselves because of any circumstances.

PD—Did you keep in mind some time-frame for the examination preparation and number of attempts?

Ms. Shiwani—No, I didn't have any time frame in my mind. I started preparing for this exam to get a seat and without getting that seat, I wouldn't have stopped preparing for this. Goal was the limit, not the time.

PD—‘Time Management’ is a key factor while making preparations as well as in writing examination

papers, be it Prelims or Main Examination. How did you manage things ?

Ms. Shiwani—Yes, it is. While giving multiple attempts I learnt this management technique. I don't wait and waste my time for any question about which I have no idea. So don't stick with any question, whether it's prelims or mains. Also do answer writing to improve the speed and accuracy of answers as I did.

Bio-Data

Name—Shiwani Shrestha
Father's Name—Dr. Tarni Prasad Mandal
Mother's Name—Mrs. Sarita Devi
Educational Qualifications—
10th—2011, CBSE, St. Xavier's School, Saharsa (95%)
12th—2013, CBSE, Krishna Niketan, Patna (90%)
B.Pharma—2019, Aryabhata Knowledge University, GPI Patna (70%)

PD—The first step is the most difficult; from where did you get the right advice ?

Ms. Shiwani—My father is my personal advisor. Whatever I have achieved is because of his advice. He is my motivator, guide, mentor and everything.

PD—What was your approach towards Preliminary Examination ?

Ms. Shiwani—Covering most of the known questions in least possible time in the first round and then doing the question in which we have 50-50 per cent idea. And then leaving the unknown question. Also be careful in filling the OMR sheet. Any mistake in OMR is going to be very costly.

PD—What shift did you adopt in your strategy for Main Examination (Written) ?

Ms. Shiwani—More diagrams, charts, tables more contents, since the number of questions has also increased. So time management is key. Improve speed and don't get stuck. Prepare well for DI question as this is a crucial deciding factor.

PD—What was your strategy for Essay Paper ?

Ms. Shiwani—Keep writing as more essays as you can. Read the essays of toppers. Have your own view about everything. Keep your essays as raw and authentic as possible.

PD—How did you prepare yourself for Interview (Personality Test) ?

Ms. Shiwani—I gave mock interviews and instead of being bookish, I prefer to give my own views in crispy manner. Be innovative. I have my mock interview at Astha IAS, Drishti IAS etc.

PD—Were you preparing for other career opportunities as well while preparing for your ultimate goal *i.e.*, Career in Civil Services ?

Ms. Shiwani—Yes. I qualified the prelims of many examinations while preparing for civil services such as CDS (conference out), SSC CGL (Merit out), Sachivalaya Sahayak (Mains out) but couldn't make it to the final list. In the final year of preparation, I stopped giving any other examination and prepare only for BPSC and I made it into final list that year.

Personal Qualities

Favourite Person—My Father

Strong Points—My fighter spirit. I don't give up easily.

Weak Points—Less health conscious but I am working on it.

Hobbies—Singing, listening music, reading books, watching series.

PD—While the changing economic environment offers immense lucrative career opportunities in various sectors, still what kept you motivated towards Civil Services ?

Ms. Shiwani—The authority and resources that we get as a civil servant to bring desired change in the lives of other people is what attracts me most. Also, this job definitely gives me enough finances for decent living. So I think it's enough for me to choose this over any lucrative services.

PD—In your opinion at which Educational Level should one start preparing for Civil Services and what should be the minimum period of time required to prepare for BPSC Examination ?

Ms. Shiwani—I started preparing for it after graduation but if someone is enlightened enough, they must be cautious about their graduation subject as well. If we are graduating with arts or humanities, it is a better for civil services. But it's

not very tough for other stream as well to cover the syllabus. I just talked about more ease.

PD—How do you find Pratiyogita Darpan ? Do you find it close to your expectations ?

Ms. Shiwani—Following Pratiyogita Darpan regularly keeps us very informed and being informed is very crucial in times when pattern has changed drastically. This is helpful for many kinds of examination as it covers a wide range of topics.

PD—What is the secret of your success ?

Ms. Shiwani—Hard work, consistency, patience, Perseverance and faith on God.

PD—To whom would you like to give the credit for your success ?


Ms. Shiwani—Hard work, consistency, patience, perseverance and faith in God.

PD—Any suggestion/advice you would like to give to the future aspirants.

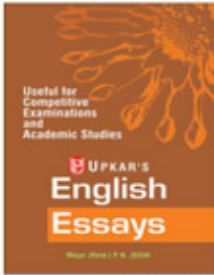
Ms. Shiwani—Work hard and believe in your capabilities. Don't be impatient.

PD—Thank you very much and wishing you all the best for your future endeavours.

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Civil Services Examination is Challenging, But within Your Reach Give it Your Best to Accomplish Your GOAL in Style !

—Atul Kapoor

The Civil Services Examination, a grueling competition, is undoubtedly tough and demanding. Being a long journey CSE preparation requires complete dedication and perseverance to make your endeavor meaningful.

Those who chase their dream with curiosity and interest, they enjoy the preparation-phase; some of them reach their final destination and show the world their worth.

With big success in mind, those who have genuine interest, find preparation for Civil Services Examination worthwhile and of great consequence. For them, it is easy to handle the exam requirements and remain motivated throughout the preparation journey.

One who understands the nature of examination, level of preparation it entails and amount of focused hard-work it necessitates excel in the UPSC Civil Services Examination.

So, be Ready to Face Lots of Unknown, Unexpected and Unpredictable Surprises

In the beginning, candidates have pleasant as well as stimulating sentiments that keep you glued to your preparation-plan.

But it is not a smooth sail; sometimes one has to struggle through hard times also. That is why it is said that you need to show courage to appear in this grueling competition.

If you are availing first attempt, remain focused and there should not be anything negative in mind that could have harmful repercussions.

Just think about the examination related requirements, the preparation you are doing and get ready to face each stage of the Examination confidently.

Success Mantra : Right Decision, Right Actions and Perfect Execution

You are in an open competition; have a competitive edge over others

since beginning. Here, it is all about relative performance that will determine your fate.

Once result is out, then only you will have clear clue which side you find yourself – Success or Failure. And yes, disappointments are going to be a large number.

If your fortune strikes and you come out victorious, you will be among a few hundred candidates and it would be truly amazing and enriching experience.

Still, there will be a turn; even if you succeed, for some it would be accomplishment of goal. Some candidates will fall short of their expectations and found their names attached to a rank that is lower in the merit-list and not good enough to get them a post in coveted Indian Administrative Service.

For Big Success, what Matters is Learning and Gaining Knowledge

Different family backdrop, dissimilar educational background, circumstances pole apart, diverse optional subjects and contradictory personalities; nothing that match, but when it comes to Civil Services Examination preparation, their views converge on the choices they make.

When it comes to selection of books, study-material, seeking guidance from coaching institutes, path each one followed and significance of focus, hard work, consistency and time management in their preparation-plans you may find many things common.

It doesn't matter if one is achieving success in first attempt or sixth; taking a shot immediately after completing graduation or planning a foray after higher degree; first attempt at age of 21 or may be at 32; devoting full time for preparation or may be working full time and squeezing time out for preparation.

I have met fresh graduates cracking it in their first attempt and achieving top ranks. I often connect with some successful candidates working, married for years and having kids; still, managed to put up extraordinary efforts that are rewarded aptly by UPSC.

Each individual is different; and has unique situation, conditions and surroundings that impact the final outcome; all you require is a winner's mind-set and unrelenting efforts till you reach your destination.

What matters is showing conviction in your decisions and being passionate for success in Civil Services Examination; it is nothing but your abilities, mental strength and perseverance that help you crack this examination.

It is Known for Glorious Uncertainties

With an aim to cover the syllabus, almost all buy relevant books and study-material, some candidates join coaching institutes to get guidance and by doing so they think that they are on the way to become IAS. But this is what even non-serious candidates do.

What matters is your clear understanding of the exam-plan, comprehending each word of the syllabus, a preparation-strategy of your own and an effective study-plan. By understanding the intricacies involved and avoiding some common mistakes you can say you have set your sail in the right direction. With consistency and focused hard work, you can deliver positive outcome.

Civil Services Examination is known for glorious uncertainties; be it a beginner or a consistent campaigner, everyone looks for some insights that could help in cracking this examination.

Sticking to the syllabus gives you a feel that the level of preparation is good, but certain distinct trends have

been emerging in the examination where expectations are much above the routine as some evolving issues, contemporary problems and inter-related issues with topics gives you a feel that there exist gaps between the examiner's expectation and your preparation.

To uplift your level, you need to go a step ahead to prepare for the contemporary developments and issues. A grip over current affairs and awareness of things around marks the significance of newspaper reading habits that comes handy while attempting question papers in examination hall. Coming to role of coaching and how you should look at it.

UPSC CSE Preparation Necessitates Coaching or Candidates Just Follow a Trend ?

Though UPSC CSE focused coaching institutes existed even 50-60 years back, but as the CSE evolved and UPSC introduced changes at regular intervals, the role of coaching institutes kept on growing.

With commercialization, last 2 decades saw an exponential growth in a few specific metropolitan cities that emerged as a hub of coaching institutes and increasing number of vacancies and aspirants fueled this expansion.

If you wish to prepare effectively, feel the need of supplementary guidance/support and maximize your potential in limited time-frame, it is definitely a necessity.

While preparing for such a big examination the biggest fear is about how to cope up with other candidates and the activities they undertake. Coaching institutes give you an environment where you with your peers have the common goal and everyone learns the skills and approaches to ace the exam.

You get opportunity to interact with your friends in coaching and discuss various questions that surround your mind about the exam. Peer-group performance, their growth, advancement and consistency inspire other to put in your best and enhance the prospects for a big success.

Biggest takeaway is that besides structured pedagogy, they help deve-

lop skills and abilities that are crucial for success in each stage of the exam. They make it possible to prepare in relatively short duration; with appropriate guidance, candidates build up time management skills as the entire syllabus is covered in the given span of time.

Answer-writing practice and timely feedback ensures you are able to understand the examiners' expectations and with practice keep on honing the skill.

By means of invaluable exposure to cutting-edge approaches, these institutes engage candidates with disciplined learning environment and encourage them to perform better.

No doubt, some of the genuine players play a vital role and significantly increase confidence and many candidates acknowledge their contribution in big success.

When it comes to optional subject, most of the candidates make cross-domain shift and pick up a new subject. Here, it becomes strategic to prepare a new subject in limited time and hence, the utility of specialized coaching comes in picture.

Even if candidates pick up their own subject that they studied in graduation or post-graduation, to cover the syllabus as per UPSC's orientation, still they seek expert guidance. Reason is simple as there are some additional topics in UPSC syllabus for optional subject than what all you have read in graduation. Moreover, answer-writing is another challenge as you have to be precise and concise to adhere to word limits.

With efforts/rewards in favour, coaching ensures greater probability of success in Civil Services Exam.

What these Coaching Institute Offer ?

Remember, the goal you have set for yourself is your and you are accountable for each and every action you take.

Irrespective of candidates' academic background, UPSC-CSE focused coaching institutes provide guidance to aspirants that can help them learn, answer questions, provide new perspectives thus develop clear understanding of the subjects/topics. They provide you access to a wealth of resources - customized

notes and study-materials, current affairs updates, Prelims mock-tests, Mains Test-Series apart from classes providing structured study-plan that enhance their performance.

The objective is to provide exam-oriented approach, develop critical eye and analyzing abilities that help candidates to keep abreast with the latest information and adjust to ever evolving format of Prelims and Mains and tackle all the papers confidently. In simple words they train candidates to score higher marks in each paper that helps them in their ultimate success.

These institutes make candidates understand their strengths and work on identifying students' weaknesses, thus giving them idea about the areas for improvement. They provide candidates insights and strategies to uplift overall performance.

Each coaching institute develop diverse learning techniques for an effective delivery and that becomes their USP. They continuously work on newer methods and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been on the rise in many organized players.

Focus is on the way they teach; it should be easy to understand and build concepts that ultimately helps candidates in their improved performance. After all they are expected to teach candidates the syllabus in limited days and months that they usually take preparing during their academics.

Periodic tests and evaluation methods keep them in sync with what they study and regular assessment keeps an eye on the growth of each candidate. Prelims mock-tests are a must for building speed with accuracy. These give you a real picture about the strong and weak area that helps you prioritize your study-plan. It gives you an idea about the mistake you commit in particular areas and repeat it.

Like-wise, Mains test-series help you hone presentation skills and sharpen your recall. It helps in time management also as you develop practice writing for three hours continuously.

Be it Prelims mock-tests or Mains test-series, these give you real exam-like experience in stimulating conditions.

The unique feature is they research and adapt their teaching method in sync with previous years' questions and keep an eye on the changing trends.

There are Hundreds of Coaching Institutes, But which one to Join is a Big Question

Don't just go by the claims; here are some mistakes to avoid :

1. Choose the Genuine One : Coaching is the best learning platform provided you land at the right place that offer the support that you are looking for. Go for the institute that fits your needs.

Likewise, bigger/popular names not always meet your prospects and joining on popularity parameter may not be sufficient for you.

Go for the institutes that highly qualified faculty members well versed with UPSC CSE requirements.

2. Don't Fall into Fallacy of Low Fee : Sometimes settling for average or substandard coaching institutes just for sack of saving some bucks may not be the right decision. Money is precious; don't waste it just for showing the world that you are preparing for UPSC.

Here, you need to research as joining an institute based on cost benefit than the alternatives on your mind may not work.

3. Timing of Coaching : This is very important decision. Now, it has been observed that teenagers even in 9th-10th standard are getting attracted towards Civil Services and commence serious preparation. It is a big examination and has an exam-plain that is quite long.

Timing of the coaching should be perhaps as near as possible to the exam so that you can take the full advantage of the preparation particularly the efforts you make on preparing dynamic part of the syllabus.

4. Over Dependence : If you leave everything on coaching institute, you are showing complacency and are calling for a disaster. With the help you get from coaching, you have to make your own efforts and put it to use to understand the concept as most of the topics provides outline and expect candidates would make efforts to revise it at home and fill in the gaps to make it comprehensive.

5. Cutting Ties with Coaching

After the Course is Over : If you are able to find the genuine coaching institute, it is not a one-time event; it is a relationship that lasts till you achieve success. Your course/s may get over with time, but the support and mentorship continue you achieve your goal and even beyond.

6. Measure Your Preparedness : Periodic evaluation is necessary to know where you stand, how much is the progress and are you in a position to match the UPSC examiners' expectations.

This is up to you to take a comprehensive package or can think of joining Prelims Mock-Test or Mains Test-Series separately. We have many specialized coaching institutes offering tailored products for an effective evaluation and genuine feedback.

7. Let it be a Life-long Learning : It is about the purpose and your outlook towards life. This exam is unique and the knowledge you gain in the process is such that helps you even if you fail to clear this exam. It is all about a comprehensive approach to learning and understanding. The study habits, benefit of reading newspapers daily and the time management techniques you use will help you throughout your life.

Be Rational in Your Decision

The sad part is sub-standard coaching institutes have multiplied that do more damage than providing any advantage to the student community. They take advantage of inadequate awareness among fresh candidates, influx of candidates from small towns and from semi-urban/rural areas who get attracted by advertisements, billboards and candidates from low-income group who look for little lower fee.

The selection criteria for coaching institutes should always be the satisfaction level of the candidates who avail their services and do well in the examination. Final selection in the exam becomes a big attraction and ensures the quality and reliability.

The thing that sets apart the popular institutes is the toppers endorsements that worked wonders for the coaching institutes as a result won the trust of aspirants. Here again, there is a catch where many coaching institutes advertise and claim toppers

on the bases of only interview program that is offered to them free of cost. I talked about this in my article in December 2023 issue of Pratiyogita Darpan.

A Few Disadvantages for Your Reference

1. Quality of tutoring; effectiveness varies.
2. High Fee structure.
3. Boarding/lodging in case you opt for coaching outside.
4. Develops dependency on coaching.
5. Tall claims; exaggeration of claims; false promises.
6. Reliance of constricted learning environment impacts the scope of understanding and creative/imaginative skills.
7. May result in rote learning and memorization that costs knowledge accumulation and the overall growth and impacts negatively as it hampers candidates' ability to think creatively, critically and analytically.
8. For talented candidates, coaching's accommodative stance (for new or weak candidates) force them to adjust the learning pace
9. One-size-fits-all approach doesn't deliver same outcome; for a fresher certain topic may sound too detailed and for a well-read candidate may find it too basic.
10. Standardized approach sometimes fails to address the demand of the exam (to tackle unpredictability).
11. Large batch sizes put down candidate-faculty relationship.
12. Diverse opinion/strategies shared by different faculties.
13. Quality of questions in Prelims Mock-Tests and Mains Test-Series.
14. Sometimes, going to coaching becomes an endless, self-defeating or pointless pursuit that force candidates to ignore their physical/mental wellbeing. If you don't find balance in the activities you undertake, you are less likely to find it rewarding.
15. Peer performance sometimes creates anxiety and cause frustration and candidates sometimes develop a feeling of giving up.

First, Ascertain do You Need Coaching at All ?

If yes, then for which stage (Prelims, Mains or Interview) and area (General Studies, Optional Subject, Essay) for which you need guidance or for overcoming self-doubts and exam phobia you need coaching for all these papers.

If you are a fresher, coaching institutes help you understand the exam-plan, intricacies involved and provide guidance, support and mentorship with a well structure study-plan that helps candidates in covering the vast syllabus methodically.

For those who join coaching after consuming an attempt or two and finding it difficult to crack, it may be a case where with introspection they know the areas that are weak and accordingly take decision.

In cut-throat competition, it is clear that coaching is about learning and step-by-step developing specific skills that ensured improved performance in the Civil Services Examination.

Remember, it is a significant financial investment that you are going to make. So, take a rational decision – you see it as a trend or a genuine need?

Foundation Course (Covering Prelims-cum-Mains)

With so many popular coaching institutes offering almost every area of syllabus under one roof, candidates prefer to join such foundation courses. By doing so, they save time and effort as they get everything at one place and the class time-table is such that there is no overlap.

They cover the entire syllabus with a systematic study-plan and arrange subject-wise classes by breaking syllabus into small portions using interactive learning technologies thus making it manageable. Systematic approach covers the entire syllabus with integrated approach.

However, it is not possible that for each subject, coaching may have good faculty specializing in important constituents of General Studies syllabus; some may be excellent, some average and some filling in the gaps.

Specific Subject Based Modules

In the recent times, candidates have become smart and look for customized offerings to save on cost and time. Different constituents from different institutes - this ensures quality and affordable fee as well.

If you feel that you need some support in specific areas say Economy and Ethics part, there is no need to join full foundation course; specific customized offerings for each subject are available for you to take advantage.

With the increasing need to have a module suitable for specific requirement, most of the coaching institutes offer such short-duration courses. This gives you opportunity to reach out to the renowned faculties and take advantage of assured quality for each module you take.

To get useful insights on IAS preparation you can watch my videos on YouTube also. Besides, I am sharing lots of information about Civil Services Exam preparation on www.iaspassion.com where I contribute regularly. You can follow me on Twitter handle @atulkpr to be acquainted with IAS Exam or to get your queries solved.

My aim and efforts had been to understand the emerging needs and make an attempt to address those to the best of my knowledge. So, you may connect with me through e-mail at atul@pdgroup.in to share suggestions, comments or queries, if any.

Disclaimer : This all comes with a caveat that what all I have talked about is not a promotion on coaching institute/s; this is just a piece of advice for those who wish to seek guidance from coaching institutes and prepare for UPSC CSE.

Is it Necessary to go for Coaching ?

No, absolutely not. Lot of candidates crack this exam with self-help.

With so much of awareness about exam related requirements, you can easily work out a plan and strategy to cover the syllabus. All you need is clear understanding of requirements, systematic approach and the right direction.

Understanding the exam-plan, syllabus, what and from where to

read and significant overlap in subjects/topics for both Prelims and Mains make things manageable.

Preparation with self-help allows you flexibility and independence, but it takes a long time to arrange the books and study-material, develop notes by refereeing various sources. The syllabus is such that you need to refer multiple sources and have to update it periodically.

With self-assessment, you can assess your competence, aptitude subject knowledge that match with syllabus and areas of improvement. You can identify your strengths and weaknesses and adjust the pace of preparation as per the time at your disposal.

You can continue with your distinct learning style and keep moving forward. Self-discipline is a must. This includes setting up small targets and working towards achieving it within the time frame. You can make quarterly, monthly, weekly and even daily plans and execute these plans to keep moving forward.

You will have to keep vigil on the current affairs front and will have to stay informed and updated with the latest about national and international events and developments.

Revision and regular practice are essential and evaluation of the answers is must.

You have to remain positive, keeping goal in focus and self-motivated to avoid any slump during preparation. Even if you have some low phases, you need a support system – if may be your family and friends who are always around in the time of need.

As such, if one needs guidance, it is available in abundance; YouTube videos, tutorials, social media posts and above all Telegram. You search anything and you are shown so many options. You can use the ones from the trusted sources.

Result of Civil Services (Main) Examination 2023 is Round the Corner

The result of Mains 2023 is expected in December and will take successful candidates a little closure to the final success.

Continued on Page 82



Divya Darpan

Fifth India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

Context

The 5th India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue highlighted progress in various areas of bilateral cooperation including defense, semiconductors, emerging technology, space, and health etc. Since 2018, 2+2 meetings have been held every year with US leaders.

Relevance

GS Paper-2 : Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

The ministers discussed the Indo-Pacific, Middle East, and Ukraine crises, emphasizing the war's humanitarian impact on the global economy and food security, and pledged continued humanitarian aid and post-conflict reconstruction.

About 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

The 2+2 meetings involve high-level representatives from each country's Foreign and Defence portfolios to enhance dialogue, understanding each other's strategic concerns and sensitivities, and build stronger, integrated strategic relationships in a rapidly changing global environment.

The US is India's oldest and most important 2+2 talk's partner.

Additionally, India has held 2+2 meetings with ministers from Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom and Russia.

Key Highlights of the India-US 2+2 Dialogue :

● Strengthening the Major Defence Partnership :

- The Ministers reiterated their commitment to deepen the defense partnership, accelerate joint projects, and collaborate in emerging domains like space and artificial intelligence.
- India and the U.S. are currently negotiating deals for the purchase of MQ-9B

unmanned aerial vehicles and the licensed manufacturer of General Electric's F-414 jet engine in India.

- The Ministers anticipate the completion of a Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA), a key priority in the Roadmap, which will enhance the resilience of both countries' defense industrial ecosystems.
 - Indian and US Ministers praised India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem's partnerships since June 2023, including Investors Strategy Session, INDUS-X Gurukul Education series, and joint challenges initiative.
 - They maximize the shared benefits of the Logistics and Exchange Memorandum Agreement (LEMOA) and identify reciprocal steps both countries can take to enhance the reach of their respective militaries.
- #### ● Promoting counter-terrorism and law enforcement cooperation :
- India and the US have condemned terrorism and violent extremism, calling for justice for perpetrators of attacks like the 26/11 Mumbai and Pathankot attacks.
 - They also emphasized the importance of upholding international standards on anti-money laundering and combating terrorism financing. They pledged to work together in multilateral platforms and counter emerging forms of terrorism and the use of emerging technologies.
 - They also expressed their concern about ransom ware and other cyber-related crimes, and recognized the need to bolster protection of

critical networks and information infrastructure.

● Science and Technology Partnerships :

- The Ministers praised the India-U.S. Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) for its progress in fostering collaborations in science and technology sectors. They urged governments, academics, and corporate sectors to continue building strategic partnerships in emerging technologies like quantum, telecom, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and semiconductors.
 - They praised recent efforts in strengthening space collaborations, including establishing a fifth sub-working group for 'Space Commerce', adding 'Plane-tary Defence' to the joint working group, and joining multilateral groups.
 - The Ministers highlighted the Joint Task Force's efforts to foster collaborations between American Universities and IIT Council of India in various fields, including sustainable energy, health, semiconductor technology, and emerging technologies.
- #### ● Strengthening People-to-People Ties :
- The Ministers praised the U.S.'s 2023 pilot program for Indian nationals' petition-based work visas, welcomed the opening of a Seattle Indian consulate, and discussed opening new consulates in Bengaluru and Ahmedabad.
- #### ● Discussion on Afghanistan :
- The Ministers urged the Taliban to respect Afghan territory's security and UNSC Resolution 2593 (2021), ensuring it's not used for terrorist attacks. They also emphasized the human

rights of Afghans, freedom of travel, and humanitarian assistance, and urged consultations for a peaceful future.

- **Discussion on Chinese Aggression** : The US emphasized that the bilateral relationship extends beyond addressing the challenges posed by China.
- **India-Canada Row** : The ongoing row between India and Canada, particularly concerning security concerns related to a Khalistan separatist based in the US and Canada, was addressed. India communicated its position on core security concerns to its partners.
- **Israel-Hamas War** : India reiterated its stance on the Israel-Hamas Conflict, advocating for a two-state solution (Two countries officially demarcated and Internationally Recognised) and the early resumption of dialogue.

The partnership between the two countries is critical for ensuring a free, open, and rules-bound Indo-Pacific region. The unparalleled Demographic Dividend offering opportunities for the US and Indian firms for technology transfer, manufacturing, trade and investment. India is emerging as a leading player in an international system that is undergoing an unprecedented transformation. It shall use its present situation to explore opportunities to further its vital interests.

Inauguration of Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link

Context

On 1st November, 2023, Akhaura-Agartala rail link inaugurated virtually by PM Modi and his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina. In a historic move, Bangladesh and northeast India re-established rail connectivity through Tripura.

Relevance

General Studies-II : India and its neighbourhood- relations.

About Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link :

- The rail link is 12.24 km long, with a 6.78 km dual gauge rail line in the Akhaura upazilla at Brahmanbaria district of Bangladesh and 5.46 km in Tripura.

- The link can significantly reduce the time and distance needed to reach Tripura, southern Assam and Mizoram from Kolkata and the rest of India.
- The final project cost is estimated at ₹ 1255.10 crore, with ₹ 862.58 crore allocated for works on the Indian side alone.
- The entire project cost is being funded by India. The Ministry for Development of North East Region (DoNER) funded the work on the Indian side, and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) funded the expense for the Bangladesh side as 'Aid to Bangladesh'.
- The Indian Railway Construction International Limited (IRCON), a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under the Indian Railways, did the work on the Indian side, and Texmaco, a private Indian firm, implemented the work on the Bangladesh side.

Significance of the Project

Historical Significance : The Akhaura junction, located in Bangladesh's Brahmanbaria district is part of the Chittagong division, and has a rich history of commercial and cultural ties with India's northeastern region, dating from colonial era.

Enhance Communication Network : The project will help provide connectivity between Kolkata and Northeast India by establishing railway connectivity via Bangladesh.

Economic Significance : It will boost tourism in the region, especially Northeast India and help enhance imports and exports of local produce.

Bilateral Ties : Strengthening the close ties that bind Bangladesh and

India and demonstrating cooperative efforts for development and prosperity on both sides in accordance with India's Neighbourhood First policy.

Connectivity between India and Bangladesh

Three trains run between West Bengal and Bangladesh as :

- The Bandhan Express reboots an old rail link between Kolkata and Khulna, the third-largest city of Bangladesh.
- The Maitree Express runs between Kolkata and Dhaka Cantonment.
- The Mitali Express connects Siliguri in North Bengal with the Bangladesh capital.

India-Bangladesh relations would be strengthened by the Agartala-Akhaura rail link, which will improve regional connectivity and spur economic growth. The project highlights the vital role that railways play in bolstering bilateral cooperation and addressing logistical issues, and it is in line with India's Act East and Neighbourhood First objectives.

70 Hours a Week

Context

Recently, Infosys chairman N.R. Narayana Murthy giving a statement sparked a debate by urging young Indians to work 70 hours per week, which translates to about 12 hours of work per day assuming a 6-day work week, to develop the country.

Relevance

GS Paper-III : Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth.



GS PAPER-II : Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Arguments in Favour for Long Working Hours

- **Improved Productivity and Efficiency :** Germany and Japan post-WWII encouraged increased working hours to boost economic productivity and efficiency. The average annual work day was between 2,200-2,400 hours, resulting in 8-3-9 hours of daily work, leading to increased productivity, project progress, and career advancement.
- **Skill Development :**
 - ❑ The increased work hours allow more time for skill development and mastery.
 - ❑ Professionals can focus on defining their skills, gaining expertise, and becoming specialists in their respective fields. This expertise can give the sense of higher job satisfaction and career growth.
- **Financial Incentives :**
 - ❑ Increased working hours per week often leads to increased earnings.
 - ❑ With overtime pay and opportunities for bonuses, individuals can substantially increase their income.
 - ❑ The financial incentive can be particularly motivating for those with financial goals or responsibilities.
- **Building Professional Connections :**
 - ❑ The extended hours spent in the workplace gives more opportunities for networking and building professional relationships.
 - ❑ Collaborating with colleagues and superiors opens doors to new career prospects, mentorship, and valuable connections.

Arguments in Against for Long Working Hours

- **Health Consequences :**
 - ❑ A 70-hour workweek can have adverse effects on an

individual's physical and mental well-being.

- ❑ Prolonged hours, elevated stress levels, and insufficient rest can result in burnout, linked to physical and mental health issues, including a heightened risk of heart disease, anxiety, and depression.
- ❑ Rising cases of cardiovascular health problems in the younger population of the country.
- **Work and Personal Life :**
 - ❑ Maintaining a 70-hour workweek often means sacrificing personal and family time. It will leave no time to socialise, exercise, recreate or even talk to family members.
 - ❑ Time spent commuting to and from the office, will leave no time to be with family and care for mental health.
 - ❑ This can lead to strained relationships, neglect of family and friends, and a decreased quality of life.
- **Challenges for Working Women :** Working women have the additional responsibility of tending to their homes and children.
- **Diminished Creativity and Innovation :** Overworking can limit opportunities for creativity and innovative thinking. Exhaustion and a lack of relaxation time can hinder an individual's ability to think critically, solve problems, and generate fresh ideas.

Some Key Points

- Data from International Labour Organisation (ILO) shows Indians are already among the hardest workers globally.
- According to ILO, Indians contribute an average of 47-7 hours per week per employed individual as of 2023.
- Furthermore, when this number is compared with the ten largest economies in the world, India has the longest average workweek.

What is Economic Productivity ?

- The main driver of economic expansion and competitiveness is productivity.
- Productivity, in economics, measures output per unit of input, such as labour, capital, or any other resource. It is often calculated for the economy as a ratio of gross domestic product (GDP) to hours worked.
- Labour productivity may be further broken down by sector to examine trends in labour growth, wage levels, and technological improvement. Corporate profits and shareholder returns are directly linked to productivity growth.
- At the corporate level, productivity is a measure of the efficiency of a company's production process; it is calculated by measuring the number of units produced relative to employee labour hours or by measuring a company's net sales relative to employee labour hours.

What Should be the Idle Working Hours According to the Labour Laws ?

- **According to the Indian Labour Act :**
 - ❑ A worker cannot be employed for more than 48 hours in a week. Weekly holiday is compulsory. If he is asked to work on weekly holiday, he should have full holiday on one of three days immediately or after the normal day of holiday.
 - ❑ He cannot be employed for more than 9 hours in a day. At least half an hour rest should be provided after 5 hours. Total period of work inclusive of rest interval cannot be more than 10-5 hours.

Therefore, a 70-hour workweek offers benefits like increased output, skill improvement and networking but also risks burnout, unbalanced work-life, and decline in creativity. Individuals must balance personal and professional goals for long-term success.

Impact of Air Pollution on Economic Growth

Context

Recently various reports and points that air pollution has direct, debilitating impact on GDP growth and per capita income levels by reducing worker outputs.

Relevance

GS Paper-III : Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

Air pollution, a significant environmental challenge, is causing severe health and ecosystem impacts, particularly in a country like India, where key economic hubs like Delhi NCR and Mumbai face recurring pollution issues due to industrial activity and population growth.

Key Reports :

- A June 2023 World Bank paper pointed to evidence that micro-level impacts of air pollution on health, productivity, labour supply, and other economically relevant outcomes aggregate to “macro level effects that can be observed in year-to-year changes in GDP”.
- A 2021 paper in The Lancet Planetary Health, which studied the direct impacts of air pollution in India on mortality and morbidity, found large interstate variations in economic loss as a proportion of the state GDP from 0.67% to 2.15% with the biggest losses in the low per-capita GDP states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- A recent World Bank report Air Pollution and Poverty : PM 2.5 Exposure in 211 Countries and Territories suggested how air pollution kills especially the poor who are more exposed and vulnerable.
- A rooftop solar company reported a 13% decrease in the productivity of its solar panels on high pollution days, thereby reducing economic viability for solar in India.
- Employees at Bengaluru’s tech hub, Whitefield Corporate Zone,

reported an 8-10% reduction in productivity at work.

- The RBI’s Department of Economic and Policy Research (DEPR) said in its latest report on Currency & Finance 2022-23 that up to 4.5% of India’s GDP could be at risk by 2030 due to lost labour hours from climate change issues, including extreme heat and humidity.

There are direct ways in which air pollution can affect GDP like

- Early mortality
- Increased health care costs
- Welfare losses but there are also indirect losses that contribute to GDP losses like
- Reduced labor or employee productivity
- Decreased consumer spending
- Out of these, employee productivity, customer traffic and premature mortality have an immediate influence on the organization.

Cost of poor air quality can be manifested in six distinct ways :

- (i) Lower labour productivity
- (ii) Lower consumer footfall
- (iii) Lower asset productivity
- (iv) Increased health expenses
- (v) Welfare losses
- (vi) Premature mortality

Challenges for India

- More than 20 of the world’s 30 cities with the worst air pollution are in India.
- Delhi has the poorest air quality among cities globally, with PM 2.5 concentration levels at nearly 10 times WHO target. A paper in Lancet had listed Delhi as the city with the highest level of per-capita economic loss due to pollution among major Indian cities.
- RBI has flagged the heightened concern for India where employment generation is still largely linked to economic activities involving the outdoors – agriculture, construction, delivery services, security agency work, etc.
- Air pollution also takes a toll on productivity even in indoor jobs such as those in call centers.

Above challenges are of particular relevance of India, where the

services sector accounts for more than 50% of GDP.

Sources of Air Pollution in India

- **Vehicular/Transport Emissions** : The transportation sector significantly contributes to air pollutants in cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Kolkata, with major pollutants being carbon monoxide, NO_x, NMVOCs, methane, CO₂, SO_x, and TSPs.
- **Industrial Processes** : India’s industrialization has led to air pollution in urban cities, with 17 polluting industries classified into small and medium scales. Seven critical industries, including iron and steel, are considered ‘critical’. Small-scale industries use biomass, plastic, and crude oil as energy sources.
- **Agriculture** : Agricultural activities release pollutants like ammonia and nitrous oxide, methane, nitrogen excretions from animal manure, methane from wetlands, and nitrogen emissions from agricultural soils due to fertilizer addition.
- **Power Plants** : According to The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), the emissions of SO₂, NO_x, and PM increased over 50 times from 1947 to 1997. Thermal power plants are the main sources of SO₂ and TSP emissions, thereby contributing significantly to the emission inventories.
- **Waste Treatment and Biomass Burning** : In India, about 80% of municipal solid waste (MSW) is still discarded into open dumping yards and landfills, which leads to various GHG emissions apart from the issues of foul odour and poor water quality at nearby localities. The lack of proper treatment of MSW and biomass burning has been responsible in causing air pollution in urban cities. Methane (CH₄) is the major pollutant released from landfills and wastewater treatment plants. Ammonia (NH₃) is another by-product, which is released from the composting process.

- **Domestic Sector** : Households are identified as a major contributor of air pollution in India. The emissions from fossil fuel burning, stoves or generators come under this sector, thereby affecting the overall air quality. Domestic energy is powered by fuels, such as cooking gas, kerosene, wood, crop wastes or cow dung cakes.
- **Construction and Demolition Waste** : Another major source of air pollution in India is waste, which is an outcome of construction and demolition activities. Even after the construction phase, these buildings have the potential to be the major contributors of GHG emissions.

Measures to Control Emission in India

- Various initiatives, such as the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) as an alternative fuel, the odd-even measures implemented in Delhi, the introduction of Bharat Stage VI vehicle and fuel standards, the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), and the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) are some examples in this endeavour.
- The CPCB ensures the monitoring and regulation of the NAAQS in the cities, towns, and industrial areas with the co-operation of the respective State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs). Under these plans, various sector-wise measures have been implemented in the urban cities of India :
 - For the transport sector, for instance, some of these measures include the use of Electric Vehicles (EVs) as a mode of public transportation, development of cycling infrastructure, use of bioethanol as fuel, and the construction of multi-level car parking facilities and peripherals to tackle congestion.
 - Within the industrial sector, some of the measures undertaken comprise the implementation of zig-zag technology for the stack emissions from brick kilns,

online monitoring of discharges through the Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS), and the installation of web cameras in highly polluting industries.

- To tackle the problem of open burning of garbage and household wastes, door-to-door collection of segregated wastes has been introduced and several compost pits have been established in urban cities.
- In the residential sector, the government has set a target of achieving 100% usage of LPG for cooking purposes. Further, to control the concentrations of particulate matter (PM) and dust particles, various steps, such as the green buffer around cities, maintenance of 33% green cover around urban areas, installation of water fountains across the cities have been taken over the years.

India is grappling with poor air quality in urban areas, including medium-scale cities like Delhi. This pollution could negatively impact human health, biodiversity, heritage, and climate. A holistic emission control strategy should combine scientific ideas and technological advancements, support the economy, and are supported by the public. Sustainable public transportation methods, such as BRTs, metros, trams, and cycle lanes, can help reduce air pollution levels.

Revised Guidelines for Appointment of State DGPs

Context

Recently, UPSC revised the guidelines for appointment of State DGPs that only police officers with at least six months of service left before retirement will be considered for appointment as the Director General of Police of a State.

Relevance

GS Paper 2 : Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government.

GS Paper 3 : Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate UPSC guidelines have been amended due to states like Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana appointing acting DGPs instead of regular ones, bypassing the UPSC-selected panel. In fact, Uttar Pradesh has not had a full-time DGP since 2022.

New Guidelines for Appointment

- The guidelines require officers with at least six months of service left before retirement to be considered for the State DGP position.
- The guidelines have changed the eligibility criteria for the DGP position from 30 years of service to 25 years, expanding the pool of eligible candidates.
- The guidelines limit DGP position shortlisting to three officers, with exceptions under specific circumstances, emphasizing voluntary participation and requiring officers to express their willingness to be considered.
- New guidelines require a minimum of ten years of experience in law and order, crime, economic offenses, or intelligence wing for IPS officers aspiring to lead State Police Departments. Alongside specific areas, the guidelines also stress the need for deputation to central bodies such as the Intelligence Bureau, Research and Analysis Wing, or Investigation.
- The UPSC's Empanelment Committee will not evaluate IPS officers for the State DGP position if the Union Ministry of Home Affairs informs the State government that releasing the officers is not feasible.

Verdict of Supreme Court

- The UPSC established guidelines for appointment of State DGPs in 2009 following the 2006 Supreme Court verdict in the police reforms case. The DGP would be chosen by the State government from three senior officers, based on their service record, length of service and range of experience for heading the police force.

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United Development Programme (UNDP) on November 6, 2023 launched the Asia-Pacific Human Development Report 2024. The report titled—“Making Our Future : New Directions for Human Development in Asia and the Pacific”, paints a qualified picture of long-term progress, but also persistent disparity and widespread disruption, foreseeing a turbulent development landscape and urgently calling for new directions to boost human development.

The Report warns that the region faces three converging ‘risk clusters’ : (i) existential threats due to climate change and future pandemics, (ii) economic headwinds from shifting globalization patterns and automation, and (iii) a flagging pace of reform due to diminishing democratic spaces, rising populism, and polarization.

Asia Pacific region will account for two-thirds of global economic growth in 2023, income and wealth disparities are worsening, particularly in South Asia, where the wealthiest 10 per cent control over half of total income. More than 185 million people continue to live in extreme poverty earning below \$ 2-15 a day a number that is expected to climb further.

The Asia Pacific region has been at the forefront of many economic transformations. These can be traced back to **Japan's early experience with export-led industrialization**, which was followed by the **emergence of the Asian Tigers**, and the **rise of the economies of South-East Asia, South Asia and China**. These shifts, featuring just-in-time production and integrated value chains, established Asia as the world's manufacturing hub and enabled many countries to climb the income ladder. Asia and the Pacific now accounts for more than one-third of global output and is expected to provide about two-thirds of global growth, underscoring a shift to a multi-polar global economy.

Asia and the Pacific region has pioneered new approaches to human development. Rising on the path of export oriented growth and digitization of the economy still is laggard in some aspects of human development across various black spots of the region. The benefits in terms of higher growth of per capita income and better standards of living have not been equally shared. There are still widespread disparities among Asia-Pacific sub-regions, and across and within countries, with rampant and persistent structural exclusion. The report highlighted following areas of sub optimal performance :

- Inequality remains deeply entrenched.
- Millions of people are trapped in poverty.
- Deep gender biases.
- Millions of workers are confined to the informal sector, and there is a pronounced digital divide.
- There is also a significant ‘planetary-pressures’ divide.

Unmet aspirations heightened human insecurity, and a potentially more turbulent future create an urgent need for change.

The Asia-Pacific region is the birthplace of the export-led growth strategy, and where the human development approach, the brain-child of two South Asian economists- , Mahbub ul-Haq (Pakistan) and Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen (Indian origin American) was operationalized across several countries. However, to ensure more prosperous, equitable, and environmentally sustainable outcomes in the 21st Century, these paradigms need to be reshaped, modernized, and mainstreamed.

UNDP Report 2023 Suggests Three New Policy Directions

I. **Mainstreaming Human Development** : The human development approach should be mainstreamed better so that the rights and needs of current and future generations are at the heart of any future development strategy.

II. **Recalibrating Growth Strategies** : Growth strategies need to evolve with the times to produce not only sustained growth but also growth that is of the right kind, meaning that it generates quality jobs and reinforces human development in all of its dimensions.

III. **Making Change Happen** : Making change truly happen means going one step further and addressing issues of governance and the politics of reform, so that we can spark interest in change and deliver it better.

India : Trends in the Distribution of Income and Wealth

- During the last three decades, India has improved living standards, and significantly reduced poverty, but it is seeing an increase in inequalities.
- Per capita income in India increased from \$ 442 in 2000 to \$ 2,389 in 2022. And between 2004 and 2019, poverty rates (based on the international poverty measure of \$ 2-15 per day) plummeted from 40 to 10 per cent. Moreover, between 2015-16 and 2019-21, the share of the population living in multi-dimensional poverty fell from 25 to 15 per cent.
- Despite these successes, poverty remains persistently concentrated in states (Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh) that are home to 45 per cent of the country's population but contain 62 per cent of its poor.
- In addition, many other people are very vulnerable, hovering just above the poverty line. The groups at greater risk of falling back into poverty include women, informal workers, and inter-state migrants.
- Women are only 23 per cent of the labour force. Work of lakhs of women is not counted in the estimation of national income.

Despite constitutional and legal provisions for equal pay for equal work, women workers are not paid equal wages as compared to their male counter parts.

- Amidst rapid growth but persistent disparity, the income distribution has become more skewed. The top 10 per cent of the population get 57 per cent of national income and the top 1 per cent get 22 per cent one of the most unequal income distributions.
- There are similar gaps in wealth: the top 10 per cent of the population controls 65 per cent of the nation's total wealth. There is growing evidence of a strong rise in wealth inequality, mainly in the post-2000 period.

Political Empowerment of Women in India

In India, as of 2017, reserving one-third of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions helped elect over one million women to government positions—globally the largest absolute number of women in grassroots politics. The country's Parliament passed a constitutional amendment bill in September 2023 to reserve one third of seats in both houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and State Legislative Assemblies.

Path Breaking Initiatives in India to Mitigate Poverty and Inequalities

Guarantee Food Security—National Food Security Act, 2013 : India's rank in Global Hunger Index 2023 deteriorated further to 111th from 107th in 2022, despite the implementation of National Food Security Act since 2013 under which more than 81 crore people get enough foodgrains at highly subsidized prices. India is the only country in the world that provided free foodgrains to all the beneficiaries of the NFSA during and afterwards Covid-19 pandemic. Food security is a systemic issue that requires tackling multiple issues concomitantly. **Food security encompasses not only the quantity of food but also its accessibility, affordability, and quality.** At the centre of the definition is the ability of individuals and communities to acquire and utilize nutritious food consistently. As such, food security is a systemic issue and involves addressing issues such as poverty,

inequality, distribution, and access to resources, healthcare, and education. Government of India addressed these issue through transparent and effective implementation of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana .

The agriculture sector has historically been vulnerable to a multitude of external factors, including extreme weather events, disease outbreaks, and fluctuating commodity prices. These factors can lead to abrupt price spikes and food shortages, affecting vulnerable populations around the world. Even a modest reduction in the sector's output has the potential to trigger food-price inflation, significant welfare setbacks for poor populations, and possibly political unrest. Thanks to favourable monsoon during the last couple of years and pro farmer policies production of foodgrains and horticultural crops is on rising trajectory in India. Production of foodgrains and horticultural crops has been estimated at 330 million tones and 352 million tons respectively during 2022-23.

Diversifying Agriculture : Since nearly two third of the population is still dependent on agriculture and allied services, initiative like Green Revolution 2.0 is relevant more diversified in nature. Diversified investments in agriculture play a pivotal role in mitigating climate and marketing related risks by enhancing productivity and building resilience within the sector. These encompass a range of strategies and practices, which include the application of advanced technology. Various new technologies have been integrated into agricultural production, including solar-assisted irrigation in off-grid rural areas and solar-powered multi-utility farming vehicles. Some farmers have adopted precision farming techniques, utilizing data and artificial intelligence to optimize the use of inputs like water and fertilizers that in turn led to higher yields and reduced environmental impacts

Social Security for Unorganized Workers : Gig workers is a rising group of labour force in unorganized sector in urban areas, but with little or no social security provisions. For the first time, the definition of 'gig worker' or 'platform worker' has been provided in the Code on Social Security, 2020 (the Code). The Code

envisages setting up of helpline, facilitation centre, etc. for gig workers and platform workers by the appropriate Government to assist them to obtain registration, to facilitate their enrolment in the social security schemes, etc. The issues related to their employment are addressed by the respective State Government as per the provisions of labour laws.

The Code on Social Security, 2020 provides for framing of suitable social security schemes for gig workers and platform workers on matters relating to life and disability cover, accident insurance, health and maternity benefits, old age protection, etc. The Code also provides for setting up a Social Security Fund and one of the sources of fund, is contribution from aggregator between 1% to 2% of annual turnover of an aggregator subject to the limit of 5% of the amount paid or payable by an aggregator to such workers.

The new Rajasthan Platform-Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Act, 2023 is a first-of-its kind social security law that targets the fast-growing platform-based gig workers. It calls for the establishment of a welfare board and a dedicated social security fund for the state's platform-based gig workers. It is to be financed by a levy of between one and 2 per cent on each platform-based transaction.

Lessons from India's Digital Success Story : India's digital public infrastructure (DPI) has facilitated significant financial inclusion, provided the digital backbone for social transfers and access to social and other services, and has been transformative for the country. It is underpinned by the India Stack (often referred to as the JAM trinity), the interlinked building blocks of which are comprised of Jan Dhan (J) free savings accounts; Aadhaar (A) the biometric identification system which provides for unique digital identities, and Mobile (M) which has become the primary means of accessing financial services, combined with the instant unified payments interface (UPI) and the more recent Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) initiative which aims to facilitate a single open network digital commerce solution to level the playing field for businesses, includ-

ing MSMEs India has been a fore-running in the use of digital systems and platforms to provide government services and respond rapidly during emergencies.

India's robust digital public infrastructure (DPI), collectively known as India Stack, played a vital role during the pandemic by enabling direct benefit transfers and by enhancing access to essential services like education, healthcare, and public-sector payments. It comprises three key layers: unique identity (Aadhaar), complementary payment systems (Unified Payments Interface, Aadhaar Payments Bridge, Aadhaar Enabled Payment Service), and data exchange (DigiLocker and Account Aggregator). Two examples of success include :

- **COVID-19 Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) :** CoWIN became the digital backbone of one of the world's largest COVID-19 vaccination programmes, enabling efficient vaccine distribution and addressing challenges like internal migration. More than 950 million citizens registered on the CoWIN portal through online and on-site modes, with more than 1.6 billion doses of the vaccine administered.
- **Unified Payment Interface (UPI) :** UPI, one of the widely used DPI, has 260 million users, and facilitated over 2,000 transactions per second in 2022. UPI has connected 414 banks and handles 9 million monthly transactions, playing a pivotal role in reducing financial inequalities and bringing the unbanked population, particularly women, into the formal financial system. DPI systems have become critical for enabling meaningful delivery of public and private services and underpinning the achievement of a range of Sustainable Development Goals. The country's experience with DPI offers valuable insights for other nations undergoing digital transformations.

Success of Economic Reforms : Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation : A primary example of agile, crisis-based correction was the series of economic reforms of 1991

which enabled the country to evolve as a market economy – with reforms for liberalization, privatization, and globalization. These reforms were adopted despite significant, and potentially destabilizing, differences among key sectors such as labour and industry. They were based on informal, research-based dialogues and consultations that enabled different sectors to work towards common objectives at times of stress.

Human Development in India: Miles to go : The success of India on the front of human development is neither convincing nor satisfactory. India's rank in UNDP's Human Development Index hovers around 130 during the last couple of years. Value of India's HDI was 0.629 in 2015, 0.645 in 2018, 0.645 in 2019, 0.642 in 2020 and 0.633 in 2021. As a result, India has been placed in 'Medium Human Development' category of the countries.

UNDP's Regional Human Development Report 2023 highlighted following pitfalls and suggestions for India's road to human Development:

- There are also persistent inequalities in the distribution of wealth and human development progress overall has been very uneven.
- India has been able to reduced risks with national currency debt.
- Income disparities have widened over the years.
- India is among those countries of the world where share of richest 10 per cent of the population in nation's wealth is more than 50 per cent.
- The country currently emitting the most greenhouse gases is China, which in 2022 accounted for 32 per cent of global CO₂ emissions. India, the second largest emitter of the region, is expected to have been recording considerable rises in emissions last year.
- India is surrounded by Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea where coastal vulnerabilities are particularly pronounced. These vulnerabilities are aggravated by the extensive degradation of natural coastal defences such as mangroves and coral reefs—crucial buffers against

storm surges and rising sea levels. Additionally, land subsidence, driven by excessive groundwater extraction and rapid urbanization, further heightens the India's flood susceptibility. Climate change exacerbates these vulnerabilities by intensifying storms, elevating sea levels, and altering precipitation patterns, thereby increasing the pressure on already strained coastal systems.

Moreover, the country is a hot-spot for geological risks, notably earthquakes and tsunamis. The Hindukush and Himalayan Mountain regions are among the world's most seismically active zones, predisposing them to earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, and glacial lake outburst floods.

The initiatives such as Maharashtra's Employment Guarantee Programme and MGNREGA served as powerful tools for enhancing social protection and ensuring livelihood security. Following suit, the state of Rajasthan has implemented a new urban employment scheme modeled after MGNREGA, guaranteeing 100 days of employment per year to urban households. Several other states in the country are currently evaluating the viability of similar schemes, addressing the issue of substantial underemployment in their respective regions.

Indeed, growth should not be the sole benchmark. While some reforms might yield modest growth, they also promise greater well-being—friendlier cities, greener economies, and better preparedness for climate change. Governance quality is crucial in this context, as innovation thrives where governance excels. Kerala's annual growth rate of 5 to 6 per cent may lag behind economic powerhouses like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Karnataka. Yet, its HDI rating, at 0.75, tops the nation. Kerala's progress in reducing poverty and addressing nutritional deprivation stands out across the country.

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With the opening of economy after the ill effects of COVID-19 pandemic, demand for loans, particularly the personal loans increased considerably. Commercial banks, NBFCs and Fintech companies welcomed the loan seekers with open arms. The net result was the high growth of consumer loans and out of those the ratio of unsecured consumer loans increased.

Growth of Unsecured Consumer Loan Sector

According to the RBI’s latest Financial Stability Report, released in June, 2023, advances for unsecured retail loans rose to 25.2 per cent in March 2023 from 22.9 per cent in March 2021, while secured loans saw a decline to 74.8 per cent from 77.1 per cent during the same period. Overall, retail loans grew at a compound annual growth rate, or CAGR, of 24.8 per cent from March 2021 to March 2023 in contrast to 13.8 per cent CAGR for overall bank credit. “In recent years, Indian banks appear to have displayed ‘herding behaviour’ in diverting lending away from the industrial sector towards retail loans. The decline was evident across bank groups. Empirical evidence suggests that a build-up of concentration in retail loans may become a source of systemic risk,” the RBI report observed. Key facts in this regards are following :

- Delinquencies, measured in terms of the inability of borrowers to repay loans between 31 and 180 days, for loans under ₹ 50,000 rose to 8.1 per cent in June 2023.
- Technically, a loan turns into special mention account 1 (SMA-1) if the borrower has not paid the repayment instalment within 30 days; SMA-2 for non-payment over 60 days; and a non-performing asset (NPA) when the repayment is not done even after 90 days.

- Essentially, loans belonging to the SMA-1 and SMA-2 have been growing.
- The bad loans in the retail segment were 1.4 per cent as of March 2023.
- According to the CRIF Highmark data, the total value of short-term personal loans (STPL) below ₹ 10,000 grew 37 per cent in FY 2022-23, while STPL of ₹ 10,000-50,000 rose 48 per cent. The credit bureau considers loans up to ₹ 50,000 as STPL.
- Some 8.6 million such loans were disbursed in FY 2022-23, registering a 50 per cent rise over FY 2021-22. About 80 per cent of all personal loans disbursed in FY2022-23 were STPL and 60 per cent of such loans had an ultra-small ticket size below ₹ 10,000.
- The overall personal loan portfolio was to the tune of ₹ 11.16 trillion as of June 2023 more than double of the level seen in March 2020 (pre-Covid).
- Small cities have contributed more to these loans. About 38 per cent of STPL up to ₹ 10,000 during the period July 2022-June 2023 were outside India’s top 100 cities. In contrast, 29 per cent originated in the top eight cities.
- To support the fact that small cities are playing a bigger role in this segment, the credit bureau says 35 per cent of STPL between ₹ 10,000 and ₹ 50,000 sanctioned between July 2022 and June 2023 were from beyond the top 100 cities, while the top eight cities accounted for 31 per cent.
- NBFCs dominate the origination and the portfolio of such loans. The share of private banks by origination volume has risen from the pre-Covid level, but relative to March 2022, it has dipped.
- An October 2023 report of Swiss brokerage UBS red-flagged the issue, saying the PSBs may see

higher defaults than their private peers, as credit losses from unsecured retail loans could increase 50-200 basis points in 2024-25. “Public Sector banks likely had 52 per cent of their outstanding personal loans to borrowers with credit scores below 644 (medium-to high-risk borrowers), while NBFCs had 49 per cent and large private banks about 31 per cent in June 2023,” the report highlighted.

- Since January 2022, small-ticket personal loans of less than ₹ 50,000, while representing a very small share of total retail balances, have roughly accounted for one-fourth of total volumes. In the June quarter of FY24, 51 per cent of consumers who took small-ticket personal loans already had more than four credit products at the time of accessing yet another new loan, compared with just 17 per cent in the June quarter of FY20.
- A recent study by SBI Life Insurance, in collaboration with Deloitte, finds that 47 per cent of individuals surrendered their life insurance policies in the last five years. Meanwhile, the absolute number of Income Tax returns filers is rising but the number of taxpayers is going down.

The rise in unsecured loans has been attributed to improved underwriting capabilities, digitisation, and the use of fintech, all of which have made lending easier, but may also have increased risks. NBFCs in particular have been using digital channels aggressively.

The situation is going from bad to worse. Whether the regulator the (RBI), the government (Ministry of Finance) or the economists like it or not, situation shows clearly there is stress in the space of unsecured borrowers. Who is responsible for the over-leveraging ? NBFCs ? Fintechs ?

Where do they get the money to lend?

Concern for Rise in Unsecured Loans

As happened in the past, the top management as well as the branch level management of Commercial Banks did not press the breaks to halt the rising wave of unsecured consumer loans with the premise that they form a minuscule part of their overall credit book. Ultimately the chief regulator—the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come forward and announced the corrective measures as it doesn't want to take a chance.

In the October 2023 monetary policy statement, while emphasising the importance of financial sector stability, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das spoke about the very high growth of certain components of personal loans. The RBI has been closely monitoring them for any signs of incipient stress.

"Banks and NBFCs would be well-advised to strengthen their internal surveillance mechanisms, address the build-up of risks, if any, and institute suitable safeguards in their own interest," Das said, adding, "The need of the hour is robust risk management and stronger underwriting standards." Deputy Governor Swaminathan J., 4 too, pointed out that unsecured loans have been an 'outlier', growing at 23 per cent in the past two years, while other segments such as loans to corporations and small and medium enterprises have been growing at 12-14 per cent.

Amid growing concerns over the ability of small borrowers to service loans, the finance ministry had asked the PSBs to review their small loan portfolios and submit a report on the state of affairs in this segment. However, the bankers have assured the ministry that they do not see any systemic risks emanating from small unsecured loans as their overall exposure remains tiny.

RBI Raised the Risk Weight for Consumer Loans (Except Housing, Education, Vehicle and Gold Loans)

RBI on November 16, 2023 issued the following guidelines to commercial banks and NBFCs :

I. Consumer Credit Exposure :

(a) Consumer Credit Exposure of Commercial Banks : As per extant instructions applicable to commercial banks, consumer credit attracts a risk weight of 100%. On a review, it has been decided to increase the risk weights in respect of consumer credit exposure of commercial banks (outstanding as well as new), including personal loans, but excluding housing loans, education loans, vehicle loans and loans secured by gold and gold jewellery, by 25 percentage points to 125%.

(b) Consumer Credit Exposure of NBFCs : In terms of extant norms, NBFCs' loan exposures generally attract a risk weight of 100%. On a review, it has been decided that the consumer credit exposure of NBFCs (outstanding as well as new) categorised as retail loans, excluding housing loans, educational loans, vehicle loans, loans against gold jewellery and microfinance/SHG loans, shall attract a risk weight of 125%.

(c) Credit Card Receivables : As per extant instructions, credit card receivables of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) attract a risk weight of 125% while that of NBFCs attract a risk weight of 100%. On a review, it has been decided to increase the risk weights on such exposures by 25 percentage points to 150% and 125% for SCBs and NBFCs respectively.

II. Bank Credit to NBFCs : In terms of extant norms, exposures of SCBs to NBFCs, excluding core investment companies, are risk weighted as per the ratings assigned by accredited external credit assessment institutions (ECAI). On a review, it has been decided to increase the risk weights on such exposures of SCBs by 25 percentage points (over and above the risk weight associated with the given external rating) in all cases where the extant risk weight as per external rating of NBFCs is below 100%. For this purpose, loans to HFCs, and loans to NBFCs which are eligible for classification as priority sector in terms of the extant instructions shall be excluded.

III. Strengthening Credit Standards :

(a) The Regulated Entities (Res) shall review their extant sectoral

exposure limits for consumer credit and put in place, if not already there, Board approved limits in respect of various sub-segments under consumer credit as may be considered necessary by the Boards as part of prudent risk management. In particular, limits shall be prescribed for all unsecured consumer credit exposures. The limits so fixed shall be strictly adhered to and monitored on an ongoing basis by the Risk Management Committee.

(b) All top-up loans extended by REs against movable assets which are inherently depreciating in nature, such as vehicles, shall be treated as unsecured loans for credit appraisal, prudential limits and exposure purposes.

The above instructions, other than paragraph C(a), shall come into force with immediate effect. All REs shall endeavour to comply with the provisions at paragraph 2C(a) at the earliest, but in any case shall implement them by no later than February 29, 2024.

The risk weight is an instrument, often used by the RBI, to rein in lenders' over-enthusiasm in giving certain types of loans. For instance, when rising exposure to the real estate sector created concerns about asset quality and the potential systemic risks, the risk weight on banks' exposure to commercial real estate was increased from 100 per cent to 125 per cent in July 2005 and further to 150 per cent in April 2006. Before that, the risk weight on housing loans was increased from 50 per cent to 75 per cent in December 2004. This was done by former RBI Governor Y.V. Reddy. He also increased the risk weight for consumer credit and banks' capital market exposures from 100 per cent to 125 per cent.

Implications of RBI's Move

Total assets as disclosed in the financials and total risk weighted assets are different things. Each asset class has varying risk weights. For instance, risk weights for home loans could range from 50 per cent to 75 per cent, for gold loans it is 75 per

cent. Corporate loans are charged 100 per cent given the risk they carry. Lower the risk weight, lower the rate of interest. This is the thumb rule. Therefore, risk weights impact borrowers indirectly and is felt through the pricing of loans. For instance, home loans have the lowest interest rate among retail products because lower risk weights allow banks to pass on the advantage of capital consumption. Personal loans and credit cards have the highest interest rate because of their tenure and charge on capital. The new risk weight limits could consume 35-100 bps more capital than the current level. However, since the lenders are well capitalised (at least 700-900 bps above the eight per cent statutory threshold), the need to raise money in the near term may not arise. PSU banks on the other hand may be just over 100-140 bps.

Besides the Commercial Banks and NBFCs, RBI's latest decision may hurt the Fintech entities as majority of lending by these entities falls in unsecured loans category. The Centre for Advanced Financial Research and Learning (CAFRAL) RBI promoted body has pointed out in its first 'India Finance Report (IFR)' that fintech firms have captured a substantial share of the consumer and retail market. Their lending is projected "to exceed traditional bank lending by 2030". Now, segmented lending data by fintech is hard to come by, unlike in the case of banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs). These new-age firms mostly tap the new-to-credit customers with little by way of credit histories. They are in a sweet spot: According to the Fintech Association for Consumer Empowerment, its members gave out ₹ 29,875 crore in loans in Q1 FY24, up year-on-year by 81.41 per cent.

The Commercial Banks, NBFCs must be careful in lending, particularly to those who want to use public funds without giving a guarantee to its timely repayment. Since Fintech firms seek funds via credit from banks and NBFC, they will feel maximum brunt of the new decision of the RBI. It's not surprising that RBI has raised the risk weights on exposures of banks to NBFCs by

25 percentage points (over and above the risk weight associated with the given external rating) in all cases where the extant risk weights is below 100 per cent. Currently, these are at 25 per cent, 30 per cent and 50 per cent for NBFCs rated 'AAA', 'AA', and 'A'. The RBI's circular is silent on lower-rated NBFCs (fintechs fall in this lot), but it's unlikely banks will indulge them. Another matter of detail: Loans are priced to risk; many banks are said to be close to their exposure limits even to some of the better-run NBFCs. So, where does that leave fintech in what is anyway a funding winter?

The banking industry will likely require ₹ 84,000 crore of excess capital or a five per cent increase over the ₹ 15.2 lakh crore capital requirement following the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) decision to increase the risk weight on the exposure of banks to consumer credit, credit card receivables and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs). Experts believe this will increase the cost of borrowing for consumers.

RBI circular affects consumer loans in general but excludes housing loans, education loans, vehicle loans and loans secured by gold and gold jewellery. Excluding quantum of loans to these segments, consumer credit was growing at 25 per cent-plus since May 2022. These unsecured loans affected by the RBI move (₹ 14.8 lakh crore) make up only around 9.8 per cent of total outstanding loans (₹ 151.5 lakh crore) as of September 2023. The affected portion of the personal loans category is only 31 per cent of the total personal loans—₹ 48.3 lakh crore—SBI said in a research report.

The current regulatory steps taken by the RBI may be called countercyclical measures as these types of actions refer to the measures (both monetary and fiscal) that stabilise the business cycle by reining in economic activity during booms and bolstering it during downturns. Apart from a moderation in the aggregate growth of unsecured loans, the impact of the measures can be seen in a material increase in the rates charged on unsecured loans by banks and NBFCs

and higher cost of borrowings for large and small NBFCs (including fintechs) with a high proportion of unsecured retail loans in their assets under management.

It will also lead to higher mobilisation of capital by NBFCs into unsecured lending to cater to the additional capital requirements. Sudden withdrawal of banks and NBFCs from the consumer loan market may also enhance delinquency risks in this category.

According to the SBI report, the decision to raise the risk weights perhaps is an attempt by RBI to send out a strong message of addressing any incipient financial stability risks in the system as such risks are coincident indicators.

Thus, proactively managing such situation seems the best policy option rather than managing delinquencies (if any) post occurrence of events. These measures are in continuity with the tilt towards an Expected Loss (EL) driven stress recognition system for regulated entities and RBI's recent move to subject 15 Upper Layer NBFCs to greater regulatory scrutiny.

Pillapan

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- Not all anticipation and change need to come from the centre. Often it is better to tap and collate local knowledge and experience. Initiatives such as 'vocal for local' and 'One District One Product' will certainly give better results.
- Through public-private-partnerships, supply chains and market access can be rapidly restored or enhanced.
- Course corrections can also be based on informal networks spanning governments and businesses. Such networks could also hinder progress, especially when they have been centred on select families. Nevertheless, they have helped drive significant growth and development in India.
- India has demonstrated successful approaches towards civic engagement.

Pillapan

The entire globe is struggling hard to cope up with the rising temperature, uneven and erratic rains, snowfalls, avalanches hurricanes. Collective commitment of nations to combat climate change—a result of decades of hard negotiations, meetings, studies, and noisy campaigns—are simply inadequate and have gone into vain. Representatives of the nations meet almost every year, face demonstrations from environmentalists, do extensive discussion to reach at consensus for final draft of declaration. But, in practice they (largest emitters of green house gases and other particulate matters) do little to combat to reduce the environmental pollution. For politicians, in the government, the will and expectations of the people is paramount. Majority of the people in almost all the countries of the world are interested more in the development, however it is detrimental to their health and survival. The glaring example is rapidly developing automobile industry (One of the largest polluters) fossil fuel based power stations, and expansion of urban areas.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) entered into force on 21 March 1994. Today, it has near-universal membership. The 198 countries that have ratified the Convention are called Parties to the Convention. Preventing 'dangerous' human interference with the climate system is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC.

The ultimate objective of the Convention is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations "at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system." It states that "such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner." The idea is that, as they are

the source of most past and current greenhouse gas emissions, industrialized countries are expected to do the most to cut emissions on home ground. Industrialized nations agree under the Convention to support climate change activities in developing countries by providing financial support for action on climate change—above and beyond any financial assistance they already provide to these countries.

Economic development is particularly vital to the world's poor countries. Such progress is difficult to achieve even without the complications added by climate change. The Convention takes this into consideration by accepting that the share of greenhouse gas emissions produced by developing nations will grow in the coming years. Nonetheless, in the interests of fulfilling its ultimate goal, it seeks to help such countries limit emissions in ways that will not hinder their economic progress. One such win-win solution was to emerge later, when the Kyoto Protocol (1997) to the Convention was conceived.

Conference of Parties (COP)

The UNFCCC was formed in 1994 to stabilize the greenhouse gas emissions and to protect the earth from the threat of climate change. COP members have been meeting every year since the year 1995. As of 2023, the number of member countries in the UNFCCC has reached 198. The first conference (COP1) was held in 1995 in Berlin. The 3rd conference of parties (COP3) was held in Kyoto and then after Kyoto protocol was adopted.

The COP is the supreme decision-making body of the United Nations Climate Change Convention (UNCCC). All States that are Parties to the Convention are represented at the COP, at which they review the implementation of the Convention and any other legal instruments that the COP adopts and take decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention,

including institutional and administrative arrangements.

The COP meets every year, unless the Parties decide otherwise. The COP meets in Bonn, the seat of the secretariat, unless a Party offers to host the session. Just as the COP Presidency rotates among the five recognized UN regions that is, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe and Others – there is a tendency for the venue of the COP to also shift among these groups.

COP 28 : UNCCC Dubai (UAE)

COP 28 was organized between 30 November and 12 December 2023 in Dubai (UAE) with great expectations but with little hope.

The devastating impacts of climate change have been evident during the entire era of industrial development. The year 2023 is set to overtake 2016 as the warmest ever and has created many records of climate changes from heat waves in so called countries, large-scale fires in Australia, The US and even in European countries, severe floods in the US and European countries. The World Meteorological Organisation has predicted that one of the next four years including 2023 would almost certainly breach the 1.5 degree Celsius threshold.

Although temperatures have gone up rapidly, the global response to contain it has not kept pace. A latest assessment in the new synthesis report on countries' climate action plans, suggests that climate action agreed upon by countries so far would, in an optimistic scenario, result in just a 2 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030, from 2019 levels. A 43 per cent reduction, something that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said was absolutely necessary for the 1.5 degree Celsius goal, currently seems to be a pipe dream.

Conferences of Parties at Various UNFCCs

COP	City/Country	Dates
COP1	Berlin, Germany	28 March–7 April, 1995
COP 2	Geneva, Switzerland	8 July–19 July, 1996
COP 3	Kyoto, Japan	1 December–10 December, 1997
COP 4	Buenos Aires, Argentina	2 November–13 November, 1998
COP 5	Bonn, Germany	25 October–5 November, 1999
COP 6	The Hague, Netherlands	13 November - 24 November, 2000
COP 6-2	Bonn, Germany	July 2001
COP 7	Marrakech, Morocco	29 October –10 November, 2001
COP 8	New Delhi, India	23 October–1 November, 2002
COP 9	Milan, Italy	1 December–12 December, 2003
COP 10	Buenos Aires, Argentina	6 December–17 December, 2004
COP 11	Montreal, Canada	28 November–9 December, 2005
COP 12	Nairobi, Kenya	6 November–17 November, 2006
COP 13	Bali, Indonesia	3 December–17 December, 2007
COP 14	Poznan, Poland	1 December–12 December, 2008
COP 15	Copenhagen, Denmark	7 December–18 December, 2009
COP 16	Cancun, Mexico	28 November–10 December, 2010
COP 17	Durban, South Africa	28 November–10 December, 2011
COP 18	Doha, Qatar	26 November– 7 December, 2012
COP 19	Warsaw, Poland	11 November–23 November, 2013
COP 20	Lima, Lima	1 December–12 December, 2014
COP 21	Paris, France	30 November–12 December, 2015
COP 22	Marrakech, Morocco	7 November–18 November, 2016
COP 23	Bonn, Germany	6 November–17 November, 2017
COP 24	Katowice, Poland	3 December–14 December, 2018
COP 25	Madrid, Spain	2 December–13 December, 2019
COP 26	Glasgow, UK	31 October–12 November, 2021
COP 27	Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt	6 November–18 November, 2022
CMA 5	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	30 November–12 December, 2023
CMP 18	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	30 November–12 December, 2023
SBSTA 59	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	30 November–12 December, 2023
SBI 59	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	30 November–12 December, 2023
COP 28	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	30 November–12 December, 2023

CMA 5 : Fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Paris Agreement;
CMP 18 : Eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
SBSTA 59 : Fifty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice; **SBI59** : Fifty- ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation.

Another UN report suggests that despite a swift rise in climate risks, the amount of the grant being made available by the developed countries to developing countries for adaptation measures was actually declining, and nowhere close to the scale of the requirement and even the commitment. Developing countries need at least \$215 billion each year to do meaningful adaptation of cleaner technologies, but barely \$ 89.6 billion has been released.

The availability of financial resources is a perennial problem, particularly for developing and least

developed countries, which face the maximum risk but are mostly dependent on financial flows from rich nations to fund their protective actions.

Line of Action

There seems no shortcut to control emissions and halt the continuously increasing the global temperature and deteriorating climatic conditions. Nothing will result from short run measures—as the past experience 28 years shows. Concrete results of climate actions might be visible only over a longer period. It

doesn't mean that leaders, scientists, environmentalists and other stakeholders remain silent spectators of adverse impacts of the climate change. "It is always better to lit a candle than grudge the darkness." Political leaders of severely polluted countries as well as vastly affected regions of the earth must not think in terms of their days in power, but in terms of greatest human cause. COP 28 provided once again an opportunity to the leaders to act collectively to 'save the earth'. Although, the COP 28 held under the darkest shadow of Russian-Ukraine war and Hamas-Israel Conflict, the net results of discussions may be promising.

10 Key Issues for COP 28 (Set out by the OECD)

1. The Global Stocktake (GST)
2. Loss & Damage Fund
3. Financing of the Developing World
4. The role of hydrocarbon producers and the fossil fuel phase out
5. Geopolitical issues—Israel, China, Russia, EU
6. Key technologies
7. Multilateral agreements and political declarations
8. The future of Carbon Markets
9. The outlook for hard-to-abate sectors
10. The future of the COP process

New and Renewable Energy is the Only Hope

Currently, the total installed capacity of renewable energy across the world is around 3,400 GW the idea is to triple it by 2030. That would mean that nearly 70 per cent of all electricity in 2030 would be generated through renewable energy, instead of the 28 per cent now.

The International Energy Agency estimates that this single measure has the potential to avoid 7 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions between now and 2030, or about 1 billion tonnes every year on an average. This amount does not appear very big at first glance given emissions need to be nearly halved by 2030. But considering that all other actions, put together, will reduce emissions by just a billion tonnes by 2030, it is nonetheless an extremely significant step.

\$ 100 billion Aid to Developing Countries and LDCs

This figure has been doing the rounds for more than a decade. Rich countries have promised to mobilise (at least) this much in climate finance every year from 2020—a promise they have not met. Developing countries and LDCs on and often raise their concerns on various regional and international platforms before the developed nations to release that much of amount which will allow them to adopt cleaner technologies in the coming years.

A new report, published by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), showed that economically developed countries fell short of their promise to jointly mobilise \$100 billion a year, towards the climate mitigation and adaptation needs of developing countries, in 2021 one year past the 2020 deadline. The report said developed countries mobilised \$ 89.6 billion in 2021 and that finance for adaptation fell by 14% in 2021 compared to 2020. The failure to mobilise adequate climate finance lowers capacity in developing countries to address climate mitigation (like emissions reduction with renewable energy) and adaptation needs (like developing and incentivising climate-resilient agriculture), and reduces trust among the world's poorer countries that the developed world is serious about tackling the climate crisis.

In Cop 28 too, developed countries have pressed hard to finally claim to have delivered on their promised amount \$ 100 billion. Although, \$ 100 aid is peanut amount in comparison to trillions of dollars that are now estimated to be required for climate action. While meeting this goal would still be an achievement, the real challenge would be making progress on finalising a new amount, over and above the \$ 100 billion figure, that has to be raised every year, starting next year.

The OECD report added that by 2025, developing countries are estimated to require around \$ 1 trillion a year in climate investments, rising to roughly \$ 2.4 trillion each year

between 2026 and 2030. The \$ 100 billion goal pales in comparison, dwarfed further by the fact that it remains unmet.

Initiatives of Government of India to Fight Climate Change

Government of India has led from the front to foster international consensus to tackle climate change. To this end, India has set up :

- The International Solar Alliance,
- The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure,
- The Global Biofuel Alliance.
- 'Lifestyle for Environment' (LiFE) mission.

Through the 'Lifestyle for Environment' (LiFE) mission, the Indian government also aims to spread awareness of good lifestyle practices and establish that sustainable lifestyles are the best way forward.

Money for Loss and Damage Fund

Loss and damage, which means the rescue and rehabilitation of stricken by climate disaster, has been one of the most vexed issues at global climate talks for more than a decade. Poor countries, with tiny carbon footprints, have done the least to cause the climate crisis but are bearing the brunt of its impacts. One of the key issues at Cop 28 was the provision of finance for the rescue and rehabilitation of the poorest and most vulnerable communities when they are stricken with climate disaster. The creation of a loss and damage fund was the only saving grace for an otherwise disappointing climate meeting in COP 27 in Sharm-el-sheikh (Egypt) in 2022. The fund, meant to provide financial help to countries damaged by impacts of climate change, had been a long pending demand. It was created in COP 27, but no one put money into it. The Dubai meeting is likely to see some money flowing into the fund, enough to signal to the small island countries—the biggest potential beneficiaries of this fund—that their concerns are being addressed. Large oil and gas producers such as UAE and Saudi Arabia should become donors to the loss and damage

fund, many argue. They are currently exempt as they are still classed as developing countries under the 1992 UN framework convention on climate change, the parent treaty to the 2015 Paris agreement.

Countries have agreed key measures to supply funds to the world's most vulnerable people to repair the damage from climate breakdown. Governments from richer and poorer countries drew up the blueprint for a new 'loss and damage' fund after a tense two-day meeting under UN guidance in Abu Dhabi that ended late on November 2023.

The loss and damage fund will be administered at first by the World Bank, and will draw on funding sources including large developing countries as well as the US, the EU and the UK. No firm target has been set for how much money the fund will disburse, but countries most affected by the climate crisis hope it will reach hundreds of billions of dollars within a few years. The blueprint must be formally adopted at the Cop 28 UN climate summit in Dubai.

Global Stocktake

As mandated by the 2015 Paris Agreement, the findings of the first stocktake exercise is supposed to be presented at this meeting. Countries are supposed to assess where they are in the fight against climate change, and what needs to be done in the next five year period to make this fight more effective and potent. The stocktake exercise has been carried out over the last one year, and its findings would inform the discussions taking place in Dubai.

Phase-down of Fossil Fuels

The issue came up in a big way in COP 28, but with a little success as economies of the middle east and many others are solely dependent on the flow of billions of dollars through the sale of crude oil. These countries will never agree to phase out the fossil fuels. Not even this, developed countries will also not support this move as they have not yet developed enough clean sources of energy.

Florian



World Panorama

India-Canada Tensions

—Arunoday Bajpai

The tensions between India and Canada display no sign of abatement. The diplomatic and political tensions between two large democratic countries have reached a high scale in since 18 September, 2023 when Justin Trudeau, the Prime Minister, in an official statement made in the House of Commons, the lower House of Canadian Parliament accused Indian security agencies in the involvement of a Canadian citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar. He also disclosed that he had broached this topic with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the G-20 Summit on 10 September, 2023 held in India, but he did not elicit positive response from Modi. Trudeau presented this event as the violation of Canadian sovereignty, as he remarked, 'any involvement of a foreign government in the killing of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil is an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty. It is contrary to the fundamental rules by which free, open, and democratic societies conduct themselves.' He termed this matter serious and demanded that India should sincerely cooperate with investigation in this killing. Not only that, Canada also ordered the expulsion of one senior official of RAW (India's External intelligence agency) posted in the Indian Embassy in Ottawa, Canada. It should be recalled that Khalistani separatist and Canadian citizen, Hardeep Singh Nijjar was killed on 18 June, 2023, outside a Gurudwara in Surrey city of British Columbia province of Canada. India had earlier demanded extradition of Hardeep Singh Nijjar for his involvement in Khalistani Separatist activities in India, but Canada did not respond to Indian request. Nijjar was the head of the separate outfit Khalistan Tiger Force, which is banned in India.

However, the Indian government rejected all charges and said they were 'motivated' and 'absurd'. India further argued that 'such unsubstantiated allegations seek to shift the focus from Khalistani terrorists and extremists, who have been provided shelter in Canada and continue to threaten India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The inaction of the Canadian government on this matter has been a long-standing and continuing concern.'

In response India too declared one Canadian diplomat in Delhi as persona non-grata and ordered his departure. India also beefed up security of its diplomatic mission as it has been facing persistent threat from the Khalistani separatist elements based in Canada. Citing security reasons, India also suspended counselor and Visa services in its mission and offices in Canada. Though neither country has initiated any measure to affect, trade and business links, Canada government has halted the Free Trade agreement negotiations with India.

International Reactions

The reaction to these events from Canada's allies and friends like the US, Australia and the British was balanced but largely tilted in favour of Canada. The US said that "We are deeply concerned about the allegations referenced by Prime Minister Trudeau earlier today. Later they expected India to seriously cooperate in the ongoing investigations into killing of Nijjar. Australia said that Canberra is 'deeply concerned' by the allegations that Canada has labeled against India. Australia believes all countries should respect sovereignty and the rule of law. Australia is closely engaged with partners on

developments and it has conveyed its concerns to India. The UK said that these are serious allegation and they are in close touch with Canada. These Western countries are restrained in their reactions, because of India's special strategic position in the Indo-Pacific region in containing China's assertiveness. It should also be noted that these countries are member of secret intelligence agency known as 'Five Eyes.' It has been reported that the intelligence collected by Five Eyes on Nijjar killing hinted India's involvement and the same was passed to the government of Canada. It should be noted that when India asked Canada to remove its excess diplomatic staff, these countries became more vocal in support of Canada in the name of diplomatic security to

What is Five Eyes ?

The Five Eyes is an Intelligence collecting and sharing mechanism of five countries namely the US, Canada, Britain, Australia and New Zealand. It evolved as a mechanism of cooperation in intelligence affairs between US and UK in the wake of WWII, when the two countries signed the UKUSA Agreement in 1946 to that effect. Initially, it was established for gathering information against former Soviet Union in view of the communist threat posed by Soviet Union in Europe and other parts of the world. Later, other countries joined this mechanism and since 1955 it has come to be known as Five Eyes on the basis of its five members. Canada joined it in 1948, Norway in 1952, Germany in 1955 and Australia and New Zealand joined Five Eyes in 1956. In Five Eyes, the national intelligence agencies of member countries participate and collaborate in collecting and sharing intelligence information. After the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991, the Five Eye has now shifted its focus towards China. It is reported that the intelligence on Nijjar killing was collected by the US intelligence agencies and shared with Canada. The organization and functioning of Five Eyes also explain the support extended by the US, UK, and Australia to Canada during its tensions with India.

Canadian staff. However, they are not in position to openly confront India in view of her strategic importance in the Indo-Pacific region and need for balancing China through partnership with India.

Tensions Continue Unabated

Meanwhile the relations between the two countries continued to slide down with each passing day. In October, 2023, India asked Canada to remove its excess staff from the diplomatic mission in India. Canada shifted 41 diplomatic staff from India to Malaysia, but accused India of violation of provisions of Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961. Article 29 of this convention provides for the security and dignity of diplomatic staff in the host country. Canada's close allies like the US, UK and Australia also supported Canada's stand on Canada's allegation of diplomatic security. However, India again denied Canada's charges on violation of provisions of Vienna Convention. India claimed that it has been engaged with the Canadian side on this matter for over a month in order to work out the details and modalities of its implementation. India's actions for asking removal of excess staff of Canada in Delhi to maintain parity with Indian Diplomatic Staff in Ottawa are fully consistent with Article 11-1 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. India further said that the reduction in Canadian diplomatic staff was necessitated by Canada's 'continued interference' in India's internal affairs. India rejected any attempt to portray the implementation of parity as a violation of international norms. It should be noted that section 11-1 of the Vienna Convention provides for maintaining parity in diplomatic staff between the two countries.

India has decided to resume Visa services in Canada on 25 October, 2023 in view of security promise by Canada as well as to address the difficulty faced by Visa seekers. However, the diplomatic spat continues unabated between the two countries even now. Both countries came face to face on 11 November, 2023 in Geneva during the meeting of UN Human Rights Council. At present, Canada is undergoing Universal Periodical Review (UPR) of human rights at the UNHRC, which happens

once in five years for each country. In the meeting the Indian Representative Mohammed Hussain made three recommendations to Canada in the spirit of constructive dialogue. **First**, Canada should further strengthen the domestic framework to prevent misuse of freedom of expression for inciting violence and disallow activities of groups which are promoting extremism. **Second**, Canada should strengthen legislative and other measures to effectively prevent attacks on places of worship of religious and racial minorities and address hate crimes and hate speech. The Sikh separatist elements have been attacking Hindu religious places and have been engaged in anti-Hindu hate speeches for quite some time. **Third**, India wanted Canada to put an end to structural discrimination against children belonging to indigenous groups and address disparities against their children in access to public services. Thus the ties between the two countries are faced with diplomatic stalemate as neither country is in hurry to resolve these tensions. While Canada has made it as an issue of violation of its sovereignty, India has articulated larger issue of anti-India and separatist activities in Canada by certain Sikh elements.

The Impact of Tensions Between India and Canada

The ongoing tensions between the two countries have adversely affected their ongoing cooperation in economic and political areas.

First the economic relations between the two countries are negatively affected. The bilateral trade between the two countries stands at \$20 billion. India's main exports to Canada are iron Ore and steel, Machinery, nuclear plants, pearl, rubber, garments and plastic goods. It is reported in news papers that due to these tensions the import of red lentil pulse from Canada is affected. It should be noted that Canada is the largest supplier of lentil to India. Also, both countries were in the process of signing a FTA known as Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CPEA), but due to these tensions, trade negotiations have been stalled. There is no hope for their early revival. Also, both countries had decided to conclude an Early Progress Trade Agreement in October, 2023 as temporary mech-

anism for promoting bilateral trade till the CEPA is not signed. For this purpose, a trade delegation of Canada was to visit India in October, 2023, but Canada has postponed the visit of this trade delegation. Thus, the present tensions have badly affected the ongoing trade negotiations between the two nations.

Second, the present tensions are likely to impact the security of large number of Indians living in Canada. At present nearly 230000 Indian students are living in Canada for their studies. These events are likely to increase ethnic tensions between Sikhs and other Indian communities living in Canada. There have been regular reports of such tensions in the US and Canada in recent years. A Sikh Separatist organization known as Sikh For Justice organized referendum in support of separate country of Khalistan in January, 2023, which led to many incident of fights between Sikhs and Hindus. These events may have repercussion for communal harmony in India.

Sikh Community in Canada and Issue of Khalistan

The issue of Khalistan supported by certain Sikhs living in Canada and lenient attitude of the government of Canada towards these anti-India activities has become a major factor for India in her bilateral relations with Canada. At present nearly 60 lakh Sikhs live in different countries. Out of which highest number of Sikhs nearly 770000 live in Canada, some five lakhs in US, 540000 in UK, 210000 in Australia and rest in other countries. Sikh community in Canada has gained political weight as they comprise 2 per cent of the total population of Canada. The Sikh Diaspora in Canada has been raising the issue of Khalistan since 1970s. Following the Operation Blue Star in 1984, some Sikh extremists conspired to blow up in June 1985 an Air India Plane in mid way, which was on flight from Canada to India. All the 329 passengers were killed in this incident. The three accused in this incident were placed behind bar by Canada, but two of them were released by the government early and last one was also released in 2016. This demonstrates the lack of commitment on the part of government of Canada towards combating terrorism and extremism.

Though, the anti-India activities were subsided in Canada following this incident, but they are being revived again for some time. A separate organization called Sikh for Justice was established in 2007 by Gurupatwant Singh Pannu in New York, but it is very active in Canada. It has been organizing referendum in support of Khalistan in US, Canada and other western countries but, these governments are not keen to take any action against these separatist and anti-India activities, in spite of the fact that India has banned Sikh for Justice and another organization Khalistan Tiger Force in 2019. The present government of Canada led by Justin Trudeau appears to be more sympathetic towards the Sikh separatist leaders. Trudeau came to India in 2018 and visited Amritsar to express solidarity with Sikhs. During this visit, India submitted a list of eight terrorists living in Canada for their repatriation to India, but Canada ignored it. Again, Hardeep Singh Nijjar was declared terrorist by India in 2020. India demanded his extradition to India but Canada did not oblige. Trudeau has political compulsion to placate Sikh community as his government is based on the crucial support of Sikh members of Parliament.

Conclusion

The tensions between Canada and India have been brewing for last few years. The Nijjar's killing gave an opportunity to Trudeau to consolidate his support base among Sikhs of Canada for his political gains. But it misfired as for India Sikh separatism is a very critical issue in view of past experience of 1970s and 1980s. India treats these activities in Canada as detrimental to her territorial integrity and expects Canada to restrain such activities. But Canada, due to various political reasons keeps a blind eye to such activities in the name of freedom of expression. India cannot compromise on its territorial integrity and sovereignty. On the other hand, Trudeau government cannot afford to alienate Sikh community due to its political compulsion. Thus the resolution of Indo-Canadian tensions appears to be a difficult task in the near future.

A Decade of BRI : Challenges and Future Course

For some times, international observers have been expecting the slowdown of BRI, but this is not the case. China has reiterated to continue with BRI in changed and modified form. This was the conclusion of the third BRI Forum for International Cooperation held on 18 October, 2023 in Beijing. In this meeting the representatives 41 international organization and more than 130 countries participated. The Heads of Governments of 23 countries including Russian President also attended the meet. This was a big boost for China at a time when its economic growth rate is struggling to rise. China has stated that it would continue with BRI in future with modified form. The next generation of the BRI shall consist of 'small and beautiful' projects to replace the mega-infrastructure projects carried on during last one decade. Also the priorities of the BRI will be changed to focus on green development, digital connectivity, and health rather than hard infrastructure. China has announced to invest another \$ 100 billion in the new projects in the coming years. China claims that the BRI is a landmark connectivity and development creating win-win situations for both China and the host countries. During the BRI meet, China claimed a huge success of BRI as Chinese Foreign Minister remarked, 'the past decade has witnessed historic achievements in Belt and Road cooperation. A path of cooperation, opportunity and prosperity that leads to common development has been found. Benefiting over 150 countries, the BRI has become the most popular international public good and largest international cooperation platform in today's world.'

India has not joined the BRI so far. But from Indian perspective, a notable development was that Afghanistan led Taliban government has also formally joined BRI during this meet. A delegation of Taliban government participated in the BRI meet. It means China may now extend the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

(CPEC) to Afghanistan in coming years. It may also plan to develop another corridor directly to Afghanistan through Wakhan Corridor to connect with the Eastern parts of Afghanistan, which are known for rich copper and lithium deposits.

China's BRI : A Background

The BRI is a dream mega project of China which was launched in 2013 by the new President of China Xi Jinping under his China Dream framework. Though, it appears to be benign infrastructure development project, but China has strategic objectives behind this project. The BRI has proved instrumental in increasing China's strategic and economic footholds in many countries of Asia and Africa. The BRI consists of two routes both joining at Venice in Italy: First, a land based route from China to Europe through Eurasia and second a maritime route from Asia to Europe through South-East Asia, South Asia and Indian Ocean, East Africa, and Middle East. Both Routes involve the development of highways, ports, and other industrial and energy infrastructures in different countries on the way. In last one decade, China has made the investment of \$1 trillion in various projects under the banner of BRI. With this China has emerged as the largest investor in the world during this period. The BRI has more strategic orientation in South Asia and Indian Ocean. Except India and Bhutan, all the South Asian Countries have joined BRI. China's ambitious project in South Asia is CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor), which with an investment of \$ 65 billion was launched in 2015 during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Islamabad. It connects Kashgar in China's Xinjiang province with Gwadar port in Baluchistan province of Pakistan. In Sri Lanka, China has launched many projects under the BRI. It includes the development of strategically important Hambantota port and Colombo Port City Project. In 2017, when Sri Lanka was unable to repay Chinese loans, China took control of

Hambantota port from Sri Lanka on 99 year lease. Now it is operated by China. China has also developed Colombo Port City Project and took major control in its operation, in spite of protests by opposition parties in Sri Lanka. During pro-China Abdulla Yameen regime (2013-2018) in Maldives, China has made deep economic and strategic inroads. China has developed road, bridge and other infrastructure including controlling some small islands on lease. In Myanmar, China is developing China-Myanmar Economic Corridor to link Kyaukpyiu port of Myanmar in the Indian Ocean. Like Myanmar Port of Kyaukpyiu, the Gwadar port of Pakistan gives another access to China in the Indian Ocean. Nepal has also agreed to participate in the BRI, but is reluctant to join any big project, due to concerns for debt and sovereignty. In 2018, China has established its first overseas naval base in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa. Thus, by implementing various projects under BRI, China has not only increased its access to the Indian Ocean but also has increased its economic and strategic influence in the region.

Challenges Before BRI

If we look at the experience of BRI launch in last one decades, it appears to be faced with two set of major challenges: Strategic Challenges, and Internal Challenges.

(A) Strategic Challenges to BRI : The strategic challenges of BRI emanate from its strategic objectives. BRI is increasingly viewed by scholars as a part of her grand strategy to emerge as a global power by the year 2049 when China completes 100 years of its communist revolution. In 2013, Xi Jinping had articulated China's grand strategy under the banner of 'China Dream', which aims at the considerable technological and economic development of China by the year 2035 and making her a global power by the year 2049. Thus China's grand strategy stands for expansion of China's strategic and economic influence across the region and the globe. The BRI is just an instrument in this grand strategy. The US and her western allies view it as a part of her grand strategy to emerge as a global power and push forward an alter-

native vision of global governance. This is what implies when the West says that China is a 'systemic challenge' for them. Thus, because of China's strategic motives behind the BRI, the countries like India, Japan, and Australia, US and her allies as well as ASEAN members are looking for alternative to China's BRI. The series of strategic initiatives by these countries to hedge against China's economic and strategic hegemony reflect their desire to find alternative to China's BRI. These initiatives are QUAD, Blue Dot Network, Millennium Development Corporation (MCC) programme Build Back Better World (B3W), and India, Middle East, Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). The IMEC was launched in September, 2023 during G-20 summit held in Delhi. Thus, the US and her partners and allies aim to contain China's global strategic influence. Since BRI is also a part of China's strategy, it is also opposed by these countries. The long list of alternative connectivity and infrastructure projects initiated by these countries poses strategic challenge to BRI. However, the major drawback of these alternative programme is that neither they match the magnitude of BRI nor there is strong will on the part of these countries to implement them effectively within a given time frame. These alternatives are more like strategic rhetoric, rather than a serious challenge to China's BRI.

(B) Internal Challenges : The internal challenges to the BRI emanate from its salient features and the way it has been launched across many countries in last one decade. Some the

internal challenges of BRI are given below :

1. Debt Trap : The most serious challenge before BRI is its predatory nature which is visible in the form of rising debt crisis in the recipient countries. China's debt trap in Sri Lanka is a textbook example. It led to loss of territory by China and huge financial crisis in Sri Lanka in 2022. China' invested huge amount of money as loan to Sri Lanka in many ambitious infrastructure projects like Hambantota port and Colombo port city projects among others. China's debt composition in Sri Lanka moved from 0.3 per cent to her GDP in 2000 to 16 per cent of her GDP in 2016. By the end of 2022, China's debt stock in Sri Lanka had reached some US \$ 7.3 billion, amounting to 19.6 per cent of Colombo's public external debt. In 2017 unable to repay China's debt, Sri Lanka had to hand over her Hambantota port to China on lease for 99 years. Sri Lanka also suffered a worst financial crisis in her history in April, 2022, which is mainly attributed to Sri Lanka's unsustainable debt and imprudent policies. Pakistan is another country which is facing China's debt trap. China is already Pakistan's largest creditor, owning approximately 30 per cent of its external debt. Pakistan's commercial banks are borrowing from Chinese banks at 5.5 per cent to 6 per cent interest, while other lenders offer funds at around 3 per cent. Observers feel that China is headed for Sri Lanka like financial crisis in near future. Pakistan's present financial and economic crisis is the outcome of its unsustainable loan and investment police in last one decade.

What is India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) ?

The IMEC is touted as a big challenge to China's BRI. It was launched on 10 September, 2023 during the G-20 Summit in New Delhi by eight countries-India, US, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Italy, France and European Union. The IMEC is basically a multimodal corridor to link India with Europe through Middle East. It will originate in two branches from India (Mundra and Mumbai) will join at Jaber Ali port in UAE and move further to Al Guwaifat port of UAE at the border of UAE and Saudi Arabia. From Ghulaifat, the IMEC will follow the land route to connect with Riyadh and further west to Haifa port in Israel. After this, it will follow the sea route in Mediterranean to connect to the Piraeus port in Greece (Europe). From Piraeus it will be further extended to link major European countries. It is claimed not only as a potential alternative to the BRI linking China and Europe but also as a revival of old trade route from India to Europe through Arab countries. However, the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict has seriously undermined the prospects of IMEC as Arab countries may not be willing to cooperate with Israel for the execution of this project in near future.

2. Violation of Global Norms of Environment and Sovereignty :

China has willfully disregarded various global norms like environmental concerns, labour norms, and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of other nations in executing projects under the BRI. China does not follow environmental norms in implementing these projects. Environmental concerns have been raised in many projects including the Colombo Port City project which is based on reclamation of coastal land. Global norms of labour like terms of engagement are flouted with impunity. China's BRI has paid no regards to the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of other nations. This principle is the backbone of the United Nations System. For example, China's CPEC projects go through Indian territories in POK in spite of India's objection to the violation of her territorial integrity. Also in case of Sri Lanka, China has proposed a new management of Colombo Port City, which disregards Sri Lanka's sovereign rights in this management. Many political groups in Sri Lanka have protested to this arrangement in 2021. India has raised objection to China's BRI projects at various forums mainly on this ground.

3. Lack of Transparency in Operations :

China's RBI lacks transparency as the terms of loan is not disclosed to the recent countries at the initial stages. Many core issues of such transactions are shrouded in secrecy. No one for sure knows that how much loan is granted at what rate and what is the component of grants in this investment.

4. No Disregards to the Priorities of Recipient Country :

The BRI has not taken into account the priorities and capacities of host countries in making big investment in the mega projects. In total disregards to the local conditions of host countries, the work is invariably awarded to Chinese Companies and is implemented with Chinese labourers. Thus, there is no employment generation in host countries. China also does not care about human rights and democracy in launching projects, if it serves her own interests. It is following the

dictum of Deng Xiaoping as the colour of the cat hardly matters so long as it catches mice. For example when global community is boycotting military regime of Myanmar, China is not deterred from launching its project there. In Afghanistan, China was the first country to appoint full ambassador, when Taliban came to power in August 2023.

Conclusion

The BRI is China's flagship programme for connectivity and infrastructure development in Asia, Africa and Europe. In addition, it is also a tool of China's grand strategy to emerge as a global power by the year 2049. It is faced with two set of challenges : Strategic challenge and internal challenges. The US and her allies find BRI as a tool of China to increase its strategic influence in the world. They treat China as a systemic challenge to the US led global order. Hence they have come out with many alternative projects and mechanism to contain China. However, the success of these alternative connectivity projects hangs in balance. The Internal challenges to the BRI are more serious in nature. These are its debt trap potential due to unsustainable loans and investment; disregards to global norms on environment and respect to sovereignty of other nations, lack of transparency and disregard to the priorities of host countries. These internal challenges have undermined the acceptability of BRI among many countries. For example, Malaysia has withdrawn from many projects under BRI and Nepal is reluctant to sign big deal projects with China. Sri Lanka and Pakistan are the living example of BRI's debt trap mechanism. In spite of these drawbacks, China has decided to continue with the BRI during the recently held third BRI Forum for International Cooperation. Yet the BRI will be implemented in the modified form. However, the challenges of BRI will have a sobering impact on its implementation in future.

PDarpan

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This is the time when you have to prepare for your personality test and get ready to face the interview board.

In the next issue, I will come back with some insights that will help you perform better.

Never Look at UPSC-CSE as Unsolvable Riddle; It is not

Every year common candidates like you make their presence felt by accomplishing their mission.

No matter how discouraged you get when face adverse circumstances; never give up as the efforts you are putting in right now have power to transform the outcome and can change your fortune. You have to read, revise and practice a lot.

Do I need to remind you again the consequence of your result in Preliminary Examination; success here will keep hopes alive and failure can ruin your attempt.

When it is all about pure performance - your study-plan and your action-plan should be such that gives you a competitive edge over others.

You want to succeed; but nothing will happen till you commit yourself to the goal you have set for yourself.

So, keep preparing, move ahead and commit to give it your best !

May the success be your ! PDarpan

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- The committee to appoint the State DGP is headed by the UPSC Chairman and includes the Union Home Secretary, the State's Chief Secretary and DGP, and one of the heads of the Central Armed Police Forces nominated by the MHA who is not from the same State cadre.

In 2021, the Union government had proposed to amend the Indian Administrative Service (Cadre) Rules, 1954 to depute IAS, IPS, and IFoS (Indian Forest Service) officers to the Centre without necessarily taking the State government's nod. Amid massive protest from the States, the proposal has been put in cold storage. The amendment was proposed as the Union government is facing an acute shortage of All India Services officers. Despite existing provisions, States are not sponsoring adequate officers for Central deputation. In many cases, officers are also not willing to serve the Union government.

PDarpan

Simplicity is Pith of Style

—I.M. Soni

An aspiring writer consulted Dr. Samuel Johnson as to what he needed to become one. The great man replied, "A pen and a piece of paper!"

If you think that you will get a spell of divine inspiration and pour out your tormented soul, include yourself out. Journalistic writing does not come from inspiration, it is perspiration. If you are a 'slave' of mood, get out of the que.

Shed myths you have picked from hearsay or self-styled writers whose only published work is two letters to the editor! Instead, dip into a standard book.

Forget that 'contact' helps. Editors are hard-boiled professionals who recognize good work in one glance. If your writing has merit, you are in. Or your article comes back like a homed pigeon!

You have to study the personality of the publication you want to write for. Watch the stuff it carries, the treatment, the length and other technical details. Watch the slant or the angle the articles have. Slant stands for style of the publication.

You have to tailor your articles for the publication, as also for the column you are aiming at. You may become the editor's delight!

Language dripping with adjectives? Your article will go into the yawning waste-paper basket (WPB). This kind of language may fetch good marks in college/university examinations, not cheques from good publications.

You write letters to the editor and that your poems or articles have been published in house journals; but college and university teachers acting as editors are not professional writers.

Newspaper or magazine is not a ground for exhibition of your vocabulary. Padding is unforgivable. Space is more precious to a publication than a glittering galaxy of words. Poetic or abstract writing

divorced from practical life fails to win the editor's nod. Correlate your writing to real life. Keep your feet firmly planted on the ground. Poetic stuff is fit for college and house journals!

Choose themes with a strong human interest angle. The former fast-sell. They have a long shelf life. They do not grow stale.

A good theme wastes away in the hands of a show-off but even a weak one sparkles in the hands of a master of style. H.L. Mencken says, "There are no dull subjects; there are only dull writers."

Anthony Trollope wrote his novels while travelling as a government servant. Roget was a doctor who enjoyed sitting down by his evening fireside, jotting down words with similar meanings. Today Roget's Thesaurus is one of the best known and most popular books in the world of words.

Do you ever complain that you 'can't get ideas'? The biggest blocks to the flow of ideas is lack of action. You have to work.

When you have an idea that calls for creative effort, begin immediately. Your first job, is to get started, and the sooner the better.

Dictionary is an excellent source of information and ideas. You can often pick up a lot of thoughts by simply thumbing through the dictionary and investigating the words that pertain to your project.

American Peoples Encyclopaedia, almanacs such as the *World or Information*, handbooks such as the *Readers' Handbook*, *Who's Who*, and *Year Books* are reserve forces of the writer.

The very act of writing key ideas and information multiplies your chances of learning and remembering them.

When you hear an idea, it makes an impression on the mind; when you write the idea, you see it.

In the learning process you are 'eye-minded' than 'ear-minded'. You grasp eye impressions more quickly and retain them longer.

Isadora Duncan puts it in perspective, "It has taken me years of struggle, hard work and research to learn one simple gesture and I know enough about the art of writing to realize that it would take many years of concentrated effort to write one simple, beautiful sentence."

Simplicity is the most paying principle of writing. H.G. Wells clips in, "I write as straight as I can just as I walk as straight as I can because that is the best way to get there." Joseph Pulitzer has said: Simplify, simplify, simplify.

The great secret of good writing is grabbing the reader by the throat in the first paragraph or as Paul O'Neil put it, "Sink your thumbs into his wind pipe in the second."

Dr. Samuel Johnson shatters one illusion suggesting that after writing; read the work, 'mark' the 'beautiful' expressions then show them the door!

He is advocating a basic principle: write to express, not to impress.

Good writing comes from constant practice, not from fits of 'inspiration'. It is not an 'art', it's a craft anyone can acquire, and the secret is 'write'!

The more you immerse yourself in the work of great writers of good English, more accurate your vocabulary, the more vigorous your style.

Next to writing, a writer needs more and precise reading. Language comes to us more enriched by the weight, experience, imagination of writer of good prose.

After writing, comes careful reading to ascertain that it is free from vague generalization, ambiguities or contractions. Watch your emotions do not get the better of your reason. The conflict between the heart

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The Global South's Great Power Struggle : India and China's Ongoing Musical Chairs in Leading the Global South

—Santhosh Mathew

Ever Since India assumed the G-20 Presidency, the term 'Global South' has been reverberating throughout the nation, accompanied by India's strong desire to be the 'voice' of the global south. What does global south actually mean, and does India possess what it takes to become the 'voice' of the global south? This inquiry gains significance in light of the formidable contender in this great power struggle, India's neighbouring giant, China. China's emergence as a global powerhouse, backed by its astounding economic growth over the last few decades, is undeniable. In the late 1980s, Deng Xiaoping, the paramount leader of China, when he met then India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, prophesied the arrival of the 'Asian Century', a prediction that has undeniably materialized. However, the question that looms large is which nation will emerge as the torchbearer of this Asian century. Statistical data undoubtedly puts China way ahead of India in various domains, such as military prowess, economic size, and technological advancements.

Understanding the term 'Global South' in 1952, against the backdrop of the Cold War, a French demographer, Alfred Sauvey, coined the term 'Third World', referring to the countries outside the two power blocs of the West (the First World) and the Soviet Union (the Second World). However, many scholars have started using this term in a different way, associating it with economics. Most of the 'Third World' countries were newly independent and, after years of colonization, have become 'developing' or 'least developed' countries. Alfred actually coined the term 'Third World' in comparison with the Third Estate during the French Revolution. Which means the third world was also being exploited as much as the third estate. The term 'Global South' was later coined by an American political activist, Carl

Oglesby, in 1969. The term 'Third World' was associated with terms like poverty, instability, and many more negative stereotypes propagated by the western media. So, the term 'Global South' has gained more popularity in recent times, emerging as a more neutral alternative. A diverse group of countries from Africa, Latin America, and Asia, characterized by their shared historical experiences of colonization, economic challenges, and desire for a more equitable global order, encapsulates the 'Global South'. Being the 'voice' of this group of nations entails representing their interests on the international stage and advocating for their issues.

In recent decades, the Global South has experienced a drastic shift in political visibility and also in terms of wealth. The World Bank (WB) also officially accepted the 'Shift of Wealth' to Asia-Pacific from the North Atlantic. According to some reports, the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) exceeded the G-7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK and USA) nations in overall GDP contribution, with the BRICS contributing 31.5 per cent of the global GDP and the G-7's contribution falling to 30.7%. With the expansion of BRICS taking place, the group's economic contribution is only going to grow. Some projections show that out of the first five big economies, by 2030, four countries will be from the 'Global South', with China and India leading the pack.

Issues of the Global South

The numbers mentioned do not reveal the whole picture. The growing wealth in the Global South is not equally contributed by all 135 countries (G77 + China). The world order has been completely disrupted by post-COVID and Russian-Ukraine conflict. While the pandemic disrupted the vaccine supply chain and the

most affected region was the global south and at present, the Ukraine crisis is posing a challenge to the supplies of other commodities like food, fertilisers, and energy. In a study conducted by the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation) in November 2022, titled "Responding to the Ukrainian Crisis : Leveraging Social Protection for Food Security and Nutrition", alarming findings were reported. According to the study, if the conflict in Ukraine persists, there could be a significant surge in the global number of undernourished individuals. Specifically, it is estimated that this increase could range from 8 to 13 million people in the years 2022–23. The regions most likely to experience the sharpest rises in undernourishment are the Asia-Pacific, followed by sub-Saharan Africa, the Near East, and North Africa. These findings underscore the urgent need for measures to address the impact of the Ukrainian crisis on food security and nutrition on a global scale.

Another major issue facing the global south is energy security, in particular the transition to sustainable energy. As we all know, the energy transition is a costly affair involving adequate finance and technology transfer. On one side, the countries of the Global North have already been industrialized, and many have become energy-sufficient. On the other hand, most of the countries of the Global South are developing countries, where they need loads of energy in the process of development while at the same time mitigating the adverse effects of climate change and achieving the goal of limiting the rise of temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius, as contemplated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The global north has been the main culprit polluting the globe for centuries and is putting restrictions

on the developing and least developed countries.

India : Voice of Global South

India, under the G-20 presidency, has hosted a virtual 'Voice of the Global South' Summit in which nearly 125 countries have participated. Prime Minister Modi has also been very vocal about the issues of the 'Global South' on various occasions. Many geopolitical strategists all over the world imply that India should become the leader of the developing countries rather than China. There are various reasons behind it.

- India is a vibrant democracy, the largest, which aligns with the values cherished by most of the countries both in the Global South and the Global North. Its commitment to pluralism, human rights, and the rule of law resonates with nations seeking representation on the world stage. When combined with a significant demographic dividend that works as a catalyst for innovation and growth. India has a young population that is well versed in technology. The thriving scientific community in India has already made substantial contributions to global progress. India is also gaining prominence as an advocate for climate action. Even though India is drastically growing, its per capita carbon is very low compared to other developing as well as developed countries. The country is also committed to renewable energy and environmental sustainability, which align with the concerns of many Global South nations. India can help them with technology transfer and the transition to sustainable energy.
- India does not need to emulate China in order to gain influence. While addressing one of the Summits, the Prime Minister actively pushed to include the African Union in the G-20 grouping. Finally this materialised at the 18th Summit (2023) G-20. India has also been actively pushing the agenda of climate financing from developed countries to developing countries.

Recently, the UN General Assembly proposed 500 billion USD as a stimulus for developing countries to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The said resolution had been actively supported by India; however, the G-7 countries are not agreeing to this proposal. Indian dignitaries have repeatedly asserted that the west should not only finance Ukraine but also help the developing countries, which do not have any part in the conflict but are the most affected by this ongoing conflict, struggling with problems like excessive debt, food and energy crises, and poverty.

- A recent report published by Pew Research Surveys has unveiled a noteworthy trend: India has greater favourability than China in the developed world. However, when it comes to developing countries (the Global South), China has an edge over India as the more favourably favoured nation. This trend can be seen because, within the Global South, many countries grapple with shared historical experiences, socio-economic challenges, and aspirations for equitable global representation. China's ascendancy as the preferred nation is predictable due to its economic prowess and infrastructure investments, which will help developing countries achieve their developmental goals. President Xi has recently stressed the 3 Gs—the Global Developmental Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the more recent addition, the Global Civilization initiative to develop ties with the Global South.

- In the last two decades, when China had laid inroads into different regions, it was more economical, but China's recent role as a mediator between long-term diplomatic rivals Saudi Arabia and Iran has taken the western world by surprise. This mediation is an early sign that China is now showing a greater willingness to engage in regional mediation. With the recent

expansion of BRICS, many critics have pointed out that the bloc has turned into a more China-friendly hub. India has indeed faced diplomatic challenges, particularly in its competition with China. China's large infrastructure investments in India's own backyard, such as in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, have alarmed New Delhi's foreign policy experts. Now we will see if India has what it takes to be the 'voice' of the global south and what advantages the elephant has over the dragon.

- The first and foremost advantage India has over China is that India is neither seen as an aggressor nor an encroacher. The once-popular 'Belt and Road Initiative' was seen as an ambitious project laid down by China to help developing countries with their infrastructure. However, now the same project has been perceived as a tool used by China to debt trap developing nations. High interest rates and the terms and conditions of Chinese state loans have been highly criticized not only by the west but also by the nations of the global south. Today, India is also a significant trade nation in its own right. Its grains are crucial to the food security of many West Asian and Sub-Saharan African countries; its refined oil keeps Europe's industries running; and its polished diamonds provide glitz to luxury boutiques in New York, Paris, and London. It has the credentials of a global actor who does not abandon the cause of emerging countries—unlike China, which, for example, made its own accord with the US on climate change before the G-20 Summit in Hangzhou in 2016.
- Another major advantage India has over China is its good relations with most countries; it can become the bridge between the global north and south. The true meaning of being the 'voice' is to be able to closely coordinate with countries of the developed

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New Multilateral World Order

—Abhinav Kohli

It's clear that post-Cold War multilateralism, which involves cooperation between multiple countries, has reached a low point both on a global and regional scale. This is evident from the 18th East Asia Summit in Jakarta (2023) and the 18th G20 Summit in Delhi (2023), which underscore the serious and possibly permanent problems in the previous system of global cooperation. Post-Cold War multilateralism refers to the period after the end of the Cold War in 1991, when many countries around the world engaged in various forms of cooperation and coordination on issues such as trade, security, human rights, and environmental protection. This was facilitated by the absence of major conflicts between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, and their respective allies. The post-Cold War multilateralism was based on liberal principles such as democracy, rule of law, and free markets, and was supported by institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, World Bank IMF and the World Trade Organization.

New World Order

The new multilateral world order is a term that refers to the emergence of new forms of cooperation and dialogue among different countries and regions in the 21st century irrespective of the presence of the three centres of power—the US, Russia and the China. It is a response to the challenges and opportunities posed by globalization, climate change, pandemics, terrorism, and other issues that require collective action and shared solutions.

Features of the New Multilateral World Order

The expansion and diversification of the existing multilateral institutions, such as the UN, the IMF, and the World Bank, WTO to include

more voices and perspectives from the developing world and the Global South. The creation and strengthening of new regional and sub-regional organizations, such as the BRICS, the African Union the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the European Union, I2U2 (India, Israel, the US and UAE), RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership), IPEF (Indo-Pacific Economic Framework) that aim to promote regional integration, development, security, and cooperation.

The emergence of informal networks and initiatives, such as the Alliance for Multilateralism, the G20, and the QUAD (India, the US, Japan and Australia), that seek to address specific issues or challenges that transcend national boundaries and require coordinated action. The recognition of the multipolar reality of the world, where no single country or bloc can dominate or dictate the global agenda, and where different actors have to engage in dialogue and negotiation to find common ground and mutual benefit.

Reasons Behind Decline of Existing Multilateralism

Rise of China and its Expansionism : One of the primary reasons behind the decline of existing multilateralism is the rise of China as a global economic and military power. China's expansionist policies, both in Asia and globally, challenge the existing multilateral order. Its unilateral efforts to alter borders with neighbours and its assertive territorial expansionism have created tensions and destabilized regional and global institutions.

Economic and Security Threats from China : The economic and security threats posed by China have compelled countries like the United States, Japan, and India to re-evaluate their engagement with China. This

has led to efforts to de-risk their massive economic interdependence with China, which has implications for existing multilateral economic institutions.

Russian Actions : The Russian occupation and annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in 2014 marked a significant challenge to the post-Cold War security order, particularly in Europe. This event disrupted multilateralism by causing rifts and conflicts in the international community.

Contradictions Within the Multilateral System : The multilateral system itself has faced internal contradictions and challenges. These internal disagreements and conflicting interests among member states have weakened the effectiveness of multilateral organizations and impeded consensus-building.

Rise of Alternative Security Forums : In response to China's expansionism, alternative security forums like the QUAD, AUKUS, and trilateral compacts have emerged. These forums reflect a shift away from traditional multilateral institutions, raising questions about the continuing relevance and centrality of existing regional organizations like ASEAN.

Changing Perspectives of Key Players : The changing perspectives of key players, such as India, have also contributed to the decline of existing multilateralism. India's evolving view of the international order, shifting from concerns about a 'Unipolar Asia' dominated by China to a more proactive engagement with the United States and its allies, has altered the dynamics of multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific region.

Global Financial Crisis and Expanding the G7 : The 2008 global financial crisis underscored the need to expand the Group of Seven (G7) to include middle powers to restore global economic stability. While this

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Election Process and Electoral Reforms in India

—A. Bajpai

This is election season. The elections to the five State Legislative Assemblies namely MP, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Mizoram have been conducted in November 2023. Also the General Elections for the 18th Lok Sabha are due in May 2024. Thus, the issues of election process and electoral reforms need fresh look in the prevailing conditions. The election process consists of various stages from the announcement of elections till the declaration of election results. The election process is regulated by the provisions of the Representation of the People Act 1950 and 1951 and other regulations made by the ECI. Representation of the People Act 1950 provides for the qualifications of voters, preparation of voter lists and the delimitation of Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha constituencies. 1951 is more relevant for election process as it provides for the election machinery and officials for the election, voting and polling station, election disputes, by election and other incidental matters. The election process in India consists of the following stages :

(1) Election process starts with the announcement of the election schedule by the election commission. Due to security and administrative constraints multi-phase election schedule is prepared. The schedule contains dates for filling nomination, withdrawal of candidature and dates of polling as well as date of counting of votes. With the announcement of the election schedule, the Model Election Code comes into effect at once.

(2) The nomination papers are filed by the candidates before the designated Returning Officer on the prescribed days. The prospective candidates are required to submit all personal information and property details in the form of an affidavit along with security deposit of ₹ 25000 (for the House of the People). A candidate forfeits his security deposit money if he fails to secure less than

one-tenth of the total valid polled in that constituency. Other candidates are given back their deposit money after the elections are over. A person may file nomination papers from maximum two constituencies of Lok

Sabha but he should be voter in any Lok Sabha constituency of India, not necessarily in the constituency where he intends to contest the election. Similar rule also prevails for the State Assembly elections.

Model Code of Conduct for the Guidance of Political Parties and Candidates

The Model Code of Conduct was promulgated by the ECI for the first time in 1971 elections for the House of People. It has been modified several times to incorporate desired changes. It is enforced by the ECI under its power to superintendence, direction and control of election in India. The Model Election Code does not have statutory basis. Therefore it cannot be enforced by the Courts. The Model Code of Conduct comes into force at once when the ECI announces the election Schedule. The Model Election Code consists of the following provisions:

1. Rules of General Conduct : These rules include ban on the activities of parties and candidates for causing tension or hatred among different castes and communities; refraining from criticism of the private life of other candidates; no appeal for vote on caste and communal lines; keeping away from corrupt election practices and electoral offences as outlined in the people Representation Act 1951; ban on organizing demonstration or *Dharnas* before the houses of individuals, ban on use of private buildings and walls without the permission of owner for elections; on creating obstruction to the election meetings of other parties.

2. Rules Regarding Meetings : These rules include prior information to and permission from administration for organizing election meetings; following prohibitory orders in force; separate permission from administration for the use of loudspeakers; and assisting the police in, maintaining order during the meeting.

3. Rules Regarding Procession : Providing advance administration to administration about the time, place and route of the proposed procession; following prohibitory order in force; avoid undue hindrance to the traffic; keeping the march of the procession to the right side of the road as much as possible; organizers to coordinate with other parties' processions if both follow the same routes; controlling those article carried by the processionists which may cause harm in case of excitement; ban on burning and carrying of effigies of other parties and leaders.

4. Rules for Polling Day : The rules for the polling day include cooperation with staff on election duty to maintain order and freedom of voters to cast their votes; supplying identity cards to agents of parties; ban the sale and distribution of liquor on the polling day; avoiding unnecessary crowd near polling booths; establishing simple polling camps near polling booth by parties without eatable and party posters; following restriction imposed on the plying of vehicle for the polling day.

5. Rules for Polling Booth : Except the voters. No person without a valid pass will be allowed to enter the polling booth on the day of elections.

6. Central Observers : The ECI appoints central observers for the election to monitor the enforcement of Model Election Code. The parties and candidates may register their complaints to them regarding the conduct of elections.

7. Rules for Party in Power : These rules include refraining from using official position for the purpose of elections; ban on combining official visits with electioneering by the ministers, ban on use of government transport means for elections; ensure equitable use of public places like maidans and rest houses by all parties and candidates; ban on the issue of advertisement on the government cost; ban on sanctioning grants after announcement of elections; ban on inauguration of projects and schemes, making adhoc appointments or making promises to electorates and restriction on ministers to enter polling booths except as voter or candidate.

If any party or candidate violates the rules of Model Election Code, the ECI may take cognizance of the same may issue warning; issue restrictive orders against the offenders; file FIR against the offender or even cancel the candidature of the candidates.

The filled papers are scrutinized by the returning officer and, if not in order, may be rejected. One day is given for the withdrawal of nomination, if some candidates want to withdraw from the fray. Usually 10 days are prescribed for filling and withdrawal of nomination.

(3) After the date of withdrawal of nominations candidates are given fourteen days for canvassing. The candidates are required to observe model code of conduct and other rules during canvassing. The canvassing comes to end 48 hours before the time fixed for the time fixed for the end of polling in that constituency.

(4) On the prescribed day, polling takes place on the designated polling booths. All polling booth/station are set by the District Election Officer under the supervision of the ECI. All officers in the election duty are appointed by the ECI and are under the administrative control of ECI during such duty. Usually the district magistrate is appointed as the District Election Officer, who is the highest election officer in the constituency.

A Polling booth is managed by the Presiding Officer and two Polling Officers, who assist him in the polling. Electronic Voting Machine has been developed by the Electronics Corporation of India Ltd. (ECIL), Hyderabad and the same was demonstrated by the ECI before the representatives of political parties on 6th August, 1980. The Bharat Electronic Ltd. (BEL), Bangalore was co-opted along with ECIL to manufacture EVMs once a broad consensus was reached on its introduction. First time use of EVMs occurred in the general election in Kerala in May 1982; however, the absence of a specific law prescribing the use of EVMs led to the Supreme Court striking down that election. Subsequently, in 1989, the Parliament amended the Representation of the People Act, 1951 to create a provision for the use of EVMs in the election (Chapter 3). A general consensus on its introduction could be reached only in 1998 and EVMs were used in 25 Legislative Assembly Constituencies spread across three states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi (UT). Its use was further

expanded in 1999 to 45 Parliamentary Constituencies and later, in February 2000, to 45 Assembly Constituencies of the Haryana Assembly election. In the State Assembly election held in May 2001, in the States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry and West Bengal, the EVMs were used in all the Assembly Constituencies. Since, then, for every State Assembly Election, the ECI has used the EVMs. In 2004, in the General Election to the Lok Sabha, the EVMs were used in all 542 Parliamentary Constituencies in the country. Another important milestone in electoral process is the introduction of VVPAT (Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail). GoI notified the amended conduct of Election Rules, 1961 on 14th August, 2013, enabling the ECI to use VVPAT with EVMs. The ECI used VVPAT with EVMs first time in by-election from 51-Noksen (ST) Assembly Constituency of Nagaland. Thereafter, VVPATs have been used in selected Constituencies in every election to Legislative Assemblies and 8 Parliamentary Constituencies in General Election to the Lok Sabha.

(5) The counting of votes and declaration of result by the District Election Officer is the last step in the election process. The counting takes place on the designated date after the voting in all the constituencies is complete. After the end of counting, the certificate of victory is given to the candidate who wins the election. The ECI collects the names of all candidates. The list of all the elected candidates of the House of People is submitted by the ECI to the President of India, which is known as the constitution of the House of People. In case of the Assembly election, the list of elected candidates is submitted to the Governor of the concerned state.

ELECTION REFORMS IN INDIA

The Election reforms aims at ensuring free and fair elections. The free and fair elections are important for **two fundamental reasons**. First, the free and fair elections are pre-conditions for the success of **democracy**, which rests on the people's consent for governance. The periodical elections enforce democratic accountability and sustain democracy.

Thus, free and fair elections lie at the very heart of democracy. It is through elections that people in a democracy participate in public affairs and express their will. It is again through elections that power changes hands in a peaceful and orderly manner in a democracy and the authority of government gets clothed with legitimacy. The elections not only sustain democracy but enliven it as well. Holding of free and fair election is, therefore, a *sine qua non* of democracy.

Second, the free and fair elections also impart **legitimacy** to the political regime. Legitimacy means the trust of the people that the regime in power has acquired power through legal means. If elections are not free and fair, the legitimacy of the government in power will be questioned.

But the gains of elections can be gained if they are free and fair. However, in recent years, the increasing role of money and muscle power, use of government machinery and other malpractices in the election process has become a cause of worry. Thus, in the changing circumstances, contiguous election reforms are needed to ensure free and fair election.

(A) Committees and Commissions for Electoral Reforms in India

The momentum for election reforms in India began in 1970s. Various Committees and commissions made recommendations for reforms in election laws. For the first time, a Joint Committee of Parliament proposed certain reforms in 1972. Some of the committees and Commissions are mentioned below:

1. Tarkunde Committee : The Tarkunde Committee was appointed by a NGO called 'Citizens for Democracy' in 1974. The Committee submitted its report in 1975. Its recommendation included adoption of the proportional representation system with multi-member constituencies in place of first past the post system; ban the donation to the political parties and restriction on the poll expenditure; and reduction of voting age from 21 years to 18 years.

2. Dinesh Goswami Committee : Appointed by the central government submitted its report in May 1990. It, among other things recommended, providing for multi-member ECI;

promulgation of Model Code of Conducts for elections, ban on candidates contesting from more than one seat, ban on the donation to political parties and making stringent provisions for preventing booth capturing and other election offences. Some of the recommendations of the Goswami Committee were enforced through change in election laws.

3. Indrajit Gupta Committee : Another Committee known as Indrajit Gupta Committee submitted its report on election reforms in 1999, which included government assistance to political parties for election expenditure; control on entry of criminal in elections; ban on election posters on walls' and making provisions for parties to submit the account of their income and expenditure etc.

4. ECI : Starting from 1970, the Election Commission has submitted its recommendations on electoral reforms in 1977, 1982, 1990, 1992 and 2004.

5. Law Commission of India (LCI) : The Law Commission of India has also made several recommendation regarding election reforms in India. The Law Commission of India has made detailed study of the election reforms issues and has made **three rounds** of recommendations on various aspects of election reforms. In 1999, the LCI submitted its 170th report on the reforms of election laws in India suggesting some changes in the Representation of people Act, 1951. In 2014, at the direction of the Supreme Court, the LCI submitted its 244th Report on the disqualifications of the candidates. Third time, it was in 2015 that the LCI submitted its 255th Report on various electoral reforms. Some of the important recommendations of the LCI contained in the **255th Report (2015)** are listed below :

Election Finance : The LCI was not in favour of state financing of elections due to paucity of state resources. However, it recommended strict adherence to election expenditure limits and filling of accounts by the political parties and candidates. This enabled government to issue Electoral Bond scheme in 2018 to mobilize anonymous funds by political parties. This scheme is challen-

ged in the Supreme Court now (decision is awaited).

Inner Party Democracy : The LCI supported adoption of inner democracy by political parties-adopting democratic procedure in the functioning of political parties.

Proportional Representation Vs First Past the Post System (FPTP) : For the sake of stability and effective functioning the LCI favoured FPTP.

Change in Anti-defection Law : The LCI proposed that the decision to disqualify a member under anti-defection should be given to the President or Governor as the case may in place of present power with Speaker or Chairman to ensure unbiased decisions.

Paid News and Political Advertisement : In this case, the LCI suggested that there should be mandatory disclosure of the source of news by the media houses.

Totaliser for Counting of Votes : The Commission reiterates and endorses the ECI's suggestion for introducing a totaliser for the counting of votes recorded in electronic voting machines to prevent the harassment of voters in areas where voting trends in each polling station can be determined. Prior to the introduction of EVMs, ballot papers could be mixed under Rule 59A of the Election Rules, although this was not permitted for EVMs. Using a totaliser would increase the secrecy of votes during counting.

Other Recommendations of LCI : There is no need to extend NOTA to cancel elections in case NOTA votes are higher than any candidate, compulsory voting and system of Recall of elected candidates are not feasible; restriction on the government advertisement during elections; a candidate should be allowed to contest from one seat only (not two seats as now); ban on independent candidates in elections; and a common voter list for Parliament, assembly and local body elections.

(B) Major Electoral Reforms Implemented in India

Some of the above suggested reforms have been implemented. The election reforms in India may finally

originate (implemented) from **three sources**: the **Election Commission of India (ECI)**, e.g., Model Code of Conduct; the **Government**, particularly **Legislature**, e.g., changing election laws; and finally the **Judiciary**, e.g., decisions of the Supreme Court of India. In recent years, the judiciary in India has emerged as a potential source of election reforms.

1. The Judiciary : The Judiciary has been an important source of election reforms in India in recent years. In March 2003 judgment (*Peoples Union for Civil Liberties & Another Vs. Union of India*), the Supreme Court held that it should be mandatory for the candidates to provide detailed information about their property and personal and public life during the filling of nomination in the form of affidavit. This order was implemented by the ECI and has come in force since the 2004 General Elections to Lok Sabha.

The Supreme Court in a order made on 10 July, 2013 in writ petition filed by a NGO called **Lok Prahary** struck down section 8(4) of the People Representation Act 1951 and held that if a person is convicted of crime with punishment not less than two years, he shall not continue as member of Parliament or State Legislature and will be disqualified for contesting any election for six years, irrespective of the fact that appeal against the conviction is filed in the higher court by the convicted person. The Section 8(4) provided that such convicts will not be subject to disqualification, if appeal is filed by them in the higher court within a period of three months. Initially government supported by other parties wanted to challenge this order, but finally it backed off and the order has come in force now.

In another order made in the writ petition filed by the People Union for Civil Liberties, issued on 27 September, 2013, the Supreme Court held that the voters should be provided *None Of the Above (NOTA)* option in the voting to record their choice if they do not like to vote for any candidate. The NOTA option has been provided for the first time in December 2013 Assembly elections.

In 2013, the SC in a writ petition filed by Subramaniam Swami, provided for the VVPAT or Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail, which is a mechanism to display printed version of the vote cast by the voter for few seconds. The paper slip is collected in the sealed box of the Voting machines. This ensures that voters vote is 'recorded as voted'. The Court also provided for the random tally of the paper slip with Voting machine recorded votes at least in one polling booth from each Assembly Constituency. This ensures that voters vote is 'counted as recorded'. Later in 2019, the SC in another writ petition enhanced the VVPAT tally of 5 polling booths in each Assembly constituency. Yetb another writ petition is filed by the Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) for further increase in the number of polling booths per constituency for tally of VVPAT. As in November 2023, the writ petition is pending in the SC. In this case the court has observed that Voters do not have the fundamental right to know that their vote has been 'counted as recorded'.

2. ECI and the Government :

The Election Commission of India and the government (legislature) are two other sources of election reforms in India. The poll reforms introduced by the ECI and the Government in recent years include, among other things, promulgation and enforcement of Model Code of Conduct for elections; introduction of Electronic Voting Machines; issue of photo identity cards for the voters, reduction of canvassing period from 21 days to 14 days, raising deposit money to deter non-serious candidates, ban on candidates for contesting elections from more than two constituencies, registration and recognition of polling parties, video recording of the sensitive polling booths, generating awareness among voters and provision for submitting detail account of income and expenditure of political parties.

Conclusion

Many efforts have been made for the electoral reforms in India. Due to these reforms, the entry of criminal elements in the elections has come down to a great extent. Strict monitoring of poll expenses is likely to

reduce the roll of unauthorized money in elections. However, the incidents of violation of Model Code of Conduct are also increasing, as observed during 2019 elections to the House of People. Election reform is a continuous process. Since the days of T.N. Seshan as CEC (1990-96), the ECI has become very active in discharge of its responsibilities. In spite of many shortcomings, the credit goes to the ECI to manage 17 times the peaceful transfer of political power at the central level in India. Still, more needs to be done to ensure free and fair elections in the largest democracy of the world, as India is known in the world and it claims to be.

However, as the technology and other conditions change, there appear new malpractices in elections. For example the growth and wide use electronic media has facilitated the conduct of elections on the one hand, but it has been used for new election malpractices on the other hand. The problem of Paid News in both print and electronic media has emerged in recent years. According to Press Council of India (PCI) Paid News can be defined as "Any news or analysis appearing in any media (print and electronic) for a price in cash or kind as a consideration". It has three dimensions : it distorts the opinion of voters; the candidates do not show this expenditure in their election expenditure; and the media also do not show this income in their accounts. In order to address the challenge of paid news, the ECI has announced two measures in 2019, as and when the case of paid news is verified. First, the name of candidate will be displayed in the website of the Chief electoral Officer of the State; and second, the name of media house will be sent by the ECI to the PCI and News Broadcasters Association (NBA) for further action. Social Media can also be misused for spreading false rumors creating problems for smooth conduct of elections. Because of decentralized nature and fast speed of social media, it is difficult to control it. **Thus, the issue of electoral reforms is not a one shot affair. It is continuous process with changing conditions.**

was a positive step toward addressing global challenges, it also highlighted the limitations of the existing multilateral framework.

Weakening of WTO : New form of protectionism emerged despite the presence of WTO. New protectionism undermines the authority of the WTO, which is a multilateral body in the field of trade.

Weakening the Security Council of the UNO : On many occasions the Security Council failed to contain the military conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war. Many times China prevented the Security Council to take tough action against the erring parties by applying the veto.

How can India Shape the New World Order ?

India can play a leading role in the QUAD and ASEAN, as well as other regional and sub-regional forums, to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific region that is based on the rule of law, respect for sovereignty, and peaceful resolution of disputes.

India can also enhance its maritime security cooperation with like-minded countries to counter the challenges posed by China's assertiveness in the region. India can contribute to the re-globalisation process by diversifying its trade and investment partners, especially in the Global South, and by developing its domestic capabilities in key sectors such as manufacturing, services, and innovation. India can also advocate for a more democratic and equitable global governance system that reflects the realities and aspirations of the emerging economies. India can use its hosting of the G20 summit as an opportunity to showcase its vision and achievements as a global leader, as well as to forge consensus on important issues such as climate change, sustainable development, health security, and digital transformation. India can also bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries by highlighting their common interests and challenges, and by proposing solutions that are inclusive and pragmatic.

The Indian Parliament : Functions and Powers

—Arunoday Bajpai

Two notable events of present time invite our attention to the Status and Powers of the Indian Parliament. **First**, the Indian Parliament has shifted to newly constructed building on 19th September, 2023. A special session of the Parliament in this new building was held during this period, which assessed the journey of Indian Parliament in last seven decades. **Second**, the elections to the Lok Sabha are due before May 2024 and political parties have launched their mobilization for this election. Out of the three organs of Government, the Parliament is the Legislative organ of the Union Government. As India has adopted the Parliamentary form of Government, there is a close relationship between the Parliament and the Council of Ministers. The party which enjoys the majority in the Lok Sabha forms the Government. If the Government loses the confidence of the House of the People, it will have to resign. All the Ministers are required to be the member of the Parliament. Following are the main functions and powers of the Parliament :

Legislative Powers

The main Legislative Powers of the Parliament include the enactment of laws, amendment of the Constitution, creation of new States or changing the boundaries of existing States, creation or abolition of Legislative Councils in States.

(A) The Parliament has the Power to enact laws with respect to the matters included in the Union List and Concurrent List as given in the seventh Schedule of the Constitution. While the Parliament has exclusive jurisdiction with respect to the Union List, its Legislative Powers in the Concurrent List are shared by the States also. However if there is any inconsistency between the laws made by the State Legislature and the Parliament, the law made by the latter prevails to the extent of inconsistency.

In the following cases the Parliament is entitled to enact laws with respect to the matters included in the State List also :

- (a) If two or more states make request for the same.
- (b) If it is required for the implementation of an international treaty or agreement.
- (c) If the Council of states declares that a matter of the State List is of national importance, the Parliament gets the right to enact laws with respect to that matter.
- (d) During the period of Proclamation of National Emergency, the Parliament gets the Power to enact laws with respect to any matter included in the State List.
- (e) When the Legislative Assembly of a state is suspended or dissolved during the enforcement of President' Rule, the Legislative Powers of the Assembly is exercised by the Parliament.

(B) Under Article 368 of the Indian Constitution the power of Amendment of the Constitution is vested in the Parliament. The Constitution Amending Powers of Parliament are also termed as 'Constituent Powers'. The Amending Power of the Parliament is distinct from its law making Power. While enactment of laws requires a simple majority of the members present and voting, the Amendment of the Constitution requires special majority as given in Article 368. The Special majority means fulfilling the following two conditions at the same time :

1. The majority of the total membership of the House that is more than 50% of the total membership; and at the same time,
2. At least two third of the members present and voting.

In order to calculate the minimum number required for special majority, one has to calculate the above two figures (given in point 1 and 2). The higher of the two figures

shall be the minimum number required for the Special Majority because the higher number satisfies the condition of the lower number also.

The proposal for Amendment of the Constitution can be initiated in either House of the Parliament and it has to be passed in both Houses separately with special majority. Both Houses of Parliament have equal Powers in Amendment.

The Parliament has the Power to amend all provisions of the Constitution except the following seven provisions related with the federal system :

- (i) The manner of election of President (Articles 54, 55);
- (ii) Extent of Executive Powers of the Union and the States;
- (iii) The Supreme Court and High Courts (Article 241, Chapter IV of part V, Chapter V of part VI);
- (iv) Distribution of Legislative Powers between the Union and States (Chapter I of part XI);
- (V) Any of the lists in the 7th Schedule;
- (VI) Representation of States in the Council of States(4th Schedule); and
- (VII) Provisions of Article 368 itself.

It should be noted that the Parliament can amend these provisions also if the proposed amendment also receives the consent of legislatures of not less than half of the States before it is sent to the consent of the President.

(C) Other Legislative Powers of the Parliament are :

First, the Parliament may by law create new States or change the boundaries of existing States. Though enactment of such law results in the alteration of the provisions of the Constitution, it is not considered an amendment under Article 368. Therefore, such a law can be enacted by the Parliament by a simple majority.

Second, as provided in Article 169, the Parliament may by law create or abolish Legislative Council in a State on the basis of the resolution

passed by the Legislative Assembly of the concerned State. Again such a law can be passed by a simple majority because it is not considered an amendment under Article 368.

Third, the Parliament has the power to approve or disapprove the Proclamation of National Emergency, Financial Emergency or the President's Rule in different States within a certain period (In case of national Emergency within one month and in case of others within two months). If approved within the stipulated period, such Proclamation will continue for a period of six months and if not approved by the Parliament such proclamation will come to end after the expiry of stipulated period of one month or two months as the case may be. The extension of such Proclamation beyond the period of six months also requires the approval of the Parliament.

Fourth, the ordinances issued by the President shall cease to be in effect after a period of six weeks from the date of commencement of session of Parliament, if such ordinance is not approved by the Parliament within such period.

The Executive Powers

As India has adopted the Parliamentary form of Government, the executive powers of Parliament assume significance. First, members of the Council of Ministers or the Union Executive are selected and appointed from amongst the Members of Parliament. If a person, who is not a Member of Parliament, is appointed as a Minister, such person shall cease to be the Minister after the expiry of the period of six months unless such person becomes the member of either House of Parliament within such period of six months. Thus, the **first** executive function of Parliament is to provide the Council of Ministers [Article 75(5)]. **Second**, Article 75(3) states that the Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of people. By the force of this provision, the Lok Sabha controls the Executive or the Council of Ministers and hold the Government accountable to people as the Lok Sabha consists of people's representative. There are various means available to Members of Parliament to control the Council

of Ministers and hold it responsible, which is discussed below. These devices are not discussed in the Constitution but find mention in the Rules of Procedure of Parliament. Both Houses of Parliament have the Power to frame their own Rules of Procedure to regulate the conduct of their business.

No-Confidence Motion : This is the most effective and ultimate tool available to Lok Sabha to ensure the collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers cannot continue in office if it loses the confidence of the House of the People. The collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers means that when the No-Confidence motion is passed, the entire Council of Ministers will resign. That means the Ministers swim and sink together. There is no explicit provision in the Constitution of the individual responsibility of the Ministers towards the Parliament. There is no need to any give grounds in the no-Confidence motion. A notice of no-Confidence motion is given before the commencement of the sitting on the day it is proposed to be raised. The Motion is taken up after the Question Hour and presented to seek the leave or permission of the House. If not less than 50 members raise their hands in support of the Motion, it is admitted for Consideration of the House. The Motion has to be taken up for discussion and voting within ten days after the leave has been granted. The time for discussion is fixed on the recommendation of the Business advisory Committee. At the end of discussion, the voting takes place. If the Motion is passed by the majority of the Members present and voting, the Council of Ministers have to resign forthwith. However, the President may ask the outgoing Council of Ministers to continue as a caretaker Government till the alternative arrangement is made. The Motion of No-Confidence can be withdrawn by its mover before the leave of the House is granted. If the Motion has received the leave of the House, it can be withdrawn only with the consent of the House.

Censure Motion : Censure Motion is another tool available to Lok Sabha to control the Executive. It

is different from the No-Confidence Motion in the sense that it should specify the reasons or grounds for moving such motion. Unlike the No-Confidence Motion it can be moved even against an individual Minister for his wrong actions or policies. The House may express the surprise, regret or indignation of House at the wrong actions or policies of the Minister concerned. Unlike the No-Confidence Motion, the leave of the House is not required to move the Censure Motion. It is up to the Government to fix the date and time of its discussion. Rules applicable to ordinary Motions apply as there are no specific provisions about Censure Motion in the Rules of Procedure.

Adjournment Motion : Since passing of Adjournment Motion involves the element of censure of the Government, this device is not used by the Rajya Sabha. Normally, the business of the House is conducted as per the pre-decided Agenda. The purpose of the Adjournment Motion is to interrupt the ongoing business on the House and to discuss a matter of urgent public importance. The essential elements of Adjournment Motion are :

- (i) The matter should be of definite nature.
- (ii) It should not be imaginative but should be based on facts.
- (iii) The issue involved in the matter to be discussed should be of urgent nature.
- (iv) The matter should be of public importance.

The Member who wants to move the motion is required to submit a notice to that effect addressed separately to the Speaker, Secretary-General of Lok Sabha and the concerned Minister before 10 AM on the day Motion is proposed to be moved. Like No-Confidence Motion this Motion is also presented in the House after the Question Hour. The mover of the Motion is required to take the leave of the House. If not less than 50 Members raise their hands in support of the Motion, the leave is granted and the Motion is admitted by the House. After the Motion is admitted, it is taken for discussion at 4.00 PM on the same day and discussion continues for two and half hour. During the discussion, first the

mover and other Members speak and the concerned Member reply at the end of the discussion. It should be noted that during the discussion on the Motion, the Speaker cannot adjourn the House as during that time this Power lies with the House. The passing of Adjournment Motion censures the government but it does not lead to the removal of the Government from the office.

Calling Attention Notices : As noted in the preceding paragraph, the Adjournment Motion involves an element of censure. Hence the Government and the Ruling party do not allow this motion to be taken or passed. Consequently, many matters of urgent public importance are not discussed in the House. In order to remove this difficulty, the provision of Calling Attention Notices was made in 1954 under Rules of Procedure. This is an Indian innovation in the Parliamentary practices. Like Adjournment Motion, the Calling Attention Notice is given by the Members before 10 AM on in writing. Not more than two Notices can be taken at one sitting of the House. It is the discretion of the Speaker to admit the Notice, if he is satisfied that the matter raised in the Notice is important. In calling Attention Notices, unlike Adjournment Motions, there is no need to seek the leave of the House. In such Notices there is neither debate nor voting at the end. The concerned Minister makes the authoritative statement on the issue raised in the Notice. However, the Members are allowed to ask clarificatory questions. The main benefit of Calling Attention Notice is that it allows raising and discussion on urgent matters without opposition from the Treasury Bench as it not involve the element of censure against the Government.

Question Hour : A major device available to members of Parliament to ensure the responsibility of the Council of Ministers is known as Question Hour. The first hour from 11.00 AM to 12.00 Noon in each day sitting is allotted for asking and answering questions. By asking questions the Members of Parliament try to seek information on matters of public importance. The Member who desires to ask question should give

notice to the Secretary-General of the concerned House before 10 days but not more than 21 days from the date on which the Member wants the question to be answered.

The Rules of Procedure lay down certain conditions for the admission of question in Parliament. First, the questions containing allegations are not admitted if not based on facts. Second, questions related to individuals are not allowed unless they raise an important issue of public policy. Third, those questions are not admitted which contain discourteous references about the friendly foreign countries. Fourth, those questions are also not allowed whose subject matter is pending before the courts or before a Parliamentary Committee.

The questions asked by the Members are of two types : (i) **Ordinary questions** which require 10 days advance notice to be given. (ii) **The Short Notice Questions** which are related to a matter of urgent public importance and do not require 10 days advance notice. The Ordinary Questions are further subdivided into two categories : (a) **Starred Questions**, which are marked by an asterisk and which are answered orally by the concerned Minister on the floor of the House. Two supplementary questions by the Member are also allowed in this category. **Unstarred Questions**, which are not marked by the asterisk mark and their answer is given in written form. No supplementary questions are allowed in this category. The Speaker or the Chairman as the case may be has the discretion to categorize the questions oral or written answers. Usually, 20 questions are listed in a single day during Question hour. No Member is allowed to ask more than 5 questions on a day. The questions which are of local and routine interest and require detail answers are listed for written answers and questions which are of public importance and require supplementary questions are generally listed for oral answers. The concerned Minister answers the question on the fixed day. Normally, no debate is allowed during the Question Hour but Half an Hour Discussion may be allowed on the recently answered questions of public importance on a different day at the end of the sitting. For such discussion a three days

advance notice is required to be given by the Member. No Member can give such notice more than once in a week and not more than twice in the entire session.

Zero Hour : Like Calling Attention Motion, the idea of Zero hour is also an Indian contribution to the Parliamentary practices. The Rules of Procedure of either House do not mention Zero Hour. It began as an informal practice in 1962. It is called so because it begins at 12'o Clock, which is a zero hour. During Zero Hour, a Member, without giving a prior notice, may raise any matter of public importance. The idea behind the Zero Hour is that there are certain matters of urgent public importance which should be raised immediately in the House as they cannot wait for a 10 days notice to be raised. The Zero Hour follows Question Hour and ends at 1'o Clock. It keeps the Government on its toes as any unexpected matter may crop in during the Zero Hour.

These and some other devices are intended to control the Government and to ensure the responsibility of the Council of Ministers towards Parliament.

Judicial Powers

The Parliament is primarily a Legislative body, yet it enjoys some powers of judicial nature also. Thus, it has the Power to remove the following Constitutional Functionaries on the ground of proved misbehaviour or incapacity if a resolution to that effect is passed with special majority by each House of Parliament separately in the same session :

- (i) The Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts.
- (ii) The Chief Election Commissioner of India.
- (iii) The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India.
- (iv) The State Election Commissioners.

The Parliament also has the Power to remove the President of India from his office by passing a Motion of Impeachment in the each House separately with not less than two-third majority of the total Members of each House on the ground of violation of the Constitution.

Continued on Page 110

America, China and Taiwan : A Supporting Role for India

—Vijan Kumar Pandey

China is once again in a position to threaten Taiwan. China's latest outburst has increased with Taiwanese Vice President William Lai. During his trip to Paraguay, Lai also made a brief stopover in America, and this angered China. Lai has emerged as the leading contender for the next President in Taiwan. The Chinese military has warned of stern action against Lai's visit to the US, terming it as seeking foreign aid by 'supporters of Taiwan independence'. The Chinese army has also given threats related to the preparations for the war. It is very common for China to conduct military activities around the border with Taiwan. Under the 'One China Policy', China considers Taiwan as its integral part, while the reality is that since 1949, Taiwan has been governed independently. Despite this, China does not desist from its habit and remains in a posture of strategic ascension around Taiwan and also threatens the countries that support it.

The picture of China-Taiwan relations is very complex and multi-dimensional, including political, historical and cultural aspects. Sporadic military activities are just an example in this confrontation, but this geopolitical confrontation between the two has been going on for a long time. There are many reasons behind China's desire to occupy Taiwan. The biggest aspect is of strategic importance. Taiwan, which considers itself a sovereign nation, has long been claimed by China. But Taiwan views the US as its biggest ally, while Washington has passed legislation mandating that the US assist Taiwan in its self-defense efforts.

China believes that with the occupation of Taiwan, it will neutralize America's 'island chain strategy', because Taiwan acts as a wall between China and the western Pacific Ocean. China's maritime

strategy, or 'Island Chain Strategy', is a geo-security concept devised by the United States in the 1940s to contain the maritime ambitions of China and the Soviet Union. If China invades Taiwan, it will gain an advantage over the major sea routes of Asia. There is also an aspect of economic interests. Taiwan is the world's semiconductor superpower. In such a situation, with control over it, China's dominance over many major industries of the world will increase further. Taiwan (officially the 'Republic of China') is a country located in East Asia. It is the largest land area between Japan and the Philippines at the meeting point of the East and South China Seas in the northwestern Pacific Ocean. Taiwan is notable for semiconductor production, and the global supply chain of semiconductors is heavily dependent on Taiwan. Taiwanese contract manufacturers are expected to account for more than 60% of total global semiconductor revenue in 2021. Currently only 13 countries (and the Vatican) recognize Taiwan as a sovereign country.

Difference between 'One China' Principle and 'One China' Policy

To understand the cross-Taiwan Strait problems, it is important to understand the difference between the 'One China' principle and the 'One China' policy :

- The People's Republic of China (PRC) adheres to the principle of 'one China', which views Taiwan as an inalienable part of China, with the sole legitimate government established in Beijing.
- The US accepts the principle's position but does not necessarily affirm its validity.
- Instead the US follows a policy of 'one China', meaning that the People's Republic of China was and is the only China, and it does

not recognize the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) as a separate sovereign entity.

- But at the same time, the US did not accede to the PRC's demands to recognize Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan.

Taiwan's per capita GDP is three times that of China, which reflects its prosperity. It is obvious that there will be immense opportunities for Chinese companies. One reason for China's insistence on Taiwan is historical and cultural as well. Taiwan, once part of the Republic of China, became independent in 1949 following the Chinese Civil War. China has not been able to digest its independent existence till date. This is the reason why making it a part of China is a major part of the Chinese Communist Party and President Xi Jinping's strategy. Naturally, this also has deep implications from an internal political point of view in China.

A question arises here that in the event of a Chinese attack, is Taiwan capable of defending itself? There is no doubt that Taiwan has made its strategic preparations, but its ability to counter China without outside help is debatable. The Taiwanese military has prepared a front to deal with immediate threats such as Chinese missiles, airstrikes and cyber attacks. At the same time, the US has recognized Taiwan's collective self-defense right through the Taiwan Relations Act.

Although the US has not made any mutual strategic agreement with Taiwan, there is a provision for its assistance in the event of any external attack. US officials have also voiced collective interest in Taiwan's defense in some of their recent statements. In the event of any attack on Taiwan, India will also have to be especially vigilant and prepare a comprehensive strategy. Especially in view of China's increasing interference in South Asia, it will be necessary to keep an eye on

both geographical and maritime levels. Along with this, on the diplomatic front, India should work with major countries for peace and stability so that the possibility of any unilateral Chinese aggression can be weakened.

India & Taiwan's Growing Ties

India has followed a one China policy from the beginning; in fact, it was one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China (PRC) and adopt the One-China policy. But over time, there has been a steady enhancement of the relationship with Taiwan, in some measure arising from the estrangement with the People's Republic. Our ties now encompass trade and incorporate the educational opportunities for Indians wanting to study the Chinese language and track developments in China. In recent years, as New Delhi has looked eastward and Taipei has looked southwards, the two have begun to meet more frequently. India established the India-Taipei Association (ITA), which serves as a de facto embassy in 1995, the same year in which Taiwan set up its Taipei Economic and Cultural Center (TECC) in New Delhi.

It will also be necessary for India to prepare to deal with the emerging scenario on the economic front in the event of a Chinese attack on Taiwan. Taiwan is a major player in the global semiconductor supply chain. Especially the master of advanced type chip manufacturing, TSMC, the world's largest chip maker, gives Taiwan a decisive edge in this key technology. If there is a Chinese attack on Taiwan, the semiconductor supply in the world will be badly affected. This will have an impact on companies in many sectors and the manufacture of various products, as chips are widely used in manufactured goods today. The deterioration of semiconductor supply will have deep economic consequences and India will also have to bear the brunt.

Taiwan Crisis Is Made Up of Three Factors

The two primary countries that need to offer a credible posture relating to China over Taiwan are the US and Japan. India may not have a

dog in the race, but New Delhi realizes that the best way of constraining China in a manner that does not result in a devastating war is to be part of a united front that makes it obvious to Beijing that any show-down over Taiwan may result in a price that it may not find acceptable.

The crisis in US-China relations is just beginning. There are both risks and opportunities for India. The growing danger of war over Taiwan is real, but we cannot be sure of the nature of the war—whether it will be short and sharp, or whether, like the Ukraine war, it will be prolonged.

The current Taiwan crisis is a product of three factors. First, Taiwan has become more democratic and more important to the world economy. Second, China has become more aggressive. This leads to the third factor: the US underscoring its support for the island republic and, unlike the case of Ukraine, US President Biden has thrice allegedly misspoken to say that the US would go to war to defend Taiwan. Beijing knows well that any attack on the island would commit it to war with the US and possibly Japan, and hence the need for all of us to handle things with caution.

- India has to understand that Taiwan is the real focus of the American Indo-Pacific strategy. It does have a large supporting role in the broader issue of constraining China.
- The two primary countries that need to offer a credible posture relating to China over Taiwan are the US and Japan.
- Were a cross-strait conflict to erupt pitting the US, Japan and Australia against China, it would pose a dilemma for the fourth member of the Quad, India.
- India has its own vulnerabilities and it's only under extreme circumstances that it will play a larger political role in Taiwan.

There is also a linkage of sorts between India's approach towards Tibet and Taiwan, both of which are claimed by Beijing as inalienable parts of China. From 2008 onwards, India stopped making the routine endorsement that it "recognised the Tibet Autonomous Region as a part of the territory of the People's Republic of China". From 2010

onwards, joint statements also stopped repeating that its "one China policy remained unaltered". This was also around the time that India and Taiwan eased visa requirements and recognised each other's degrees. Former President APJ Abdul Kalam also visited Taiwan and, in turn, India hosted several senior leaders of the Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party, including its then-chairperson, Tsai Ing-wen.

Conclusion

Here India has to understand that Taiwan is the real focus of the American Indo-Pacific strategy. The South China Sea issue pales into insignificance compared to the complexity and consequences of the Taiwan issue. Here, India does have a large supporting role in the broader issue of constraining China. In such a situation, there is no need to prepare any well-known strategy to deal with any political and military mischief of China in the Taiwanese world. This will stop the rigging of China's unilateral action on Taiwan. Even if India does not exert significant military influence east of the Malacca Straits, it can still leverage its geo-strategic position in deterring sectarian military aggression. When democratic values are being challenged in the world, democracies around the world have an obligation to unite in support of Taiwan's autonomy. Security is necessary to keep up with the times in a Taiwan that is strong and mature. The relations between Taiwan and China are complex; the latter is Taiwan's largest trading partner, and the Taiwanese have invested a massive \$ 198.3 billion in China. Like many other countries, China is dependent on high-quality semiconductors produced in Taiwan. A stable and peaceful relationship between the two is of benefit to China.

In the end, if the cross-strait conflict pits the US, Japan and Australia against China, it will create a dilemma for India, the fourth member of the Quad. New Delhi may become part of an informal blockade by US allies such as Britain, Australia and France. One thing is for sure that such a conflict would be disastrous for the world economy, and the most affected country apart from Taiwan could be China.

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India's Foreign Policy Adjusts as BRICS Expands

—Nripendra Abhishek Nrip

BRICS was formed at a time when the world was being viewed from a new geopolitical perspective. Due to economic progress, many countries of the world were emerging rapidly. They not only wanted their share in economic development rather wanted to play an important role in world politics as well. BRICS is a group of five developing countries that represent 41 per cent of the world's population, 24 per cent of global GDP and 16 per cent of global trade.

This year the BRICS Summit took place in Johannesburg, South Africa from August 22 to August 24. This is the first time after the Corona epidemic, when this summit is being held in person. The gathering marks an important moment in international diplomacy as discussions took place regarding the strengthening of political and economic influence within the developing world. The theme of this 15th BRICS Summit is "BRICS and Africa : Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism."

Expansion of BRICS

The 15th BRICS Summit has been organized with the aim of increasing the number of member countries from five to eleven, which signifies a solid effort towards improving its global status. With joining of Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia and Argentina in BRICS, representation of the Middle East, Africa and South America has increased significantly. Their full membership will be effective from January 1, 2024. Former member countries include Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

With the six new members (BRICS + 6), their share in Global GDP will jump to 30 per cent and in global population to 46 per cent. Biggest impact will be on the share of global crude oil production that will

increase to 40 per cent from the current 18 per cent, while the oil intake share of BRICS + 6 will jump from 27 per cent to 36 per cent because three new members (Saudi Arab, UAE and Iran) are oil producing and exporting countries.

Likewise, BRICS + 6's share in global merchandise trade will rise from 20 per cent to about 25 per cent. Share in global services trade will increase to 15 per cent from 12 per cent at present. BRICS + 6's share in global forex reserves will increase by 600 bps to 45 per cent.

But, share of China and India, two largest economies within the BRICS, is most likely to decrease with the addition of new 6 members. At present, China's share in BRICS' GDP is about 70 per cent which may reduce to 62 per cent in BRICS + 6. Similarly, India's share in BRICS GDP is about 13 per cent which may come down to 12 per cent.

The BRICS expansion is also being seen as a competition to the G-7 grouping of countries. Because the G-7 countries have the world's largest economies. Analysts believe the bloc could exacerbate geopolitical problems in an attempt to restore global balance, as both Russia and China seek to sway it to their side and have tensions with the West.

India played a key role in drafting the membership criteria of the organization and promoting strategic partnership among the new entrants. India's Prime Minister proposed to set up a BRICS Space Exploration Association to further cooperation in the field of space technology and research. India called for the cooperation of BRICS countries under the International Big Cat Alliance for the protection of endangered big cats.

Challenges Before BRICS

BRICS has expanded at present, but many questions are standing before us. The biggest question arises

about the rules of the new member countries included in the group because there is no uniform rule. There is no formal way to join BRICS. Neither the countries have to make any written application, nor do they have to fulfil any specific conditions. Another question is, will the expanded group live up to the expectations just by increasing the numerical strength? Will the addition of some more geopolitical rivals along with countries already standing on different axes really strengthen the grouping? The relations of the new member countries with the old countries will not affect the basic spirit of the group. Will the group remain entangled in factionalism? Apart from this, there are innumerable questions whose answers will have to be found by the member countries in the days to come.

Apart from framing rules for visiting members, BRICS has other challenges as well. In Western countries, BRICS is being seen as an organization that is challenging its alliance. But the biggest weakness of BRICS is the lack of shared values among them. Everyone wants to use it for their own benefit. The deteriorating relations between India and China in the past few years weakened it further. If the BRICS countries have to compete with the western countries in the future with their growing economies, then they will also have to work on reducing mutual differences.

BRICS + 6 has some inbuilt contrasts. It has various type of governments from democracy (India, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran) to Monarchy (Saudi Arab), limited democracy (UAE) and a one-party rule (China). India has bitter relations with China on border issues. India had cordial relations with Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Iran. During the Russia-Ukraine war, China came closer with Russia.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE are moving away from the West, while Iran has a long history of bitter relationship with the US and United Kingdoms.

As it appears from the current geopolitics, China is on the path of her expansionary strategy. The new addition to BRICS has more influence of China. China will use its influence in BRICS to make its position more strong in Africa, Middle East and South America.

Focussing on economic growth will help the BRICS + 6 look past these inherent contradictions and face common challenges, from securing funds for development activities, skilling the youth, fighting the poverty, strengthening the human development and addressing the climate change.

The success of the BRICS + 6, as a group of Global South, will largely depend on the attitude of political attitude of Big Brother *i.e.*, China.

Role of India

After the expansion of the group, India will have to make efforts that its

role remains important because if China dominates the expanded countries, then its hold on the organization will be stronger. China does not need to preserve the exclusiveness of the conglomerate to maintain its global position. China has integrated new members over the years and attempted to transform the bloc into a China-led coalition. Since 2017, when it introduced the "BRICS Plus" concept, Beijing has sought to expand the agenda. Following the invasion of Ukraine, Russia has also become keenly interested in expansion as it could help build a Russia-sympathetic bloc to counter Western efforts to isolate the country.

India is looking after its own interest as well as the interest of other countries which have been given membership because all of them are emerging economies. All have the potential to play an active role in peace and economic development in the world. India wants the development of BRICS, but the development of BRICS should not be against any particular group and keeping a posi-

tive attitude, it should be a matter of everyone's development.

India fears that China wants to make it a platform of its influence through expansion. Brazil also says that it does not want to make BRICS a G7, G20 or an anti-American organization. It is believed that to reduce the impact of the dollar, China is also emphasizing on the local currency of BRICS. So, are Russia and China looking at this as building a platform against the US? And what role can India play in this so that China does not make it an anti-American bloc? On this question too, India will have to expand its policies only after thinking deeply.

The foundation of India's foreign policy was laid by the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as non-alignment that means India will not join any faction. However, currently, India's Foreign Minister is referring to this non-alignment as multi-alignment, which means that India will not align with any one group but will align with all groups according to its interests.

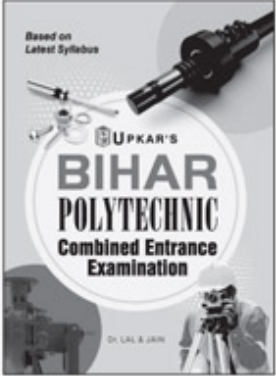
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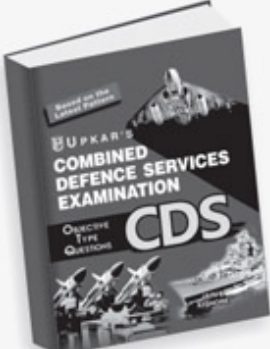
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The Changing Role of the State in Indian Economy

—Shrawan Kumar Singh

Concept of Market

Free markets are conceptualized as having little to no interference from the government. Following the writings of Adam Smith, the government is responsible for just a few primary functions. Markets only work efficiently if there is full information among all participants, including buyers and sellers, producers and consumers. However, due to an information asymmetry, regulations are put in place to rectify the information asymmetry and protect consumers. In reality governments do step in to :

1. stabilize markets,
2. regulate transactions,
3. provide institutional frameworks,
4. enforce rules around contract law and property rights,
5. governments also intervene when markets fail in the form of bailouts and other emergency measures, Bailouts can skew the market by changing the rules to allow poorly run companies to survive. The government only uses its ability to protect the most systemically essential industries like banks, insurers, airlines, and car manufacturers.
6. governments affect the markets and influences business in ways that often have unexpected consequences,
7. governments have the capacity to make broad changes to monetary and fiscal policy, which has a huge impact on business,

It is clear from the above that governments have a substantial and far-reaching influence on markets due to their ability to regulate everything and regulations that impact each industry. Governments play a substantial role in the financial sector.

Role of the State

The proper role of the state depends on the model of the eco-

nomy, as well as of the state itself. Przeworski (1998) has emphasised that "the goal of state is to build institutions that would empower governments to do what they should while impeding them from doing what they should not". This calls for changing not just administration, but also political system.

One role of government is to correct problems of market failure associated with public goods, external costs and benefits, and imperfect competition. Government intervention to correct market failure always has the potential to move markets closer to efficient solutions, and thus reduce deadweight losses. There is, however, no guarantee that these gains will be achieved :

- (a) Governments may seek to alter the provision of certain goods and services based on a normative judgment that consumers will consume too much or too little of the goods. Goods for which such judgments are made are called merit or demerit goods.
- (b) Governments redistribute income through transfer payments. Such redistribution often goes from people with higher incomes to people with lower incomes, but other transfer payments go to people who are relatively better off.

Przeworski (1998) suggest that "the quality of state performance depends on the institutional design of all these mechanisms, and that well-designed institutions will allow and induce governments to intervene in the economy in a way that is superior to what occurs in a noninterventionist state".

As regards debates about the proper role of government in the economy, these debates have gone around in circles, with arguments about market failures being countered by claims about regulatory failures. "The economist recognizes

that government can do some things better than the free market can do but he has no reason to believe that democratic processes will keep government from exceeding the limits of optimal intervention" (Posner, 1987 : 21).

In Posner's (1987 : 28) view, "a government strong enough to maintain law and order, but too weak to launch and implement ambitious schemes of economic regulation or to engage in extensive redistribution, is probably the optimal government for economic growth."

The neoliberal approach for limiting the role of state includes :

1. reducing the size of public administration,
2. reducing the size of the public sector,
3. insulating the state from private pressures,
4. relying on rules rather than allowing discretionary decisions, and
5. delegating decisions subject to dynamic inconsistency to independent bodies that have no incentives to yield to political pressure.

As regards role of the state, Kydland and Prescott (1977) have suggested the following :

1. public administration should be reduced because the state is 'bloated',
2. the productivity of public services is allegedly lower than that of the private sector,
3. the public sector should be privatized because governments are supposed to be more responsive to political pressures from public than from private firms,
4. the state should be 'insulated' from political pressures so it will not fall prey to rent seeking by private interests,
5. economic policy should be governed by rules, that would

eliminate discretion and thus overcome the sub optimality due to dynamic inconsistencies.

An alternative to rules is to delegate important policy decisions, particularly in the monetary realm, to institutions that are independent from political pressures and thus have no incentives to yield to dynamic inconsistencies (Cukierman, 1992).

In a recent summary, Stiglitz (1994) put it bluntly : "The standard neo-classical model—the formal articulation of Adam Smith's invisible hand, the contention that market economies will ensure economic efficiency—provides little guidance for the choice of economic systems, since once information imperfections (and the fact that markets are incomplete) are brought into the analysis, there is no presumption that markets are efficient."

1. When some markets are missing,
2. information is endogenous,
3. markets need not clear in equilibrium,
4. prices do not uniquely summarize opportunity costs and can even misinform,
5. externalities result from most individual actions,
6. information is often asymmetric,
7. market power is ubiquitous, and 'rents' abound.

Stiglitz (2021) has emphasised the fact that if markets are incomplete and information imperfect, moral hazard and adverse selection render first-best allocations unattainable. This allows for a much greater role for the state. Thus the state has a positive role to play. There are important things the state could do.

According to Przeworski (1998) the problem is not that of 'the market' versus 'the state', but of specific institutions that would induce individual actors—whether economic agents, politicians, or bureaucrats—to behave in a collectively beneficial manner. The 'economy' is a network of multifarious and differentiated relations between particular classes of principals and agents : managers and employees, owners and managers, and investors and entrepreneurs, but also citizens and politicians, and politicians and bureaucrats.

The performance of firms, of governments, and of the economy as a whole depends on the design of institutions that regulate these relations. What matters is whether employees have (Przeworski, 1998) :

1. incentives to maximize effort,
2. whether managers have incentives to maximize profits,
3. whether entrepreneurs have incentives to take only good risks,
4. whether politicians have incentives to promote public welfare, and
4. whether bureaucrats have incentives to implement goals set by politicians.

Institutions organize economic and political relations :

- (a) Economic relation pertains to the relations between employers and employees, owners and managers, or investors and entrepreneurs;
- (b) Political relations cover relations between citizens and governments or politicians and bureaucrats, as well as those that structure state 'intervention'; and those between governments and private economic agents.

If the economy is to operate well, all these principal-agent relations must be structured appropriately (Przeworski, 1998).

The issue of state can be analysed in the context of principal-agent relations. There are three kinds of principal-agent relations :

1. between government (politicians and bureaucrats) and private economic agents (regulation),
2. between elected politicians and appointed bureaucrats (oversight), and
3. between citizens and government (accountability).

The performance of an economic system depends on the design of all these relations. Private agents must benefit by behaving in the public interest and must suffer when they do not, and so must bureaucrats and politicians.

To summarize, government intervention can be effective if the regulatory institutions are well designed, and politicians can better control bureaucrats if they solicit the

cooperation of citizens. But the question that still remains open is whether politicians will want to intervene well and to control the bureaucracy.

One must recognize the difficulties inherent in government efforts. Each instance of government intervention involves an interaction with utility-maximizing consumers and profit-maximizing firms, none of whom can be assumed to be passive participants in the process. So, while the potential exists for improved resource allocation in cases of market failure, government intervention may not always achieve it.

The late George Stigler, winner of the Nobel Prize for economics in 1982, pointed out that even though the market is often an inefficient allocator of resources, so is the government likely to be. Government may improve on what the market does; it can also make it worse. The choice between the market's allocation and an allocation with government intervention is always a choice between imperfect alternatives.

Income Redistribution : Given the prevailing situation, many people argue that incomes should not be determined solely by the marketplace. A public goods argument can be made for government programs that redistribute income. Whatever the underlying basis for redistribution, it certainly occurs. The governments of every country in the world make some effort to redistribute income. Programs to redistribute income can be divided into two categories. One transfers income to poor people; the other transfers income based on some other criterion.

The Role of State in India

This section attempts to throw some light on the changing role of the state in India. The government must supplement the working of the market rather than replace it. Blending of the state and market systems can enhance the productive capacity of an economy proving beneficial for the producers, consumers, traders and the labour force of the country.

Given the contemporary situation in India, the country possesses a dynamic and vibrant private sector. In contrary to the private sector, the public sector is of less paramount

importance. However it would be improper to underestimate the value of public sector completely. "In present era, government has a vital role but a different one from that conceived in the past. The need of the hour is to enter into harmonious relation with the private enterprises. Private investment and Public control with transparency without causing hindrance should be the way forward. This is time the governments realize the reality, change economic approach and allocate scarce resources towards the leading sectors which have been left unattended in past years" (Maggo, 2015).

The world has seen five long waves of technological innovation in industry. The first was led by textiles, iron and water. The second was about steam power, railways and steel. The third was led by cars, plastics and electricity. The fourth had petrochemicals, electronics and aviation. The fifth was powered by microprocessors, software and digital networks. The world could now be entering a sixth wave of green energy, robots and artificial intelligence.

Although one can talk of certain general principles, there is no hard and fast rule to determine the optimal degree and the desirable areas of state intervention, which can only be determined in the concrete historical, institutional, and geographical context.

One must remember the hard fact that the market economies has been shaped more by the visible hand of the government determining the economic environment within which supposedly free individuals seek personal advancement. This has often involved the government shaping technological choices and investment, sometimes through publicly-owned enterprises and sometimes by the visible hand choosing private sector winners. This is happening now in India through the production-linked incentive (PLI) programme and measures like the large subsidies for new chip manufacturing plants. The PLI programme is a determined attempt by the government to pick sectors as the key to growth and companies as winners within these sectors (Editorial comment Business Standard 19 June, 2023).

The visible hand of the government should focus on promoting competition among capitalists. Its substantive and more detailed interventions must deal with what profit-oriented entrepreneurs will not provide at the level required. This includes measures to protect the environment, providing monopolistic infrastructure services, supporting long-term science and technology research and ensuring education and health facilities at the level and quality required.

The visible hand of the government must also address a major limitation of a market economy and ensure fairness in the distribution of income between those who own resources and those who work with the resources to produce products of value. That is the centuries old lesson that must be better understood by the government (Editorial comment Business Standard 19 June, 2023).

Stiglitz (2021) has stressed an important fact regarding the role of government in an economy :

"The long-lasting, widespread COVID-19 pandemic has imposed huge challenges on public health as well as economic recovery. Governments must take an active role in designing and enforcing economic policies to address various problems that pure market forces cannot, such as externalities and the absence of risk markets. Covid-19 has exposed deficiencies in current arrangements and the need to develop better institutions. We also need to develop better understandings of the relationship between government, the market, and other institutions within society".

The reform of the state should be conceived in terms of institutional mechanisms by which governments can control the behaviour of private economic agents, and citizens can control governments. Since the quality of state intervention depends on the specific institutional design. State intervention can be superior to nonintervention when the institutional design allows governments to intervene in the economy, enables politicians to control bureaucrats, and enables citizens to control governments. At the risk of repetition, it bears emphasis that all are necessary.

Governments must be able to distinguish when their interventions will increase social rates of return and must have instruments of effective intervention. But governments themselves must have incentives to intervene well and must be subject to sanctions when they do not act in the public interest.

The elected politicians must want and be able to control bureaucracies, which are not subject to direct popular sanctions. Citizens must be able to discern good from bad governments and to sanction them appropriately, so that those incumbents who act well will win reelection, and those who do not will lose.

These conditions are stringent, and they can never be fully satisfied. But institutional design matters. All democracies that have emerged since the end of the eighteenth century, including the most recent ones, have merely combined in different ways, often piecemeal, the preexisting institutions. Hence, there is a great deal of room for institutional creativity.

According to Prof. Chakravarty "the principal characteristic [of development planning] is that we are not interested in the task of 'prediction' as such but in that of determining policies or controls that will ensure the attainment of certain specified goals or objectives". Development planning must increasingly get to grips with problems of information, ownership and control. Since 1990s, the dynamics of growth have changed substantially with the growing importance of globalisation, which opened up to the world economy and the rising concerns about the environmental impact of growth (Desai, 2023).

India's economic and social transformation since 1991, reversing the slow growth of the notorious licence-raj years, was also testimony to the benefits of economic liberalisation. Now, protectionism and import substitution are back in vogue as economic policies. Combined with the impulses of political and social majoritarianism, the nation's socio-economic resilience will undoubtedly face new tests in the years ahead (Desai, 2023).

The continuing spread of India's remarkable digital public infra-

structure has powered low-cost transactions across the country, including for the delivery of expanded government direct benefit programmes. Sharply increased government capex has noticeably strengthened physical infrastructure, especially roads, while some fiscal consolidation continues after the inevitable blowout of FY21.

The resurgence in private investment is long overdue. The “twin balance sheet problem” has been largely conquered. Today, we are witnessing historic capital investment outlays in the economy, which brings with it the challenge of planning better to ensure ease of doing business for production centres and ease of living for large populations.

In terms of regional connectivity, the movement of bulk commodities to the Northeastern region by waterways is reducing travel time, logistics cost and carbon footprint. Greenfield national highways, which connect the industrial parks in the Northeastern region to railways and the port gateways in Chittagong and Kolkata, while being mindful of the ecology of the region by minimising forest area coverage, are an interesting narrative emerging from the Gati Shakti initiative.

When planning big infrastructure projects, data-based decision making and digital surveys have substituted manual, field surveys, thereby revolutionising the planning process during a short period of time. The objectivity in decision making is visible when, for instance, optimum alignment and connectivity to economic activity defines a project rather than extraneous local considerations.

Sometimes, all it takes for central banks to achieve their objectives is to do things differently, rather than to do different things. The development and regulatory policies include a range of announcements which show continuity in approach. The hope is that public sector investment will eventually attract more private sector investment. There are now some signs of this happening. Capital accumulation will be the dominant driver of Indian economic growth over the next decade. It will contribute more than half of the additional economic output over the next 10 years. The rest will be from productivity growth

and an increase in the labour force, in that order.

There are two main types of asset creation other than construction activity—new capacity in existing industries and the growth of new industries. Take the automobile sector, for example. It makes a difference whether new investments are expanding factory lines for cars run on internal combustion engines or creating an electric vehicles industry from scratch. There is growing confidence that the private sector investment cycle in India is gradually recovering, which will be one of the important building blocks of sustained growth in the coming years.

Growth has been uneven. Large sections of the population aren't benefiting as much. Those at the bottom half of the pyramid haven't participated in the growth story, especially post Covid. There are several indications of the distress. A business as usual approach will not suffice. If status quo is maintained, the economy is likely to grow at a slower pace than what is required to achieve the target. The policy framework must be guided by the objective of raising the country's growth prospects over the medium to long term. This requires concerted and urgent action.

India thus has several gaps to fill if it is to sustain fast growth for decades. Some of these are obvious. The quality of education, and the quality and quantity of healthcare have to improve massively. Female work-participation rates must also be raised.

That's why what the US Fed does with the price of money in America has an impact not just on the US bond market but the bond markets of other countries, too. Likewise, what China and Europe do with their trade policies impacts product markets in other countries too? What India does makes no difference to the world because its share in global trade and investment is so small. Is this bad? Not necessarily because this gives us a lot of manoeuvrability.

So the key policy question was whether governments and central banks should intervene or let the markets find their own balance or 'equilibrium'. Patinkin's view was

that intervention should be minimal. He thoroughly disapproved of intervention at the drop of a hat which is so fashionable now. It has intervened massively only in infrastructure.

Debate and discourse can help nourish policy capacity in government. It's no secret that among India's economic constraints is the government's diminished capacity for sound policymaking. Creating jobs and making the affluent pay a fairer share of taxes. But there's little policy debate on what ought to be done.

Key elements of reform such as the land acquisition laws, reform of trade in agriculture commodities, labour laws, bringing petroleum products under the GST regime, lowering the GST rates, etc, should be widely discussed. So, even as we celebrate the anniversary of important landmarks in our economic history, the leadership must note to walk the extra mile to convince the stakeholders about the need for and the benefits of reforms. Economic inequality and social differentiation complicate governance.

India is today at an inflection point. Investors should come to the country with a clean playbook. They must not presume that business models that have worked well for them elsewhere will be comparably successful in India. They should first see the sights and sense the smells and only then write about the country.

A continuous rise in living standards is the key to avoiding social conflict, the absence of which would pit the losers, the poor, against the rich. The ability of governments to extend welfare benefits like healthcare, education, etc., is not possible without economic growth and higher tax revenues. It is thanks to economic growth that China and India had lifted millions out of extreme poverty by integrating into the global capitalist economy and supplying low-cost goods and services to the developed countries.

It is impossible to reconcile these two contradicting positions unless we do something like what Monbiot suggests, “There is a poverty line below which no one should fall, and a wealth line above which no one

should rise. Even though technology has been a driver of social transformation, it has so far only led to more inequality while remaining strongly coupled with increasing use of energy and materials.

Faster economic growth tends to curtail democratic freedom. Absolute economic freedom often comes by limiting the welfare state that is an imperative of democracy—any democratically elected government would be forced to spend on health, education, housing and welfare for the poor, but which a hardcore capitalist would consider a constraint upon economic growth.

As Pearl Buck had said, “All things are possible until they are proved impossible.” Now taken a highly political turn on the issue of growth strategies and the future of economic reforms in India. There is little disagreement between the two sides, though the political football game will continue.

The ‘structural adjustment’ in the economy will necessarily imply that some segments will find their skill levels inappropriate to the new growth dispensation. This is independent of the country’s political system. In developing countries, there seems a consensus that in the absence of a general social security system, the state must fund or direct such re-skilling. The issue of inequality then seems to be the critical one for a country like India, and it is often mixed up with the challenge of poverty reduction.

Since 1991, economic reforms in India’s ‘Licence Raj’-driven economy have inevitably been accompanied by a radical structural change. For example, the country’s small-scale textile/handloom industries faced strong external competition, which they were ill-prepared to face. Reinvention needed strong state support, which has been forthcoming under most political dispensations. It is no coincidence that while textiles were a dominant export item in the early 2000s, that is no longer so. The textile export economy of South and South-east Asia is dominated today by countries like Vietnam, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and technology is an essential part of the supply chain. It is strong government incentives for this and other Small Scale Industries (SSI) that will ensure that growth does not

fall prey to short-term political expediency.

Economic growth with government support for re-skilling, rather than picking growth over equity, (or vice versa), is the right political choice. Concentration of wealth and rising inequality hinder growth. India must get the balance right by promoting growth, quality healthcare, good education and jobs (Balakrishnan, 2023).

Conclusion

Stiglitz (2021) very succinctly has suggested that beyond ensuring full employment, regulating externalities, promoting robust competition, guarding against exploitation, limiting market power, and providing social protection. The pandemic has laid bare the dire need for reforms to create good governance, addressing both government and market failures, and improve institutions. “The power to do well also enables the capability to do badly. Thus, we must work to correct market failures and government failures. It is a never-ending struggle to create good institutions”.

Despite the policy mistakes that have put our world on its current course, we now have an opportunity to heed the lessons of the past and present and chart a more promising path for future generations. Building a \$ 25 trillion economy by 2047 is certainly not impossible. But it requires serious reform, not mere talk of destiny or recitation of past glory. If an undernourished population is a massive liability, so is an uneducated one. North India in particular is a human development basket case. The focus should be on learning outcomes.

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Again, both Houses of Parliament have the power to punish a person who is found guilty of breaching the privileges of the House or its Members. In such cases the concerned House of Parliament conduct its proceedings like a Court of Law.

Parliament as an Organ of Information and Debate on National Issues

Yet another important function of Parliament is to act as forum of

collecting authoritative information from the Government through various devices of asking questions from the Ministers. It also provides a national platform to debate and discuss various issues and problems of public importance. The chief merits of this platform are that its activities get national attention and secondly it represents different shades of opinions and groups at national level. Though, the formulation of public policies is the responsibility of the Government, the Parliamentary Debates on these policies highlights their weaknesses and strength and informs public opinion about them. Thus, it plays an indirect role in the generation and formulation of public policies. In a Democracy the Government feels the pulse of people through a representative body like Parliament. Thus, the Parliament acts as a link between the people and the Government.

Decline of Parliament

The seven decade long functioning of Parliament was assessed when the Parliament moved to the new building in September 2023. Credit goes to the Indian Parliament that it has passed many path-breaking legislations to bring about desired socio-economic change. While 1950-70s were dominated by the socialistic turn of the Parliament, it turned its attention to social justice issues by passing legislation for the empowerment of women, reservation for the OBCs, inserting the right to education as fundamental rights and so on. It has also performed the function as a national forum for debate and discussion on important national issues. Yet, as commented by many experts the level of debate has gone down over the years. There have been instances when unruly behaviour and practice of paid question asking raised concerns. Parliament is the expression of national conscience on all issues of public importance. Hence the glorious traditions of healthy debate and discussion need to be strengthened, which in turn will strengthen the roots of democracy in India.

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Agriculture Sector of India

—Dr. N. Karunakaran

Introduction

In India half of its population depends on agriculture for its livelihood, and the country has the second largest arable land area in the world. As a lead producer of products like rice, wheat, cotton, sugar, and dairy, India's agricultural system is essential to itself and the rest of the world. Indian agriculture is facing serious challenges; climate change disrupts agricultural systems and sustainable farming practices. The country's climate and food systems are deeply interconnected. As the impacts of climate change become more severe, the world's food security will depend on the resilience and innovation of agricultural systems. If unsustainable farming practices continues, the environment will get worse. The application of AI and other advanced technologies tackle these challenges around the world.

Meaning of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) is the intelligence of machines or software. It is also the field of study in computer science that develops and studies intelligent machines. 'AI' may also refer to the machines themselves. AI technology is widely used, was founded as an academic discipline in 1956. There are thousands of successful AI applications used to solve specific problems. In a survey in 2017, one in five companies reported they had incorporated 'AI' in some offerings or processes. In the early 2020s, generative AI gained widespread prominence. In 2022, generative AI began to create images, audio, video and text that are indistinguishable from real photographs, recordings, films or human writing.

Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture

Agriculture is one of the important areas for artificial intelligence

(AI) and machine learning (ML). AI, machine learning and the Internet of Things (IoT) sensors that provide real-time data for algorithms increase agricultural efficiencies, improve crop yields and reduce food production costs. Global spending on smart, connected agricultural technologies and systems, including AI and machine learning, is projected to triple in revenue by 2025, reaching \$ 15.3 billion. IoT-enabled Agricultural (IoTAg) monitoring is smart, connected agriculture's fastest-growing technology segment projected to reach \$ 4.5 billion by 2025.

Indian Government, during 2020-21 and 2021-22, has allocated funds to the tune of ₹ 1756.3 cores and ₹ 2422.7 crores to the States for introducing new technologies including drones, artificial intelligence, block chain, remote sensing and GIS, etc in agriculture. Further, the Government also allocated ₹ 7302.50 crores and ₹ 7908.18 crores in 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively to ICAR (Indian Agricultural Research Institute) for undertaking Research and Development in Agriculture for developing new technologies, their demonstration at farmer's field and capacity building of farmers for adoption of new technology.

Some of the areas that exhibit maximum potential to improve agriculture, with the integration of artificial intelligence are :

- Cognitive computing has become the most disruptive technology in agricultural services as it can learn, understand, and interact with different environments to maximize productivity.
- Proximity sensing, remote sensing, Internet of Things (IoT) and image-based Precision Farming are being used for intelligent data integration related to historical meteorology, soil reports, recent research, rainfall, insect

infections, along with drone imagery is being used for in-depth field analysis, crop monitoring and field surveys.

- The artificial use of image recognition using intelligence approaches for plant identification, cation, pest infestation and disease diagnosis is also becoming prevalent.
- Yield mapping to find patterns in large-scale data sets and understand the orthogonality of them in real time, and optimizing irrigation systems to measure effectiveness of frequent crop irrigation is invaluable for crop planning.
- AI and machine learning-based smart tractors, agribots and robotics a viable option for many remote agricultural operations that struggle to find workers. These robots can harvest faster, locate and remove weeds more accurately, and thus reduce operating costs and dependence on labour.
- Improving the track-and-traceability of agricultural supply chains by removing roadblocks to get fresher, safer crops to market can help reduce inventory shrinkage by providing greater visibility and control across supply chains.

Application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Agriculture

The world Government Summit report published in 2018, point out four key developments viz., demographics, scarcity of natural resources, climate change, and food wastage, pressing the future needs from agriculture. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the concept that can potentially transform the present day agriculture to a 'produce more from less inputs' model. Figure 1 illustrates some uses of AI in agriculture.

At the farm level, AI influences crop production many ways; particularly through proper distribution of seeds, fertilizers and other agricultural chemicals, automated irrigation scheduling, monitoring soil, crop and animal health, surveillance of pests and diseases, and farm machinery positions in the field. The applicability of AI in agriculture includes :

- **Diagnostic Application Service :** Identification of symptoms of water stress, pest and diseases infestation etc. in farm fields.
- **Prescriptive Application Service :** Soil health analysis and prescription of fertilizer recommendation or any other agricultural inputs.
- **Advisory Application Service :** Weather advisory and Irrigation scheduling.
- **Predictive Application Service :** Yield prediction, disease and pest attack forecasting (early warning system).

The main potential of AI in Indian agriculture is :

- **Agricultural Growth driven by IoT :** AI and IoT (sensors) can be used to create intelligent systems that can be embedded in machines to make it work with higher accuracy.
- **Image-based Insight Generation :** Using the satellite and drone imagery real-time alerts can be generated in precision farming.
- **Computer Vision :** Computer vision technology can be used to grade the agricultural produce (grading of fruits and vegetables), enhance the quality of produce, and fetch high market values and profit to farmers.
- **Identification of Optimal Agronomic Product Mix :** AI helps to generate farm specific recommendations analyzing different parameters like soil health, weather forecast, type of seeds, and pest infestation in the area.
- **Crop Health Monitoring Systems :** Remote sensing techniques, hyper spectral imaging and AI build crop health monitoring systems that can monitor crop health from both time and effort perspectives.

- **Smart Irrigation Systems :** Smart irrigation involves providing the right quantity of water at the right place at the right time for the right crop so as to improve crop yield.

- **Agriculture Risk Management :** Climate change issues such as increased temperature, erratic rainfall pattern and other associated problems have increased the importance of the AI system in agriculture in recent years.

- **Natural Language Processing (NLP) for Agro Advisory :** India is a multi-lingual society and majority of farmers are illiterate. A lot of content failed to reach the desired people due to lack of human-resource to convert it to the end-user's language. This gap can be effectively filled through natural language processing.

Use of Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture

Government has initiated doubling of farmers' income. The Government has constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee to examine issues relating to doubling of farmers' income and recommend a strategy to achieve doubling of farmers' income in real terms by the year 2022.

The committee has, inter-alia, appreciated the role of Digital Technology, which can play a transformational role in modernizing and organizing how rural India performs its agricultural activities. The technologies include Artificial Intelligence, Big Data Analytics, Block chain Technology, Internet of Things etc. By use of the modern and advance technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and giving accurate and timely information regarding crops, weather and insects etc. to the farmers may improve the crop productivity, reduce the risk and improve the income of the farmers. Major technology interventions include :

- Development of Kisan Suvidha mobile application to facilitate dissemination of information to farmers on the critical parameters viz., Weather; Market Prices; Plant Protection; input Dealers (Seed, Pesticide, Fertilizer) Farm Machinery; extreme

weather alerts; Soil Health Card; Cold Storages and Godowns; Veterinary Centres and Diagnostic Labs.

- Development of 'Farm Machinery package for Different Agro-Climatic Zones in India' mobile application, which gives information on farm machinery package available for state-wise, agro-climatic zone wise, district-wise, cropping pattern wise and power source wise.

- Development of 'My Ciphel' mobile application to help farmers to get precise information regarding the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) developed post-harvest technologies, products and machineries.

- ICAR has also compiled and developed more than 100 mobile apps, State Agricultural Universities and Krishi Vigyan Kendras and uploaded on its website. These mobile apps developed in the areas of crops, horticulture, veterinary, dairy, poultry, fisheries, natural resources management and integrated subjects, offer valuable information to the farmers, including package of practices, market prices of various commodities, weather related information, advisory services, etc.

- Development of mKisan Portal (www.mkisan.gov.in) for sending advisories on various crop related matter to the registered farmers through SMSs.

- Launching of e-National Agriculture Market initiative to provide farmers an electronic online trading platform.

- Introduction of Soil Health Card Scheme to assist State Governments in providing Soil Health Cards to all farmers across the country once in a cycle of 2 years.

- Using machine learning process along with different computer algorithm for crop classification and area estimation.

NITI Aayog has recently pointed out the great potential of AI to provide information to farmers on the quality of soil, when to sow, where to spray herbicide, and where to expect

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Microplastic Pollution and its Management

—Dr. R. S. Sengar

Microplastics are one of the major emerging pollutant and have recently been reported in many places around the world. Plastics in the environment break down into microscopic particles that can transport from one place to another. The main sources of microplastics are landfill sites, open dumping and manufacturing units. Microplastics usually move into the groundwater system with water flow through fractures during heavy rainfall. For example, septic wastewater contains thousands of micro fibre of polymers (polyester and polythene). Small particles usually start to flow into domestic waste water from washing their clothes with fibre/synthetics. Imagine how many thousands of polyester fibers find their way into the groundwater system just from a load of laundry. Especially in aquifers where surface water interacts easily with groundwater. Microblades are a type of microplastic, which are very small pieces of polyethylene plastic, that are added to health and beauty products such as some cleansers and toothpaste. These tiny particles easily pass through water filtration systems. Some hygiene and cosmetics products (e.g., body wash) can also mix with wastewater in your home, which then enters the soil-ground water system and pollutes the environment. Plastic microbeads appeared in personal care products about 50 years ago, with plastics increasingly replacing natural ingredients, according to the United Nations Environment Programme. Atmospheric deposition is a major cause of microplastic pollution.

What is Microplastic ?

Microplastics are pieces of plastic less than 5 millimeters long that can be harmful to us. Particles below 100 nm are called nanoplastics. Both microplastics and nanoplastics are usually formed from the breakdown of larger pieces of plastic.

(a) Primary Microplastics : They are the smallest particles that are designed for commercial use and are used in the manufacture of microfibre clothes and other fabrics. The common examples are Microbeads found in personal care products, plastic pellets, and plastic fibers.

(b) Secondary Microplastics : These are formed from the breakdown of larger plastics such as water bottles.

Research Priority

In particular, the following measures should be taken in the Indian soil and water system :

- Research to address the distribution of microplastics in terrestrial environments.
- Investigation of anthropogenic processes affecting microplastic behaviour (transport, degradation and decomposition).
- Improving methodological accuracy for microplastic quality detection.
- Recent studies point to the widespread toxicity target and rise of nanoplastics. Eco-toxicity studies are necessary. The transport of nanoplastics to other parts of the body through the digestive tract and respiratory system and the resulting local effects need to be analysed.
- Additionally the role of nanoplastics in facilitating the contact of environmental hydrophobic pollutants needs to be elucidated.

WHO on Microplastics

The World Health Organization (WHO) claims that the level of microplastics in drinking water is not yet dangerous to humans, but more research is needed to see the potential risk in the future. Microplastics larger than 150 micrometers are unlikely to be absorbed by the human body, but very small microplastic particles,

including nano-sized plastics, are more likely to be absorbed.

Stop Groundwater Pollution : Waste water of textile industry should be purified by more advanced technology like bioreactor membrane filter can prepare sand filter setup near laundry area. To prevent the toxicity of microplastics, organic pollutants, diesel oil, pesticides, etc. should not be left in the soil.

Global Initiative

Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) : The GPML was launched at the Earth Summit in 2012 in response to a request outlined in the Manila Declaration. Under the Manila Declaration, 65 signatories reaffirmed their commitment to reduce and develop policies to control and reduce pollution of wastewater, marine litter and pollution from fertilizers.

G7 Summit : The risks of microplastics were acknowledged in the Leaders' Declaration at the 2015 G7 Summit in Bavaria, Germany. The GloLitter Partnership Project, launched by the IMO and FAO, aims to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter caused by shipping and fisheries. 30 countries including India are involved in this global initiative to deal with marine litter.

London Convention, 1972 : Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Waste and Other Matter, a convention held in the year 1972 to prevent pollution of the sea by controlling all sources of marine pollution and regulating dumping of wastes into the sea was signed. The 1996 Protocol to the London Convention (London Protocol) and the 1978 Protocol to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) are other similar initiatives.

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Government Servant Bound by Code of Conduct; Cannot Lead Immoral Life Citing Indian Mythology : Rajasthan High Court

—Sanjeev Sirohi (Advocate)

While most commendably according the paramount importance to the highest standards of discipline, uprightness and morality for government servants, the Rajasthan High Court in a most commendable, courageous, cogent and creditworthy judgment titled *Hari Singh Vs State of Rajasthan in S.B. Civil Writ Petition No. 18980/2017* and cited in [2023:RJ-JP:23836] that was pronounced as recently as on September 20, 2023 has minced just no words to hold in no uncertain terms that when rules prescribe certain code of conduct for government employees and bars them from leading an immoral life, the same cannot be violated on the ground that Indian mythology permits the same. It must be noted that the Single-Judge Bench of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ashok Kumar Gaur upheld the removal from service of the petitioner a married constable with Rajasthan Armed Constabulary who was found to be in a live-in relationship with a married woman who is also a constable with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). In the fitness of things, the Bench dismissed most commendably the specious and lame contention of the petitioner who cited Indian mythology to justify his conduct.

It merits mentioning that the petition had relied upon judgment in *Mahesh Chand Sharma Vs State of Rajasthan in S.B. Civil Writ Petition No. 2067/1999* delivered on 7th March, 2019 in which a coordinate Bench of the High Court while dealing with adultery case had cited Indian mythology as well as customs prevalent in tribal areas. But the Single-Judge Bench of Hon'ble Mr Justice Ashok Kumar Gaur in this leading case most forthrightly held that, "This Court finds that the said observations of the learned Single-Judge are absolutely out of context

and bereft of any reasoning and further not supported by any legal jurisprudence." Very rightly so!

At the very outset, this learned, laudable, landmark and latest judgment authored by the Single-Judge Bench comprising of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ashok Kumar Gaur of Jaipur Bench of Rajasthan High Court sets the ball in motion by first and foremost putting forth in para 1 that, "The instant writ petition has been filed by the petitioner challenging charge-sheet dated 14.9.2007, punishment order dated 31.03.2008, appellate order dated 10.02.2009 rejecting the departmental appeal and order dated 25.05.2017 rejecting the review petition filed by the petitioner."

To put things in perspective, the Bench envisages in para 2 that, "The brief facts, as pleaded in the writ petition, are that petitioner was appointed as Constable in the Rajasthan Armed Constabulary vide order dated 13.04.1995. The petitioner was posted at 'C' Company, 12th Battalion RAC (IR) Chanakyapuri, New Delhi and he was served with a chargesheet dated 14.09.2007 issued under Rule 16 of the Rajasthan Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1958 (hereinafter 'the Rules of 1958')."

As it turned out, the Bench enunciates in para 3 that, "The petitioner has pleaded that memo along-with statement of allegations were based on an application submitted by father-in-law of the petitioner containing the false allegations that the petitioner had illicit relations with one Mukesh Kumari."

As we see, the Bench then while elaborating points out in para 4 that, "The petitioner has pleaded that memo of allegations revealed that the petitioner was married with one Sulochana and out of wedlock, two children were born. The petitioner was having illicit relation with one

Constable Mukesh Kumari, who was working in CRPF at New Delhi and she was already a married lady. The petitioner was living with his paramour in an illicit relationship and he did not meet his own legally wedded wife and children. The petitioner in spite of persuasion by his in-laws, continued to maintain illicit relations with his paramour and ignored to look after his wife and children. The said act was treated to be a serious misconduct of leading an immoral life and also an act of indiscipline."

Do note, the Bench notes in para 47 that, "This Court deems it proper to quote Rule 3, 3A and 4 of the Rules of 1971, are as under :

General

(1) Every Government servant shall at all times : (i) maintain absolute integrity; and (ii) maintain devotion to duty and dignity of office.

(2) (i) Every Government servant holding a supervisory post shall take all possible steps to ensure the integrity and devotion to duty of all Government servants for the time being under his control and authority;

(ii) No Government servant shall, in the performance of his official duties or in the exercise of powers conferred on him, act otherwise than in his best judgment except when he is acting under such direction, obtain the direction in writing, wherever practicable, and where it is not practicable to obtain the direction in writing, he shall obtain written confirmation of the direction as soon thereafter as possible.

Explanation—Nothing in clause (ii) of sub-rule (2) shall be constituted as empowering a Government servant to evade his responsibilities by seeking instructions from, or approval of, a superior officer or authority when such instructions are not necessary under the scheme of

distribution of powers and responsibilities.

(3A) Violation of the Rules: Any Government servant who commits violation of these rules shall be liable for disciplinary action.

(4) Improper and unbecoming conduct. Any Government servant who :

(i) is convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude whether in the course of the discharge of his duties or not;

(ii) behaves in public in a disorderly manner unbecoming of his position as a Government servant;

(iii) is proved to have sent an anonymous or pseudonymous petition to any person in authority;

(iv) leads an immoral life;

(v) disobeys lawful order or instructions of superior officer or defies the superior officer;

(vi) without sufficient and reasonable cause, neglects or refuses to maintain his/ her spouse, parent, minor or disabled child who is unable to maintain himself/ herself or, does not look after any of them in a responsible manner;

(vii) willfully tempers with the meter or any other equipment or the power/ water line with a view to causing financial loss to any of the Departments/Companies providing public utilities like power and water; shall be liable to disciplinary action."

Do also note, the Bench notes in para 48 that, "This Court on perusal of Rule 3 of the Rules of 1971 finds that the government servant as per Rule 3 (1) (ii) of the Rules of 1971 shall act all times maintaining devotion to duty and dignity of office."

Be it noted, the Bench notes in para 49 that, "This Court finds that as per Rule 3A of the Rules of 1971 if a government servant who commits violation of the Rules of 1971, is liable for disciplinary action."

Be it also noted, the Bench notes in para 50 that, "This Court finds that any government servant who leads an immoral life is liable to disciplinary action as per sub-rule (iv) of Rule 4 of the Rules of 1971."

To be sure, the Bench mentions in para 52 that, "The word 'misconduct' has been defined in Black's Law Dictionary as under :

"A forbidden act, a dereliction from duty, unlawful behavior, wilful in character, improper or wrong behavior." Misconduct in offence has been defined as : "Any unlawful behaviour by a public officer in relation to the duties of his office, wilful in character. The terms embraces acts which the office-holder had no right to perform, acts performed improperly and failure to act in the fact of an affirmative duty to act."

As things stand, the Bench observes in para 54 that, "This Court is primarily required to consider the act of leading immoral life by the petitioner as one of the misconduct or unbecoming conduct of a government servant where allegation is levelled of staying with a married lady, having illicit relation with her and treating the said lady, as his own wife and as such, leading an immoral life and showing indiscipline as well."

It is worthnoting that the Bench notes in para 56 that, "This Court finds that a government servant as per the Rules of 1971 has not only to maintain devotion to duty and dignity of office but he has to follow code of conduct and in what manner not only his official duty is required to be performed but apart from his duty hours or while not working in office, he has to follow the norms/ conduct Rules, which are prescribed by the employer."

Most forthrightly, the Bench mandates in para 57 that, "This Court finds that a government servant is a public servant and while discharging his duties in such a status, such an employee has to maintain himself in private as well as public life maintaining high standards and he has to be above the board. The government servant cannot be permitted to assert his right in his private life by not following the norms or conduct Rules which are prescribed by the employer for maintaining high standards."

For clarity, the Bench clarifies in para 58 that, "The relationship of the employee with the employer of a government servant is not of a private character where only two individual persons are governing their relationship as employer and employee."

Most commendably, the Bench finds no hesitation in holding in para 59 that, "The government servant is

supposed to discharge his duties while working in office or even beyond office hours. He is a public servant in the eyes of a general public. The divesting status of a government servant from his office duty hours to lead his personal life the way he likes by leading an immoral life, cannot be countenanced by bestowing unfettered right in favour of such government servant."

Quite significantly, the Bench holds in para 77 that, "This Court finds, in the present facts of the case, admittedly the petitioner was working in the disciplined police force and while he was staying in a government accommodation with a lady, who was already married with some other person for a considerable period and treated such lady to be her wife and at the same time, he did not keep his wife and children with him and as such, the Disciplinary Authority had rightly come to conclusion that a grave misconduct was committed by the petitioner of leading immoral life and also committed indiscipline."

Most significantly, the Bench then holds in para 96 that, "This Court finds that the Authorities have not committed an error in initiating the enquiry against the petitioner and passing the order by imposing punishment of dismissal from service."

Finally and far most significantly, the Bench concludes by holding in para 97 that, "This Court finds that the present writ petition lacks merit and as such, the same stands dismissed."

In sum, we thus see that the Rajasthan High Court has made it absolutely clear not leaving even an iota of doubt to linger in the mind of anyone that a government servant is always bound by code of conduct and so cannot be allowed ever to lead immoral life citing Indian mythology. Two wrongs cannot make a right and this is what the Single Judge Bench comprising of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ashok Kumar Gaur of Jaipur Bench of Rajasthan High Court has held so very briefly, brilliantly and boldly which must be always implemented in totality by all the courts in similar such cases concerning government servants! No denying it!



Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti

The Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti is responsible for laying down policy guidelines and programmes for the development and regulation of country's water resources. It aims to ensure optimal sustainable development, maintenance of quality and efficient use of water resources to match with the continuously growing demands on this precious natural resource of the country.

National Mission for Clean Ganga

In December 2022, Namami Ganga Mission was recognized as one of the top ten initiatives of the World Restoration Flagship of the UN Decade. Namami Ganga was chosen from over 160 submissions made from across the world. Additionally, the documentary 'Ganga : River from the Skies' made in collaboration with National Geographic India won international accolades by winning awards under 3 categories in Asian Academy Creative Awards 2022-Best Documentary, Best Current Affairs and Best Natural History or Wildlife Programme; and Best Natural History / Wildlife Show at Asian Television Awards 2022.

In 2022, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) sanctioned 43 projects at a total cost of ₹ 2,056 crore, bringing the cumulative total to 406 projects sanctioned worth ₹ 32,898 Cr. In the same period, NMCG also completed 50 projects which resulted in the completion of total 224 projects.

With regard to sewerage infrastructure, 25 projects, comprising of 41 STPs for creation/rehabilitation of 910 MLD treatment capacity and laying of 427 km sewer network between January to November 2022 has been done. Till date, 176 sewerage infrastructure projects have been sanctioned in the Ganga Basin for the creation of 5,270 MLD treatment

capacity and 5,213 km sewer network. Key highlights include :

- MoU with Sahakar Bharti to develop 75 Sahakar Ganga Grams in the basin.
- Release of over 6 million IMC & Mahseer fingerlings, and ranching of over 70,000 Hilsa in Ganga River.
- Launch of JALAJ Livelihood Model (biodiversity sensitive tourism-based boat safaris) launched at 26 locations on 16th August, 2022. This will be replicated at 75 locations.
- Launch of Web Based Tool to monitor Health Status of Urban Water Bodies.

This year, NMCG participated in the prestigious Singapore World Water Week 2022 held from 17th to 21st April, 2022 and organized a session on "Sustainable Wastewater Management in Developing Countries : An Innovative Indian Approach in River Rejuvenation" on 17th April, 2022. From 24th August to 1st September, 2022, NMCG also participated in Stockholm International Water Week 2022. On 24th August, 2022, NMCG hosted a session on 'Zero Liquid Discharge Cities'.

NMCG along with C-Ganga hosted the 7th India Water Impact Summit, based on the theme "Restoration and Conservation of Small Rivers in a Large Basin with a focus on Mapping and Convergence of 5Ps (People, Policies, Plans, Programmes and Projects)".

2nd meeting of National Ganga Council : The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi chaired the National Ganga Council meet held on 30th December, 2022 via video conferencing in Kolkata. During the meeting, PM emphasized on ways to enhance various forms of herbal farming along the Ganga. Prior to the meeting, PM laid foundation stone and dedicated Namami Ganga and Drinking Water and Sanitation Projects to

the nation. PM inaugurated the 7 sewerage infrastructure projects (20 Sewage Treatment Plants and 612 km network) at a cost of more than ₹ 990 crore. These projects will add sewage treatment capacity of over 200 MLD in the State of West-Bengal. PM also laid the foundation stone for 5 sewerage infrastructure projects (8 Sewage Treatment Plants and 80 km Network) to be developed under National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) at an estimated cost of ₹ 1,585 crore. These projects will add 190 MLD new STP capacity in West Bengal.

This project is 100% centrally sponsored and the Centre will bear all financial cost of the project.

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)

The Government of India on 27.07.2016 approved funding of the 99 prioritized irrigation projects (and 7 phases) with an estimated balance cost of ₹ 77,595 crore (Central share- ₹ 31,342 crore; State share- ₹ 46,253 crore) for completion in phases. Project Completed under PMKSY-AIBP : AIBP works of 50 prioritized projects out of identified 99 projects (and 7 phases) were reported to be completed till date. Out of this, 4 projects have been reported to be completed during 2022-23 till date.

Implementation of PMKSY AIBP (including CADWM) during 2021-26 :

- The Government of India has approved implementation of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for 2021-26 with an outlay of ₹ 93,068 Crore on date 15th December, 2021 to benefit about 22 Lakh farmers. The Union Cabinet has approved central support of ₹ 37,454 crore to States and ₹ 20,434.56 crore of debt servicing for loan availed by Government of India for irrigation development during PMKSY 2016-21.

- Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme, HarKhet Ko Paani and Watershed Development components have been approved for continuation during 2021-26. Total additional irrigation potential creation targeted during 2021-26 under AIBP is 13.88 Lakh hectare. Apart from focused completion of 60 ongoing projects including their 30.23 lakh hectare command area development, 6 additional projects have been taken up till date.
- Also, two national projects, namely Renukaji Dam Project (Himachal Pradesh) and Lakhwar Multipurpose Project (Uttarakhand) have also been included for central funding of 90% of works of water component under the scheme.

Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP) Phase II and Phase III : India ranks third globally after China and USA with 5334 large dams in operation. About 411 dams are under construction. In addition, there are several thousand smaller dams. These dams are vital for ensuring the water security of the Country. The Union Cabinet approved externally aided DRIP Phase II and Phase III in its meeting held on October 29, 2020. 19 States and 3 Central Agencies are involved in the scheme with a provision for rehabilitation of about 736 dams (14% of large dams). The Budget Outlay is ₹ 10,211 crore (Phase II : ₹ 5107 Cr, Phase III: ₹ 5104 Cr) and duration of Scheme is ten (10) years, to be implemented in two phases, each of six (6) years duration with two (2) years overlap. The funding pattern of Scheme is :

- 80 : 20—Special Category States,
- 70 : 30—General Category States and
- 50 : 50—Central Agencies.
- The Scheme also has provision of Central Grant of 90% of loan amount for special category States (Manipur, Meghalaya and Uttarakhand).

The Scheme has four components :

1. Rehabilitation of dams and associated appurtenances to improve the safety and operational performance of selected dams in a sustainable manner;

2. Dam safety Institutional Strengthening to strengthen the dam safety institutional setup in participating States as well as at the Central level;
3. Incidental Revenue Generation for sustainable operation and maintenance of dams; and
4. Project Management

The Phase II of the Scheme is being co-financed by two multi-lateral funding Agencies-World Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The Loan Agreement and the Project Agreements with World Bank in respect of 10 States and CWC, has been declared effective since October 12, 2021. The inclusion of additional four States (Karnataka, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) has also been notified by the World Bank in June 2022. The Loan signing with AIIB for remaining US\$ 250 million held on 19th May, 2022 with original 10 States. The tenders amounting to ₹ 2100 crore have been published. The contract(s) for approximately ₹ 1100 crore have been awarded. An expenditure of ₹ 392 Crore has been incurred under the scheme by various partner Implementing Agencies.

Hirakud Dam Project

Hirakud Dam is built across the Mahanadi River, about 15 km from Sambalpur in the state of Odisha. It is the longest earthen dam in the world. It is one of the first major multipurpose river valley projects started after India's independence.

CWPRS has been involved in hydraulic model studies for additional spillways of Hirakud Dam, Odisha (under DRIP). It was proposed the construction of two additional spillways to safely pass the additional flood of 27182 m³/s, due to revision in the design flood from 42450 m³/s to 69,632 m³/s. 2-D physical sectional (1:40 scale) and 3-D physical comprehensive (1:100 scale) model studies are being carried out to finalize the designs of left bank additional spillway and their components to enhance the discharging capacity of the Hirakud dam.

Participation in 24th Congress of ICID

The 24th Congress and 73rd International Executive Council (IEC) of International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID) was

held in Adelaide, Australia during 3-10 Oct-2022 and the 25th Congress of ICID and 74th IEC of ICID is proposed to be held at Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh-India) during 1st to 8th November, 2023.

Central Water Commission

CWC has conducted in-house Sedimentation Assessment Studies of 8 reservoirs using remote sensing technologies in the year of 2022 which was conducted using Microwave data (instead of optical data). The advantage of using microwave data is that the images are not affected by cloud cover, and we get images of the reservoirs near FRL during monsoon season as well (which is relatively difficult with optical imageries as when the reservoir is full, most of the time it is monsoon season and it is cloudy). The highlights are as following :

- In addition to the in-house studies, a batch of 40 reservoirs, covering all the major river basins of India, has been outsourced in August 2022 for sedimentation assessment using satellite remote sensing technique.
- Post-project Environmental Impact Assessment studies for three projects namely Ukai; Tawa; and Eastern Kosi Canal have been completed during 2022. Reservoir Operation Rule Levels for Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar reservoirs were prepared as per KWDT-1 award, TAC approved notes and interstate agreements.
- The Secretariat of the Indian National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage (INCID), India's representative national committee in the International Commission on Irrigation & Drainage (ICID), is housed at CWC. INCID Secretariat, in partnership with ICID, organized a 1.5 day Side Event – "Conclave on Water Security of India" during the 7th India Water Week, held at Greater Noida from 1-5th November, 2022.
- INCID invites and processes the nominations for ICID's annual awards including the World Heritage Irrigation Structure (WHIS) Awards. 4 nominations were processed and sent to ICID for consideration for the WHIS-2022. In 2022, India won the highest number of (four) WHIS awards namely : (1) Baitarani system, Odisha, (2) Lower Anicut, Tamil Nadu, (3) Rushikulya Irrigation System, and (4) Sir Arthur Cotton Barrage, Andhra Pradesh

The event is expected to witness a footfall of about 1000+ delegates from all over the world. INCID, in association with NWA, Pune, organized a Webinar series titled WALMI Meet-2022 to discuss the activities of various WALMIs/IMTIs along with their issues, solutions and constraints.

India-EU Water Partnership (IEWP)

The 13th EU-India Summit was held in Brussels (Belgium). It was an outcome of the 'Joint Declaration on Water' adopted by India and the EU on 30th March, 2016. "This Summit was to enhance cooperation on water issues, including 'Clean Ganga' programme of the Government of India. A 'Memorandum of Understanding on the India-EU Water Partnership' was signed in October 2016, with an objective to strengthen the technological, scientific and the management capabilities of India and EU in the area of water management on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit. On 27th October, 2022, IEWP organized the 5th India EU Water Forum on Water Cooperation at New Delhi which brought together a wide range of stakeholders from both India and the EU and its EU Member States with the objective to exchange views on good practices, regulatory approaches, business solutions and research and innovation opportunities in the water field in India and the EU.

India Denmark Cooperation

Under cooperation with Denmark, emanating from declaration made by Prime Minister of India after meeting Prime Minister of Denmark, a Centre of Excellence for Smart Water Resources Management (CoESWaRM) and Smart Lab for Clean Rivers in Varanasi on the lines of Smart City Lab in Panjim was proposed to be established. Consequently, Letter of Intent and MoU were signed between two countries on 3.5.2022 and 12.9.2022 respectively. Simultaneously, two separate Notes viz., setting up of Smart Lab and centre of Excellence, were drafted in consultation with Denmark side

Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal)

- Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal) is a Central Sector Scheme of

Government of India with an outlay of ₹ 6000 crore, partly funded by the World Bank. It was launched by the Prime Minister on 25th December, 2019 and implemented from April 2020 for 5 years.

- This scheme aims at increasing the capacity of States to manage their ground water resources and for ensuring their long-term sustainability with active participation of the local communities through a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches.
- Atal Bhujal Yojana is expected to improve ground water conditions in the target areas and to contribute significantly to ensure ground water sustainability for interventions planned under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

Central Ground Water Board National Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme :

- NAQUIM studies for aquifer mapping and management plan formulation have been taken up by CGWB under the scheme Ground Water Management and Regulation. During 2022 (1st January to 30th November, 2022), Aquifer Maps and Management Plans for 5-7 Lakh sq. km have been prepared covering various parts of the country. So far, under the Aquifer Mapping programme, an area of 24.4 lakh sq. km has been covered out of the total ~25 lakh sq. km area identified for mapping in the country.
- During Phase-I, 1.01 lakh sq.km area had been proposed in 2020-22, out of which, 19,020 sq. km area is in priority areas of Sikar, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan and Kurukshetra and Yamuna Nagar districts of Haryana. The area covered spread over 91 Administrative Blocks including 46 Blocks of Rajasthan, 36 Blocks of Gujarat and 9 Blocks of Haryana State.
- The Honourable Union Minister of Jal Shakti released the Report of "National Compilation of Dynamic Ground Water Resources of India 2022" on 9th November, 2022.

- The beneficiary under this scheme is small and marginal farmers only with priority to be given to SC/ST and Women farmers. Ground Water irrigation facility through Dug wells, Dug cum Bore wells, Tube wells and Bore wells etc. can be funded for schemes in areas categorized as SAFE and meeting the following criteria :

1. Less than 60 per cent of the annual replenishable groundwater resources have been developed.
2. Average annual rainfall of 750 mm or more to have availability of enough water for recharge;
3. Shallow groundwater levels within range of 15m below ground level or less during pre-Monsoon period.

- Ground water development for irrigation is planned in such a way that after implementation of the project, stage of Ground Water extraction should not exceed 70% at any time. The guidelines outline measures to prevent over-exploitation and facilitate recharge to ground water. Suitable recharge measures are to be taken up under NRM component of MGNREGS or any other recharge scheme in the target area of the present scheme to provide sustainability to ground water. State/UT Governments are supposed to ensure that micro-irrigation practices are implemented in at least 30% of the proposed irrigated area in convergence with relevant scheme(s) of Central/State/UT Governments.
- As on November 2022, more than 29229 irrigation wells have been constructed and command area of more than 77123 ha has been created, benefiting nearly 66440 small and marginal farmers.

Progress Under the Scheme 'Irrigation Census' :

The Minor Irrigation Census is conducted under the centrally sponsored scheme "Irrigation Census" with 100% central funding through which State Statistical Cells consti-

tuted under different States/UTs are also supported. The sixth Minor Irrigation Census with reference year 2017-18 is currently under implementation where in the Ministry has also launched the first Census of Water bodies covering all water bodies in the country, both rural and urban. During 2022, the following progress under the scheme 'Irrigation Census' has been achieved :

1. The field work and data entry/validation work of 6th Minor Irrigation Census and first Census of Water bodies has been completed by all the States/UTs.
2. The admissible funds were released to States/UTs after thorough examination of proposals submitted by States/UTs for release of funds.
3. The releases were also made to the state Statistical Cells for incurring expenditure on salaries, allowances etc.

Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP)

The 'Flood Management Programme (FMP)' and 'River Management Activities and Works related to Border Areas' (RMBA) under operation during XII Five Year Plan were merged as 'Flood Management and Border Areas Programme' (FMBAP) for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20 and further extended up-to March, 2021. Cabinet further provided approval to the scheme upto September 2022. The process for EFC approval from Cabinet upto March 2026 is underway.

India and Bangladesh Matters

- On 23rd August, 2022, the India-Bangladesh Water Resources Secretary level meeting under the framework of the Joint Rivers Commission was held at New Delhi. The 38th Meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission was held in New Delhi on 25th August, 2022.
- On 6th September, 2022, A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Republic of India and Republic of Bangladesh on withdrawal of up-to 153 cusecs of water each by India and Bangladesh from the

common border river Kushiara during the dry season for the consumptive water requirements of each country.

- This Memorandum of Understanding strengthened the co-operation between India and Bangladesh on water resources management of common rivers. Both India and Bangladesh withdraw an equal amount of water from the common stretch of Kushiara River during the dry season (1st November to 31st May). The Indian State of Assam benefited from this MoU, as availability of assured water for consumptive requirements, will boost agriculture and other allied activities in the region, particularly in Karimganj District.

Central Soil and Materials Research Station (CSMRS)

- CSMRS is a certified organization which deals with field and laboratory investigations, research and problems in geotechnical engineering, concrete technology, construction materials and associated environmental issues, having direct bearing on the development of irrigation and power in the country and functions as an adviser and consultant in the above fields to various projects and organizations in India and abroad. The function of CSMRS is covered in three main disciplines namely Soil Discipline, Rock Discipline and Concrete Discipline.
- The Soil Discipline deals with soil characterization, rock fill material characterization and geosynthetics material characterization. This discipline conducts foundation investigations for assessing the competency of the foundation strata for the construction of the structures and borrow area investigations for ascertaining the suitability of the soils collected from the borrow area to be used for the construction of the structures.

National Hydrology Project

National Hydrology Project (NHP), a Central Sector Scheme, is being implemented w.e.f. by DOWR,

RD & GR on pan India basis with the support of the World Bank. The objective of the project is to improve the extent, quality, and accessibility of water resources information and to strengthen the capacity of targeted water resources professionals and management institutions in India. There are 48 IAs which are taking forward this initiative spanned over a period of 8 years (from 2016-17 to 2023-24). Initiatives under this project :

1. Establishment of National Water Informatics Centre as a nationwide repository of water resources data- Single window system for accessing water resources related information, analytical tools and knowledge products. The Centre was established in 2018 and strengthened for acquiring and disseminating water resources information to various stake holders through web enabled system in public domain.
2. Capacity building of Water resources professionals of the states of India in using various analytical tools including mathematical models, remote sensing and GIS techniques, etc. as required for planning and management of water resources and dealing with extreme event management such as floods and droughts.
3. In November 2021, a unique Young Water Professional Programme launched in collaboration with Australia Water Partnership and Australia India Water Centre and the same has been successfully completed in November 2022.

National Water Mission

- "Jal Shakti Abhiyan—Catch the Rain-2022" campaign : After the successful campaign of Jal Shakti Abhiyaan(s) of 2019 and 2021 in generating awareness amongst the citizen(s) of the country, "Jal Shakti Abhiyaan : Catch the Rain-2022 on theme "where it falls, when it falls" was launched by Hon'ble President for being implemented from 29th March, 2022 to 30th November, 2022. This is the third year that the country is in mission mode, orga-

nizing a Jal Andolan to conserve rain water and recharge ground water.

- Till November 2022, a total of 10-58 Lakh water conservation and rainwater harvesting structures have been constructed, 2-34 Lakh traditional water bodies have been renovated, 7-19 Lakh reuse and recharge structures have been created, 13-33 Lakh water shed development activities have been undertaken and 78-26 crore trees have been planted under the campaign. About 125 officers from CWPRS visited various sites throughout India under the JSA Abhiyan : Catch the Rain.

Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (BWUE)

The Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (BWUE) has been set up under the administrative control of Department of Water Resources, RD & GR on 20.10.2022 for promotion, regulation and control of efficient use of water in irrigation, industrial and domestic sector. The Bureau will be a facilitator for promotion of improving water use efficiency across various sectors namely irrigation, drinking water supply, power generation, industries, etc. in the country. The Bureau is set up as a division under the overall supervision of Additional Secretary and Mission Director, National Water Mission.

National Water Development Agency (NWDA) : Ken-Betwa Link Project

Ken-Betwa Link Project (KBLP) is the first inter-linking of rivers (ILR) project for which implementation has been initiated with an estimated cost of ₹ 44,605 crore (year 2020-21 price level) having central support of ₹ 39,317 crores through a Special Purpose Vehicle viz., Ken Betwa Link Project Authority (KBLPA). The project will be of immense benefit to the water starved Bundelkhand Region, spread across the States of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh which includes districts of Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpur & Raisen and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi & Lalitpur respectively. For environment management and safeguards, a comprehensive landscape management plan has been prepared by Wildlife Institute of India

and its final report was released on 2nd June, 2022. The project is planned to be completed in 8 years by March, 2030.

7th India Water Week 2022

The Department organized the 7th India Water Week-2022 from 1-5 November, 2022 at India Expo Centre Greater Noida with theme "Water Security for Sustainable Development with Equity". The event commenced with the inauguration of the event by Hon'ble President of India on 1st November, 2022 during which Hon'ble Governor and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh were present. The inaugural function was attended by about 2,000 participants. The state-of-art exhibition was attended by about 100 industries, State Governments and international organizations. International organizations (ICID, IWMI, World Bank) participated in conference and organized sessions. Partner Country viz., Denmark organized one side event.

Dam Safety Act, 2021

After China and USA, India is the 3rd largest dam-owning nation in the world. There are around 5,700 large dams in the country, of which about 80% are already over 25 years old. Nearly 227 dams that are over 100 years old are still functional. Union Government has enacted the Dam Safety Act in December 2021 and notified vide Gazette of India notification S.O. 5422(E) dated 28.12.2021 which effected from 30.12.2021. The Act provides for four tiers of institutional mechanism :

1. Establishment of National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS),
2. National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA),
3. State Committee on Dam Safety (SCDS), and
4. The State Dam Safety Organization (SDSO).

After enactment of the Dam Safety Act, Central Government has constituted the National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS) and has established the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) vide Gazette Notifications S.O. 757(E) and G.S.R. 134(E) dated 17th February, 2022 & S.O. 758(E) and G.S.R. 135(E) dated 17th February, 2022 respectively.

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pest infestations. Globally, AI-driven technologies are emerging to help in

improving the efficiency with respect to crop and soil monitoring, weather forecasting, predictive agricultural analytics, markets and supply chain efficiency. Machine learning and soft computing methods with pattern recognition through image and video (drone cameras, satellite imagery) data processing are being widely used world-wide. AI can be used to create intelligent systems which are embedded in machines that can work with higher accuracy and speed than humans and at the same time be responsive like humans. AI together with Internet of Things (IoT) and Sensor Technology can be the great enabler of precision agriculture. AI can also play a critical role along with remote sensing technology in wide scale implementation of Climate Smart Agriculture.

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World Environment Day, 2018 : As it was celebrated in India, world leaders vowed to 'beat plastic pollution' and end its use completely.

Plastic Pacts : Plastic Pacts is a business driven initiative to transform the plastic packaging value chain across all formats and products. They bring together people from all over the plastics value chain to implement practical solutions. The first Plastic Pact was launched in the United Kingdom in the year 2018.

Initiatives taken by India

Elimination of Single-Use Plastics : In 2019, the Prime Minister of India pledged to eliminate all single-use plastics in the country by 2022, with an immediate ban in the Delhi urban area.

Important Rule : The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 states that every local body should be responsible for setting up infrastructure for segregation, collection, processing and disposal of plastic waste. The Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2018 introduced the concept of Extended Producer Responsibility.

Un-Plastic Collective : The Un-Plastic Collective (UPC) is a voluntary initiative launched by UNEP-India, Confederation of Indian Industry and WWF-India. It seeks to reduce the threats posed by plastics to the ecological and social health of our planet.



Compendium

Indian Polity and Constitution

- * Article 137 of the Constitution of India empowers the Supreme Court to
—Review its own judgements and orders
- * A Bill authorizing the government to raise or spend money is called —An Appropriation Bill
- * The procedure of removal of Supreme Court and High Courts judges in India is inspired from the
—Constitution of the USA
- * Which Parliamentary Committee does not give any representation to the Upper House (Rajya Sabha) of Indian Parliament? —The Estimates Committee
- * The 'Right to Property' was deleted from the list of Fundamental Rights by
—The 44th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1978
- * The 'Right to Property' was made a legal right after the 44th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1978 under
—Article 300-A
- * The provision of joint sitting of the two houses of Parliament in India is not applicable to
—Money Bills and Constitution Amendment Bills
- * Goa was made a full-fledged state with a State Assembly through
—56th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1987
- * When the President of India keeps the Bill cleared by Parliament for an indefinite Period without giving ratification or rejection note, it is called
—Pocket Veto of the President
- * Who can attend the meetings of both Houses of Parliament without being member of either House?
—The Attorney General of India

Indian National Movement

- * In which year did the Indian National Congress pass a resolution calling upon the Indians to refrain from the Japanese goods?
—1937 AD
- * Mahatma Gandhi's newspaper 'Navjivan' was renamed in 1932 as
—Harijan Bandhu
- * Which Indian revolutionary handed over command of the INA to Subhash Chandra Bose in 1943?
—Rashbehari Bose
- * Which Indian leader introduced the Shivaji Festival and Lathi Clubs to instill nationalist feelings among Indians?
—Bal Gangadhar Tilak

- * Mahatma Gandhi started his historic 'Dandi March' on
—March 12, 1930
- * Shaheed Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw bombs in the Central Assembly Hall in protest of
—The Public Safety Bill
- * Which Indian leader became popular as Danka Shah during 1857 Revolt? —Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah
- * Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya used to compose poems under the penname of —Makarand
- * Who was the founder of the paper 'Comrade'?
—Maulana Mohammed Ali
- * Who said these words about Dadabhai Naoroji, "If ever there is the divine in man, it is in Dadabhai"?
—Gopal Krishna Gokhale

History and Culture of India

- * According to Kautilya's Arthashastra, who was responsible for issuing coins in the Mauryan administration?
—Lakshanaadhyaksha
- * In which Jain text does the list of the 16 Mahajanapadas of ancient India occur? —Bhagavati Sutra
- * Who has been referred to as 'Niganthanathputt' in ancient India?
—Lord Mahavira
- * Sher Shah Suri died in 1545 AD during his expedition against
—Kalinjar
- * The Governor-General who annexed Sindh in British India was
—Lord Ellenborough
- * Who set up 'Sharada Sadan School' in 1889 AD in Mumbai to promote women education?
—Pandita Ramabai
- * Allasani Peddana, a famous Telugu poet dedicated his book 'Manucharita' to a Vijayanagar ruler named
—Krishnadeva Raya
- * The most fertile land under Zabt system is referred to as
—Polaj
- * The tripartite struggle in post Harsha period was fought for the city named
—Kannauj
- * Guru Gobind Singhji founded the Khalsa order in
—1699 AD

Economic Affairs of India

- * Which Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE) under the Ministry of Railways have been accorded Navratna status recently?
—Irrcon International Ltd. (IRCON) and RITES Ltd. (RITES)

- * Which North-East state of India recently adopted e-Cabinet System ? —**Tripura**
- * Which village in Gujarat gets UNWTO' Best Tourism village 2023 Award ? —**Dhordo**
- * Which Indian institute got the UNCTAD's International Standards for Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) award this year ? —**ICAI**
- * What is India's rank on the Global Hunger Index 2023 ? —**111 rank**
- * Who has been honoured with the Nobel Prize 2023 in Economics ? —**Claudia Goldin**
- * 'Yono' banking app is associated with —**State Bank of India**
- * Backward bending supply curve belongs to —**Labour market**
- * A share buyback instituted by a company has no effect on —**Net profit margin**
- * 'Credit expansion and contraction' does not come under —**Fiscal policy**

Geography (India and the World)

- * A counter clockwise atmospheric circulation in the northern hemisphere is generally referred to as —**Cyclone**
- * 'Puerto Rico Trench' is located in the —**Atlantic Ocean**
- * A topographical map with scale 1:50000 indicates 1 cm to —**500 metre**
- * The depression formed at the mouth of a volcanic vent is called —**Crater**
- * Torres strait lies between —**Australia and New Guinea**
- * 'The Valley of Flowers' is located in —**Garhwal Himalaya**
- * The Aravalli mountains in India are the examples of —**Residual mountains**
- * Raniganj coal mines are located in —**West Bengal**
- * The Shompens are the vulnerable tribal group of —**Andaman and Nicobar islands**
- * Which lake is a typical lagoon separated from the sea by the Sriharikota Island ? —**Pulicat lake**

Science & Technology

- * What is the chemical name of 'Blue vitriol' ? —**Copper Sulphate**
- * Zinc is used to protect iron from corrosion because zinc is —**More electropositive than iron**
- * AIDS is caused by a virus whose genetic material is —**Single stranded RNA**
- * Very small insoluble particles in a liquid may be separated from it by using —**Decantation**

- * Soap removes grease by the process of —**Emulsification**
- * Solid state of Carbon dioxide is generally referred to as —**Dry ice**
- * Mitochondria are able to produce their own —**Nucleus**
- * Stibnite is the ore of —**Antimony**
- * The image formed by an astronomical telescope is —**Real and diminished**
- * A molecule in plants comparable to haemoglobin in animals is —**Chlorophyll**

Agriculture

- * 'Pseudo fertility' is caused due to delay in season in —**Tobacco**
- * 'Podu' is the name of shifting agriculture in —**Odisha**
- * Pearl millet (Bajra) is an example of —**Cross Pollinated crop**
- * The wilt disease in pea increases in —**Alkali soils**
- * Saline soils are commonly known as —**Chopan**
- * In strawberry, the vegetative method of propagation is done through —**Runner**
- * Which country is the origin place of 'Loquat' ? —**China**
- * Inflorescence of the wheat crop is called —**Spike**
- * Shifting cultivation is the example of —**Subsistence cultivation**
- * Single Super Phosphate is the example of —**Straight fertilizer**

Environment, Biodiversity, Climate Change etc.

- * Which city became India's first wetland city ? —**Udaipur**
- * One carbon credit is accepted as equivalent to —**100 kg of carbon dioxide**
- * Which part of the atmosphere has close relation with the sun spot ? —**F1 layer**
- * In an ecosystem, caterpillar is an example of —**Primary Consumer**
- * 'The World Without Os' is a book on environment written by —**Alan Weisman**
- * Which is the basic input of energy in an ecosystem ? —**Solar radiation**
- * The study of a single species and the environmental factors in its habitat is known as —**Autecology**
- * The elements of ecosystem are divided into four categories on the basis of —**Functions**

- * First world climate conference was organized in
—1979 in Geneva
- * Where was the first biosphere reserve in 1986 set up in India?
—Nilgiri

Communication

- * Keith Davis identified four types of grapevine channels in an organization. They are
—Single stand, Gossip, Probability and Cluster
- * Grapevine is commonly known as
—Informal communication
- * In the two way symmetric model of public relations, the model of communication used is
—Group to Group
- * An interview is a type of
—Dyadic Communication
- * In the organic model of development, the beneficiaries become
—Communicators
- * Formal guidelines and authority hierarchies are examples of
—Organization Communication
- * The media audiences are capable of
—Critical distance
- * The concept of valid knowledge is discussed as part of
—Cultural Communication
- * Who suggested communication as an open system?
—G. Garbner
- * The choice of communication patterns is influenced by
—Proximity, utility and loneliness factors

Sports and Games

- * Which country emerged the overall champion in the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou?
—China
- * Which team won the Ryder Cup 2023?
—Team Europe
- * Who clinched Formula One Driver's Championship 2023 recently?
—Max Verstappen of Red Bull team
- * How many medals did India clinch in the 19th Asian Games at Hanzhou?
—107 medals (28 Gold, 38 Silver and 41 Bronze medals)
- * 'Goal line', 'Caps' and 'Personal' are terms associated with the game of
—Water Polo
- * Lusail F1 Circuit is located in
—Doha, Qatar
- * 'Heave', 'Nelson' and 'Rebuts' are the terms associated with the game of
—Wrestling
- * Sudirman Cup is associated with the game of
—Badminton
- * How many players are there in a water polo team?
—Seven
- * Which country will host the next and 20th Asian Games?
—Japan

Miscellany

- * Who has been chosen for SASTRA Ramanujan Prize 2023?
—Ruixiang Zhang
- * The EU's Sakharov Prize 2023 was given to
—Mahsa Amini and the 'Woman, Life, Freedom' movement in Iran
- * Who has been awarded the 2023 Nobel Peace Prize?
—Narges Mohammadi
- * World Tourism Day is observed on
—September 27
- * Anthophobia is the fear of
—flowers
- * 'Goudi', 'Karma', 'Dagla', 'Tapali', 'Navrani' are popular folk dances of
—Chhattisgarh
- * Xin Hua is the news agency of
—China
- * Crude density of population is also known as
—Arithmetic density
- * Who is regarded as the pioneer of Atomic energy in India?
—Homi J. Bhabha
- * Kumi, Kolattam and Kavadi are the popular folk dances of
—Tamil Nadu

Pitambar

Continued from Page 85

world on behalf of the Global South. India is a member of QUAD along with three countries of the global north : America, Australia, and Japan. India also enjoys cordial relations with Europe. On the contrary, China is currently locked in a quasi-cold war with the United States and its allies. Other troubles are also brewing between China and the Global South. Due to its expansionist nature, China is at loggerheads with Southeast Asian and East Asian countries over territorial disputes. Japan, which took over the chairmanship of the G-7 countries this year, has invited India. China may have firepower, but India's diplomatic acumen gives it a better ability to lead the world.

A leader should possess not only the ability to lead, guide, provide security, manage conflicts and mediate disagreements, but also an invisible prowess that builds trust and a feeling of being in the right hands. China undoubtedly has the upper hand in terms of physical, economical and political protection mechanisms. India, while falling, some might argue, miles behind, upholds its ideals of brotherhood and 'one family' through its soft power. Nations around and far, looking at the internal construction and the history of a potential captain, should develop a natural urge to align with the nation, in ideal circumstances. Coercion and candy-baiting might also do the trick, after all. True leaders attract, charlatans lure the prey in.

Pitambar



Important Concepts in News

Indian History, Art & Culture

Odhuvars

Reason for Discussion

Recently, the Tamil Nadu government has ordered the appointment of 15 Odhuvars (which include five women) to worship the deities by singing hymns and praises in the Shaiva temples of Chennai.

Key Facts :

Odhuvar

- Odhuvars are musicians who perform devotional music in Hindu temples of Tamil Nadu, especially during religious ceremonies and rituals, but they do not fall in the category of priests and are not allowed to enter the sanctum sanctorum.
- They can be from both male and female classes. They perform *Thirumurai* singing not only during regular pujas, but also during special functions and festivals. The purpose of this tradition is to preserve and spread the ancient Tamil Bhakti tradition.
- Thevaram and Thiruvagam are two ancient Tamil texts, it is a compilation of hymns and praises of Lord Shiva, the singing of these songs has been done by Odhuvar since ancient times.
- There has been a tradition of Odhuvars since ancient times, their recognition came to light during the Bhakti movement. The Odhuvar tradition was well developed in Tamil Nadu between the 6th and 9th centuries.
- During this period, many saint-poets popularly known as Alvars and Nayanars composed devotional poetry in the form of hymns in praise of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva respectively. Odhuvar emerged as the custodian of this rich musical and devotional heritage.

Relevance of Odhuvars in the Present Context

- The Odhuvars have made important contributions to the preservation and spread of the Tamil language. Through his devotional poetry, he has simplified the understanding and reading of ancient Tamil texts for future generations.
- Mostly Odhuvar musicians belong to the outcast communities and their role being assigned for any work in the temples is an opportunity for social and economic upliftment for them. Along with this, their art unites the local community and promotes a sense of unity and belonging.

Issues and Concerns Related to Odhuvars

- Odhuvars often face economic insecurity as a large part of their income depends on donations and offerings to the temple. Lack of fixed income of Odhuvars can also become the reason for the decline of this devotional tradition.
- Due to the economic insecurity of Odhuvars, there is a strong possibility that there may be a decline in interest in the Odhuvar tradition among the younger generation. This is a matter of concern for the continuity of this tradition.
- Lack of support and cooperation from government institutions is also increasing the concerns of the Odhuvars, whereas with the cooperation of these institutions the sufferings of the Odhuvar communities can be reduced significantly.
- It is becoming challenging for Odhuvars to compete with digital media and contemporary musical forms.

Alvar and Nayanar

Alwar :

- Alwar is also called Alvarkal. They were a group of Vaishnav (devotees of Lord Vishnu) saint-poets. His works primarily focused on his deep devotion to Lord Vishnu and emphasized the concept of surrender (prapatti) to God to attain salvation.
- Modern researchers believe that the Alvars existed between the 5th and 10th centuries. However, another study provides evidence of their existence between 4200 and 2700 BC.
- The devotional hymns and poems of the Alvars are compiled in the major Vaishnava text, 'Nalayir Divya Prabandham'. These compositions written in Tamil language describe the divine qualities and forms of Lord Vishnu.
- Major Alwar saints are : Sri Andal, Thirumazhisai Alwar, Tiruppan Lawar, Nammalwar, Kulasekara Lawar. Andal was the only female Alwar among the 12 Alwar saints of South India.

Nayanar :

- Nayanars were a group of Shaiva (devotees of Lord Shiva) saint-poets. Their number was 63. He was completely devoted to Lord Shiva and composed hymns and poetry in his praise, these compositions focused on the path of devotion and love for God.
- The hymns and poetic compositions of the Nayanars were compiled into Thirumurai, a collection of Shaiva scriptures. These compositions written in Tamil language describe various forms and divine qualities of Lord Shiva.
- The number of Nayanar saints is 63. Among them, Jnanasampandar, Appar, and Sundarar (often called the trio) are worshiped as saints through their images in South Indian temples.
- There were only three women among the Nayanar saints : Mangayarkarasiyar (50th Nayanamar), Isaignaniyar (63rd Nayanamar), and Karaikal Ammaiyar (24th Nayanamar).

Polity, Governance and Social Justice

Surrogacy

Reason for Discussion

Recently a petitioner in the Delhi High Court raised the question as to why there are eligibility (marital status, age or gender criteria) of women to allow or not allow surrogacy in India.

Key Facts :

Surrogacy

- Surrogacy is an arrangement in which a woman (surrogate) agrees to give birth to a child on behalf of another couple wishing to have a child.
- In this entire process, the surrogate (gestational carrier), is the woman who conceives and gives birth to the child for a couple (intended parents).
- Surrogacy is permitted when : (i) for intending couples who are suffering from proven infertility; (ii) philanthropic; (iii) not for commercial purposes; (iv) not to produce children for sale, prostitution or other forms of exploitation; and (v) for any disease or condition specified by means of the regulations.

Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 : With the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act 2021, commercial surrogacy has been banned in India. It allows only 'altruistic surrogacy', where the surrogate mother does not receive any monetary compensation other than medical expenses and insurance. Single men, heterosexual couples, same-sex couples and LGBTQ individuals cannot avail such services. Following are the provisions of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act 2021.

Provision

- The intended couple for surrogacy will be a legally married Indian man and woman. According to this Act, the age of the man will be between 26-55 years and the age of the woman will be between 25-50 years and they should not have any previous biological or adopted history. There will be no natural or surrogate children.
- This Act also bans commercial surrogacy. If found guilty in a

commercial surrogacy case, the punishment can be imprisonment of up to 10 years and a fine of up to ₹ 10 lakh.

- The Act allows only altruistic surrogacy where no money is exchanged.
- The couple opting for surrogacy must be a close relative. Any woman agreeing to be a surrogate cannot be a surrogate more than once in her life and must be certified for medical and psychological fitness at that time.
- For abortion of a surrogate child, there should be written consent of the surrogate mother and written permission of the appropriate authority/authority. This authorization should be in accordance with the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.

Decision given by Supreme Court

In March 2023, a government order amended the law banning the use of donor gametes. The order stated that 'intending couples' would have to use their own gametes for surrogacy. A petition was filed in the Supreme Court challenging this amendment as a violation of the woman's right to motherhood.

The court said in its order that the child must be genetically related to the mother or father. The court emphasized that the law allowing gestational surrogacy is 'woman-centric', meaning that the surrogate child must have a right to birth. The decision to give up is based on the woman's inability to become a mother due to a medical or congenital condition. The Court explained that when Rule 14(a) of the Surrogacy Rules applies, which lists medical or congenital conditions and allows a woman to opt for gestational surrogacy, the child will be born to the intended couple, particularly the father must be related. Supreme Court restricts Rule 7 of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 to women who suffer from Mayer-Rokitansky-Küster-Hauser (MRKH) syndrome (a rare congenital disorder that affects the female reproductive system), so that the victim woman can be allowed to carry out surrogacy using donor eggs. Rule 7 of the Surrogacy Act prohibits the use of donor eggs for the procedure.

- The Act also prescribes specific eligibility criteria for both surrogacy and the couple opting for surrogate motherhood. Couples are required to have "all the essential conditions", including a certificate of certified infertility of one or both persons, a court order granting the upbringing and custody of a child born through surrogate, and a surrogate mother for 16 months. Insurance coverage for (including in the event of postpartum delivery complications.)

Gestational Surrogacy

Gestational surrogacy is a process in which a woman gives birth to a child for another person or couple. In this, the surrogate mother is not the biological mother of the child, rather she only gives birth to the child. In this insemination, the sperm of the donor/provider father and the mother's egg are fertilized under test tube and then transplanted into the uterus of the surrogate mother.

Challenges Related to Surrogacy

- Like India, the debate in other parts of the world also focuses on the ethics of surrogacy rather than its economic benefits. On the other hand, economic benefit is the main criterion behind the practice of surrogacy. Most of the women who become surrogates are extremely vulnerable due to poverty, lack of financial resources, low educational level. Financial gain is the major factor for them. This makes their economic exploitation very easy.
- Bans on commercial surrogacy move from a rights-based approach to a needs-based approach, removing women's autonomy to make their own reproductive decisions and their right to motherhood.

Science and Technology

Deep Fake Technology

Reason for Discussion

Recently, an obscene video of an Indian actress using deepfake technology went viral, raising concerns about the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI).

Key Facts :

- 'Deepfakes' are artificial forms of entertainment/media using

artificial intelligence (AI) that can be used to deceive or mislead people through audio and visual content.

- The term deep fake originated in 2017, when an anonymous Reddit user called himself a 'deep fake'. This user manipulated Google's open-source, deep-learning technology to create and post pornographic videos.
- Literally Deep Fake is a combination of 'deep learning' and 'fake'. Under this, fake videos, photos or audios are prepared by combining available data with the help of computers with powerful graphics.
- In this technology, using artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms, the words, body movements or expressions spoken by one person are transferred to another person with such ease that it becomes difficult to detect that the presented photo/ video is real or deep fake?
- There are now lots of tools available to help people create deepfakes, with many companies offering it as a service.

Applications of Deepfake

- Not all deepfakes are malicious, but some are also entertaining and helpful in making life easier.
- Video galleries and museums can be brought to life using deepfakes.
- Deepfake technology is currently being used for the entertainment industry to improve dubbing on foreign language films.
- If a person loses his voice due to some serious illness or any other reason, then it can be recreated using deepfake.

Side Effects of Deep Fake

- Through deep fakes, a person, institution, business and even a democratic system can be harmed in many ways.
- Being hyper-realistic digital falsification, deepfakes become very difficult to distinguish from authentic media.
- Through deep fake, extensive interference can be done in media files (such as changing faces, lip syncing or other physical activity) and in most of the cases, prior permission of the

people is not taken, which can lead to psychological, security, political instability and Creates a risk of business disruption.

- Abuse of deepfakes has been seen extensively in cases of pornography causing emotional and personal reputational damage and in some cases even leading to personal violence.
- Deepfakes can be used by terrorist or extremist groups to spread anti-national sentiments.
- Deepfakes can promote efforts to undermine democracy by altering democratic discourse and spreading public distrust of critical institutions.
- Deepfakes can be used in elections to spread caste hatred, unacceptability of election results or other types of misinformation, which can become a major challenge for a democratic system.
- Deepfakes promote factual relativism and can help a totalitarian ruler remain in power, justifying oppression of people and depriving them of their rights.

Legal Provisions Against Deepfakes in India

- However, there are no legal regulations against the use of deep fake technology in India. Specific laws may be demanded regarding misuse of this technology, including copyright infringement, defamation and cyber crimes etc.
- In cases of cyber crimes in the country, action can be taken under the provisions of the 'Information Technology Act-2000' passed in the year 2000 and the Indian Penal Code.
- To deal with cyber crimes, 'Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre' (I4C) was established under the Union Home Ministry in the year 2018.
- To deal with cyber crimes in a coordinated and effective manner, 'Cyber Sanitation Centre' has also been established under the 'Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology' (MeitY).
- To provide security to the personal data of citizens, 'Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019' was introduced in the Lok Sabha in December 2019, after which it has been sent to the Standing Committee.

Solution

- Media literacy for consumers is the most effective tool to combat disinformation and deep fakes. The greater public awareness there is about technology and its uses, the more they are able to think critically about the media they consume. And will take precautions where necessary.
- To address the challenge of creation and distribution of deep fake media content, a comprehensive framework for Internet and social media regulation policy should be prepared through discussions involving information technology companies, civil society, policy makers and other stakeholders.
- Options for easily available and usable technology-based solutions to identify deep fake media content, authenticate it and facilitate access to its authoritative sources should be promoted.
- Using a blockchain ledger system, a record of tampering with videos, images and audio can be maintained, thereby tracing their origin and any manipulations.
- Authentic and official sources should be made more visible to help inform people about events, this will help reduce the effects of deepfakes.

Environment and Biodiversity

The Adaptation Gap Report, 2023

Reason for Discussion

Recently, the latest edition of the Adaptation Gap Report, 2023 has been released by the United Nations Environment Programme. This report has been released ahead of the COP28 climate talks to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. According to the report, developing countries need at least US \$ 215 billion each year this decade for meaningful adaptation work. About US \$21 billion was given to developing countries for adaptation projects in 2021, which was about 15% less than in previous years. This year's report focuses on the availability of funds to complete adaptation or adaptation projects.

Key Features of the Report :

Adaptation Finance Difference

- According to the report, the adaptation finance gap is widening. It now ranges from \$194 billion to \$ 366 billion per year.
- The adaptation gap is likely to be 10-18 times larger than current international adaptation finance flows, which is about 50% higher than past estimates.
- The adaptation finance gap refers to the gap between estimated adaptation financing needs and costs and finance flows, which has widened over time.

Adaptation and Mitigation

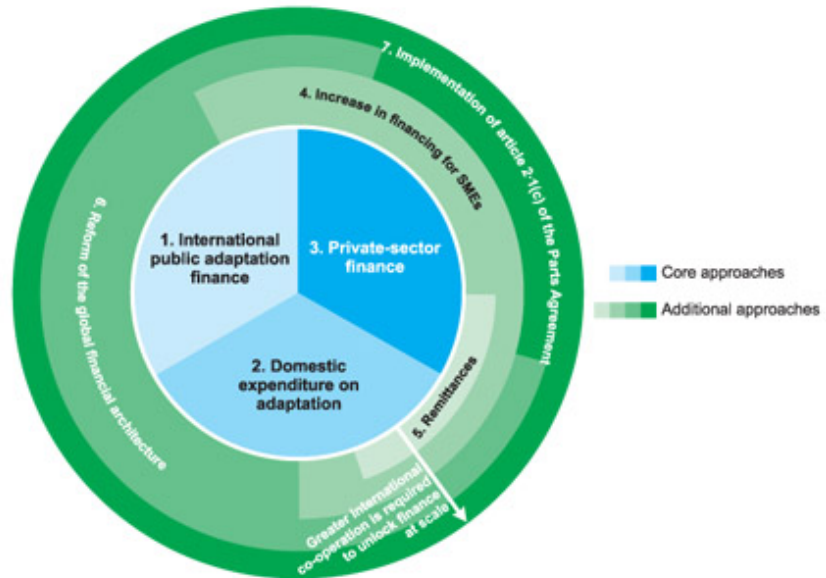
The difference between climate change mitigation strategies and climate change adaptation is that while mitigation aims to deal with the causes of climate change and reduce potential impacts, adaptation looks at how to reduce its negative impacts and mitigate any opportunities. How to take advantage. Where mitigation strategies fail to reach emissions control targets, climate adaptation will be critical to mitigating the impacts of climate change and paving the way for our survival along with the rest of the Earth's inhabitants.

Gender Equality in Financing

- Gender equality for financing: Only 2% of international public financing for adaptation, which lists gender equality as a primary goal, has been evaluated as gender responsive, with the remaining 24% either it is gender-specific or integrated.

Seven Measures to Increase Financing

- While domestic spending and private financing are potentially the most important sources of adaptation finance, domestic budgets can be a large source of financing for adaptation in developing countries, ranging from 0.2% to 5% of government budgets.
- There is a need for 'inward investment' by large companies and financial institutions, and the provision of finance and services for activities that contribute to adaptation contribute to adaptation.
- Adaptation is essential to save lives, livelihoods and eco-



Seven ways to bridge the adaptation finance gap

systems, especially in developing and economically vulnerable countries, as they have no immediate solutions to manage the ongoing impacts of climate change. These adaptation measures require adequate climate finance. Countries take various adaptation measures depending on their specific needs, including strengthening coastal areas, building sea barriers in island nations, experimenting with heat-resistant crops, building climate-resilient infrastructure, protecting water sources, etc. But these adaptation measures impose financial obligations beyond the budgetary reach of governments.

- According to international climate agreements, developed countries are obliged to provide financial assistance and technology to support developing countries adapt to climate change. Developed countries have failed to raise the required funds despite various conventions and treaties.
- Most developing countries have listed their adaptation needs in their climate action plans, called Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which seek to document every country's contribution to the global fight against climate change.

India and the Adaptation Gap

- The Adaptation Gap Report 2023 reaffirms the argument that

countries in the South have been making for over a decade about the growing gap between rising climate risks and implemented adaptation.

- This gap between increasing climate risks and implemented adaptation is not felt equally, as it affects the poorest and marginalized populations the most.
- Some countries face wide adaptation gaps, as per an IPCC report – countries in Africa, South and Central Asia show wide adaptation gaps. Climate change-induced disasters and losses are increasing in India too.
- These risks are increasing due to inadequate mitigation of greenhouse gases by high emitters. Moreover, there is little finance available to deal with these growing risks. Building climate-resilient infrastructure, developing institutional capacity to prepare for complex risk management and enabling technological innovations require funds and Indian global financing mechanisms are failing to reach the most vulnerable.
- The report highlights inadequate progress in adaptation planning and implementation, while also calling for greater focus on proactive, equitable and effective adaptation action and support.
- This is especially important for a country like India, which faces multiple climate risks.

- The Adaptation Gap Report, 2023 underlines the critical need for India to strengthen its climate adaptation efforts and calls for more significant international support to close the adaptation finance gap.
- It is a call to all stakeholders to work together to ensure a more resilient and sustainable future for India and the world.

Economy/Finance

Lewis Model & India

Reason for Discussion

Recently, Lewis Model is being discussed in the comparative context of the economy of China and India. While the Lewis Model has proven successful for China, Whereas India is struggling with its implementation due to the challenges faced during the transition from agriculture to industrialization.

Key Facts :

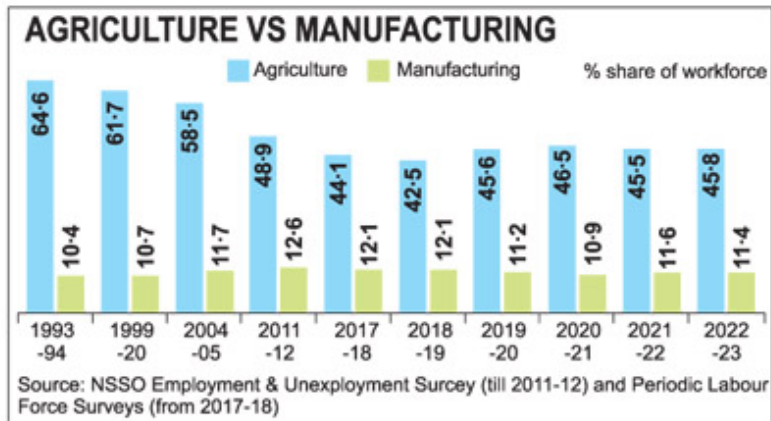
Lewis Model

- In 1954, Nobel laureate Sir Arthur Lewis proposed an economic theory in his essay "Economic Growth with an Unlimited Supply of Labour." This theory is based on the assumption of a dual economy. There are two areas in this :
 1. Capitalist sector
 2. Subsistence area
- Lewis's model argued that underdeveloped countries with a surplus of labour could achieve rapid industrialization by shifting workers from agriculture to manufacturing, creating a virtuous cycle of economic growth.
- The essence of the model suggested that surplus labour in agriculture could be redirected to manufacturing by offering wages high enough to attract workers away from the agricultural sector. This shift would, in theory, be similar to the industrial Will catalyze growth, increase productivity and promote economic growth.

Key Elements of Lewis Model :

China and Lewis Model

- After this model was adopted by China, its application was successful there. China combined market forces with state planning, making use of its population advantage and surplus rural labour. This strategy not



only attracted foreign investment, but also promoted exports and domestic industries.

- At the same time, China's massive investment in infrastructure, education and research and development increased productivity and competitiveness, resulting in rapid industrialization, poverty reduction, and economic transformation.

India and Lewis Model

- The agricultural sector accounts for the largest share of India's workforce. The percentage of the workforce engaged in agriculture fell from 64.6% to 48.9% between 1993-94 and 2011-12, increased from 10.4% to 12.6% and decreased to 11.4% in 2022-23. with manufacturing's share in employment increasing only marginally during the same period. Contrary to expectations, this change has primarily not benefited the manufacturing sector, which has experienced only modest growth in the share of employment.
- The decline in manufacturing employment reflects a trend of

labour increasing primarily in services and manufacturing, which is the opposite of the expected structural change outlined by economist Lewis.

Contradictions in the Implementation of Lewis Model in India

- There is widespread disguised unemployment in the agricultural sector in India, due to which excess labour is engaged in activities that do not contribute to increased productivity or income. This situation of surplus labour complicates the transfer of workers to other industries.
- Given the relatively low wages in the manufacturing sector, inadequate social security, and the high cost of urban living, rural agriculture has failed to entice workers to relocate and has hindered the implementation of the Lewis model.
- The present education system is not able to train workers in line with market demands, resulting in a skill gap that hinders employment of workers in industries.

Specifications	Details
Unlimited Supply of Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In less developed economies, there is usually an abundance of labour in the agricultural sector. ● Due to low agricultural productivity this labour force is considered underemployed or surplus.
Move Towards Industrialization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As industrialization begins, surplus labour from agriculture moves to the industrial sector leading to increased production and industrial growth. ● This transfer of labour and capital accumulation helps drive economic growth.
Salary Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Initially, wages in the industrial sector may remain low due to surplus labour force. However, as this labour is absorbed, wages can rise and the productive capacity of the economy increases.
Transformation of Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Over time, as the industrial sector grows and workers move away from agriculture, the economy changes from primarily agrarian to more industrial and modern.

Prominent Historical Personalities of India



Kapil Muni

Kapil Muni was a leading figure of philosophy and spiritualism in ancient India. Though there are many great philosophers and spiritual leaders with the name of Kapil in ancient India, but the philosopher being discussed here is the founder of the Sankhya philosophy, one of the six schools of ancient Indian philosophy. Nothing can be said about the life of Kapil Muni with a certainty on historical basis. But this fact is beyond suspicion that he was the founder of the Sankhya philosophy, the oldest of all six philosophical schools in ancient India.

Kapil's Sankhya philosophy is based on the existence of 25 basic principles of which 'Prakriti' is the first basic principle (the tattva). He propounded the principle of evolution of the world in his philosophy. According to him, the universe did not come into existence due to God but due to the inherent nature of the Prakriti (matter-tattva). He also claimed that soul was one of the most significant principles out of the 25 basic principles under the Sankhya philosophy. He does not accept the mutual dependence of soul (Purusa) and nature (Prakriti) but he accepts they are somewhere involved with each other. Virtue (Sattva), Passion (Rajas) and Dullness (Tamas) are the three qualities doctrines in the Sankhya philosophy.

- The Sankhya philosophy is also referred to as the 'philosophy of Numbers' because it chiefly talks about 25 basic principles.
- 'Sankhyakarika' is a prominent text written by Isvara Krishna on the Sankhya philosophy. It presents a detailed analysis of Kapil Muni's philosophy and ideology.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was a prominent saint and spiritual figure of the Bhakti Movement of medieval India. He was a luminary figure of the Krishnite form of Vaishnavism. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was born in 1485 AD at Mayapur village in Nadia district, West Bengal. Jagannath Mishra was his father while Sachi Devi was his mother. He left his home in search of truth and peace at a young age of 25. He visited numerous parts of India and became a staunch devotee of Lord Krishna and Radha. He used to imagine the life of Lord Krishna in Vrindavan, Mathura in his Bhakti fervour of Lord Krishna.



Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

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In his early life, Chaitanya was popular as 'Nimai Pandit' as he was a bright and sharp-minded boy blessed with great literary acumen. Being a saint and reformer, he opposed the division of society in the name of caste and creed and presented love and peace as the real goal of life. He gave the message of equality and humanity as all people are same for Lord Krishna. He opened doors of the Bhakti for all as Haridas, an outcaste was also his follower. He laid emphasis on total dedication and complete surrender of a devotee to Lord Krishna. His simple ideas, easy teachings and Bhakti fervour influenced lakhs of people in India especially in Bihar and Bengal. Thousands of people became his follower. He also worshipped Lord Jagannath in Puri for many years. In brief, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu dedicated his entire life in the bhakti of Lord Krishna and he passed away in 1533 AD.

- Vishambhar Mishra was the original name of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.
- Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was the founder of the Gosai Sangh. He started Sankirtan System, the tradition of singing and dancing in the bhakti of Lord Krishna.
- Chaitanya Mahaprabhu earned immense popularity as a devotee of Krishna and his followers accepted him as an 'incarnation of Lord Krishna'.
- He also propounded the philosophy of **Achintya Bheda-Abhedavada**.
- Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was the contemporary of Mirabai, Vallabhacharya and Guru Nanak Devji.
- Chaitanyacharitamrita was a famous biography of Chaitanya penned by Krishnadas Kaviraj.

Zain-ul-Abidin

Zain-ul-Abidin, generally referred to as 'the Akbar of Kashmir' for his liberal, secular and reformative policies to his people, was a powerful and popular king of Kashmir in 15th century. Shahi Khan was the actual name of Zain-ul-Abidin. He was the son of Sultan Sikandar. Shahi Khan captured the throne of Kashmir after deposing his brother Ali Shah as the King in 1420 AD. Shahi Khan adopted the title of Zain-ul Abidin at that time.

Zain-ul Abidin adopted a secular, reformative and liberal policy towards his people in Kashmir. He initiated many administrative and other reforms in his state. For strict law and order situation, he enforced the system of responsibility of the village communities for local crimes. He curtailed the burden of taxes and regulated the price of commodities with some measures to stabilize currency also. He gave proper attention to the public works and

built many buildings for public welfare. He also adopted a policy of religious freedom, equality and justice to all. He did away with Jiziya on his non-Muslim people besides providing religious freedom to them. Zain-ul-Abidin earned the title of 'Bud Shah' for his people-friendly policies.

Zain-ul-Abidin was a great scholar of Persian, Tibetan and other languages. Art, literature and music flourished in his state under his patronage. The Mahabharat and the Rajatarangini were translated into Persian from Sanskrit in his rule. Many other great books in Arabic and Persian were also translated in his rule. In brief, Kashmir witnessed a great and golden period of its history under his rule. After a successful rule lasting 50 years, Zain-ul-Abidin passed away in 1470 AD. His son Haider Shah succeeded Zain-ul-Abidin as the king of Kashmir. In 1586, Mughal emperor Akbar conquered and annexed Kashmir in the Mughal empire.

Peshwa Baji Rao I

After the death of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath in 1720 AD, Chhatrapati Sahu appointed Baji Rao I, the eldest son of Peshwa Vishwanath as the new Peshwa of the Maratha Kingdom. With this appointment the Peshwa post got hereditary in the family of Peshwa Vishwanath. The Maratha Kingdom witnessed a great success and glory in terms of the territorial expansion, political influence and overall administration during the tenure of Baji Rao I as Peshwa. He was a man of great military skills and a great statesman.



Peshwa Baji Rao I

After assuming the charge of Peshwa, Baji Rao I consolidated the Maratha power. Baji Rao I successfully subdued Nizam to bring Deccan under the political sway of the Marathas. He defeated Nizam in the battle of Palkhed in March 1728 AD and forced him to sign the treaty of Mungi Shivagaon. Maratha forces under the leadership of Peshwa Baji Rao I again proved their superiority over Nizam in the battle of Bhopal in December 1737. Nizam had to accept the treaty of Duraha Sarai in January 1738. In brief, Peshwa Baji Rao I thrashed Nizam to establish Maratha power in Deccan.

Peshwa Baji Rao I also firmly dealt with the internal threats to Maratha power and the position of Peshwa. He defeated and killed Senapati Trimbak Rao, a fierce foe of Peshwa, in the battle of Dabhai in 1731 AD. He strengthened the authority of Chhatrapati Sahu as the supreme Maratha leader by bringing Shambhaji-II of Kolhapur under his leadership through the treaty of Varna in 1731. He also crushed the threat from Pratinidhi Sripat Rao. He established himself a powerful leader of the Marathas in a very short span of time.

Peshwa Baji Rao I wanted to exploit the weakness of the Mughals to expand the Maratha territory and power in the North India. He once commented, "Let us strike at

the trunk of the withering tree, the branches will fall themselves." Here the withering tree means the tottering Mughal empire. Peshwa Baji Rao I also launched a successful attack on Delhi in March 1737 AD. He also established Sahu's authority in Konkan by subduing Angriyas, the naval force of the Konkan coast. In the initial days of his Peshwai, he defeated the Siddis of Janjira in 1722. He also got success against Portuguese and captured Bassien and Salsette from them in 1739 AD. The Maratha forces under his leadership conducted successful military raids on Gujarat, Malwa, Bundelkhand and Doab. Peshwa Baji Rao I helped Chhatrasal of Bundelkhand against the Mughals in 1728 AD. In return he got a part of Bundelkhand including Kalpi, Jhansi and Saugar etc. In brief, Peshwa Baji Rao I transformed the Maratha power into a formidable force at pan-India level influence. It was Peshwa Baji Rao I who popularized the ideal of Hindupad-padshahi. Peshwa Baji Rao I passed away in 1740 AD.

Panambakkam Ananda Charlu

Panambakkam Ananda Charlu was one of the founding members of the Indian National Congress. He was born in August 1843 AD in Chittoor. He was a successful and famous lawyer of his time.

It was in his chambers that the Madras Advocates' Association was launched in 1899. He used to point out the misery and plight of his fellow countrymen under the oppressive colonial British rule which he regularly contributed to leading journals like 'The Native Public Opinion' and 'The Madras'. He tried to draw the British government's attention towards the problems of Indians through his articles. In 1878, he helped G. Subrahmanya Aiyar and C. Viraraghavachari in launching 'The Hindu' and became a regular contributor of articles to it.



Ananda Charlu

In 1884, Ananda Charlu played a key role in founding the Madras Mahajan Sabha which was aimed at raising public voice in an organised way. He was also one of the seventy two delegates to the first session of the Indian National Congress in Bombay (Now Mumbai) in 1885. He believed in raising voice for people and getting rights within constitutional limits. He was a moderate leader of INC. He continued to serve the country through the INC till his last breath in 1908 AD.

- Ananda Charlu became the President of the Indian National Congress in its seventh session in Nagpur in 1891.
- He remained the member of the Madras Legislative Council from 1903 to 1905.
- He also founded the Triplicane Literary Society in 1884.
- He was honoured with the Rai Bahadur and Companion of the Indian Empire (CIE) titles.

Pillapan



Current Objective Questions

Trade And Industry

- Consider the following statements in relation to global manufacturing of solar photovoltaic modules—
 - Solar manufacturing at present is highly concentrated in just five countries accounting for over 90 per cent of global capacity.
 - China is far and away the largest, with the capacity to produce solar modules with an output of over 500 GW every year, equivalent to 80 per cent of world manufacturing capacity.
 - The other four are Viet Nam (5 per cent of the global market), India (3 per cent), Malaysia (3 per cent) and Thailand (2 per cent).

How many statements given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) All 1, 2 and 3
(D) None of the above
- The term 'polycrisis' has been discussed in—
 - World Development Report 2023 (World Bank)
 - Global Risk Report 2023 (WEF)
 - Human Development Report 2022 (UNDP)
 - State of Stability Report 2023 (RBI)
- Consider the following countries—
 - Russian Federation
 - Kazakhstan
 - Belarus
 - Armenia
 - Kyrgyzstan
 - Tajikistan
 - Uzbekistan

How many countries given above are the members of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) ?

(A) Only 4 (B) Only 5
(C) Only 6 (D) All 7
- Consider the following facts about BRI—
 - China's massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was launched in the year 2013.
 - To date 147 countries accounting for two-thirds of the world's population and 40 per cent of global output have signed on to projects of BRI or indicated an interest in doing so.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
- Consider the following initiatives :
 - Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
 - Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII).
 - Eurasian logistics Corridor (ELC).
 - Global Gateway Programme (GGP).
 - India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC).

China is closely associated with how many initiatives given above ?

(A) Only 2 (B) Only 3
(C) Only 4 (D) All 5
- Consider the following statements in relation to some recent decisions of Financial Action Task Force (FATF)—
 - The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter-governmental body that sets anti-money laundering standards and add countries in it 'grey' list.
 - FATF has removed offshore tax haven Cayman Islands, Panama, Jordan and Albania from its 'grey list'.
 - FATF has added Bulgaria in the grey list.
- How many statements given above is/are correct ?
 - Only 1
 - Only 2
 - All 3
 - None of the above
- Board of Directors of Fincare Small Finance Bank approved a merger plan of the FSFB with—
 - Indian Bank
 - ICICI Bank
 - AU Small Finance Bank
 - None of the above
- The Maitree Super Thermal Power Project is being implemented in which country ?
 - Bangladesh
 - Bhutan
 - Nepal
 - Sri Lanka
- The NITI Aayog, the Union government's think tank, is in the process of preparing a 25-year vision for the Indian economy. According to the road map, India would be expected to attain a size of—
 - \$ 6-69 trillion by 2030
 - \$ 12-23 trillion by 2035
 - \$ 16-13 trillion by 2040
 - \$ 29-02 trillion by 2047

How many projections given above is/are correct ?

(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
- Consider the following statements in relation to recent guidelines of SEBI about the Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI)—
 - The new rules restrict FPI holding in assets of a single Indian corporate group to 50 per cent.
 - The new rules restrict overall investment of each FPI in Indian equity to ₹ 25,000 crore.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

(A) Only I
(B) Only II

- (C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
11. Which of the following statements is incorrect about the CASA (Current A/c and Saving Banks A/c) deposits of Commercial Banks ?
(A) Based on behavioural analysis, about 40 per cent of CASA is considered stable and adjusted in the longer end asset-liability bucket
(B) CASA balances the asset-liability gaps
(C) CASA reduces the Interest Related Risks in Bank's Balance sheet (IRRBB)
(D) CASA lowers the capital requirement. Since capital is far more expensive than Casa, banks would not mind paying higher rates for 'sa'
12. Consider the following statements in relation to Tribunals in Indian Judicial System—
I. Constitution (42nd Amendment) Act 1976 added Articles 323 A and 323 B.
II. Article 323 A and Article 323 B of Indian Constitution empowers the Parliament to establish the Tribunals.
III. Generally, the Executive interferes or may interfere in the working of Tribunals.
How many statements given above is/are correct ?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) All 3
(D) None of the above
13. Which of the following statements is incorrect about State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) ?
(A) SLBCs were conceptualized under the ambit of the RBI in the year 1977
(B) SLBCs are high level statutory bodies
(C) SLBCs meet every quarter under the chairmanship of nominated Chairperson or the CEO of the bank
(D) SLBCs have played an exemplary role in the expansion of PM Jan Dhan Yojana
14. Liquidity in banking system is regulated by—
I. Repo Rate.
II. Reverse Repo Rate.
III. Cash Reserve Ratio.
IV. Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate (MCLR).
How many options given above is/are correct ?
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
15. Financial Inclusion Index has been developed and released by—
(A) NITI Aayog
(B) NABARD
(C) Securities and Exchange Board of India
(D) Reserve Bank of India
16. Consider the following—
I. Integration of Digital System (IDS).
II. Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP).
III. Ease of Logistics (ELOG).
IV. System Improvement Group (SIG).
How many of the above is/are the features of new logistic policy ?
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
17. The global tax pact consists of following pillars—
I. Pillar 1 aims to re-allocate a portion of 'excess' profits of MNCs to the markets where they operate.
II. Pillar 2 aims to introduce a global minimum corporate income tax of 15 per cent.
Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
18. Consider the following institutions—
I. International Labour Organization (ILO).
II. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
III. International Bank for Rehabilitation and Development (IBRD).
IV. World Trade Organization.
- How many institutions given above has/have released the Globe Skill Gaps measurement and Monitoring : Towards a Collaborative Framework ?
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) Only 4
19. Largest Rice exporter country in the world is—
(A) India
(B) China
(C) Philippines
(D) Thailand
20. As per World Bank/s data value of exports of goods and services of India were what per cent of its Gross Domestic Product in the year 2022 ?
(A) 22.4% (B) 21.5%
(C) 18.7% (D) 19.9%
21. Government of India launched the sale of 'Bharat' Aata at subsidized price on November 6, 2023. This is available at—
I. Physical and mobile outlets of Kendriya Bhandars.
II. Physical and mobile outlets of NAFED.
III. Physical and mobile outlets of NCCF.
IV. Ration shops under Public Distribution System.
Correct code is—
(A) Only I, II and III
(B) Only IV
(C) Only I and II
(D) All I, II, III and IV
22. Consider the following statements in relation to—
I. Since 2005 India has managed to lift 415 million people out of multidimensional poverty.
II. Between 2000 and 2022, per capita income in India soared from \$ 442 to \$ 2,389.
III. Between 2004 and 2019, poverty rates (based on the international poverty measure of \$ 2.15 per day) plummeted from 40 to 10 per cent.
IV. Between 2015-16 and 2019-21, the share of the population living in multidimensional poverty fell from 25 to 15 per cent.

- How many statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4
23. "Making our Future : New Directions for Human Development in Asia and the Pacific 2024" has been released by—
 (A) World Bank
 (B) United Nations Development Programme
 (C) Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
 (D) World Economic Forum
24. Current international poverty line, as updated by the World Bank in September 2022 is—
 (A) US \$ 1-90 (B) US \$ 2-15
 (C) US \$ 3-65 (D) US \$ 6-85
25. Consider the following pairs in relation to World Bank's updated poverty lines of various group of countries—
 I. US \$ 1-90—Poorest Countries of the world.
 II. US \$ 2-15—Low income countries.
 III. US \$ 3-65—Lower-middle-income countries.
 IV. US \$ 6-85—Upper-middle-income countries.
 How many pairs given above is/are matched correctly ?
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4
26. Consider the following statements—
 I. Kerala's annual growth rate of 5 to 6 per cent lags behind economic powerhouses like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Karnataka.
 II. Kerala's HDI rating, at 0.75, tops the nation.
 III. Kerala's progress in reducing poverty and addressing nutritional deprivation stands out across the country.
 How many statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) All 3
 (D) None of the above
27. Consider the following facts regarding to Quota of International Monetary Fund—
 I. Quotas are the building blocks of the IMF's financial and governance structure.
 II. An individual member country's quota broadly reflects its relative position in the world economy.
 III. Quotas are denominated in SDRs, the IMF's unit of account.
 IV. Quotas are key determinants of voting power besides the maximum amount of loan a member can avail of.
 How many statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only I, II and III
 (B) Only II, III and IV
 (C) Only I, III and IV
 (D) All I, II, III and IV
28. Which is the world's first Airlines to deploy 'generative AI virtual Agent' ?
 (A) Air India
 (B) Lufthansa
 (C) Pacific Airways
 (D) Singapore Airlines
29. Performance and working of which of the following sectors suggest that Indian business is getting increasingly oligopolistic ?
 I. Telecommunication
 II. Aviation
 III. Automobiles
 IV. Organised Retailing
 V. Media
 How many options given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 2 (B) Only 3
 (C) Only 4 (D) All 5
30. It is often being claimed that life has become easier for the small and midcap sectors in India Which of the following factors played a key role in 'ease of doing business' for this group ?
 I. Goods and Services tax replaced a plethora of indirect taxes.
 II. Advent of digital payments
 III. Growth of cashflow-based lending easing access to finance.
 IV. Growth of organised retailing making market penetration smoother.
 V. Improved logistics facilitating an expanded footprint for regional players.
- How many reasons cited above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 2 (B) Only 3
 (C) Only 4 (D) All 5
31. Consider the following facts in relation of APEC—
 I. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) grouping met in San Francisco (The United States) in mid November 2023.
 II. India is not a member of EPEC, however, India's Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, attended the forum.
 Correct code is—
 (A) Only I
 (B) Only II
 (C) Both I and II
 (D) Neither I nor II
32. Which Sea Route is being explored between India and Russia as an alternate to traditional Suez canal sea route ?
 I. Chennai-Vladivostok Maritime Corridor (CVMC).
 II. Northern Sea Route (NSR).
 Correct code is—
 (A) Only I
 (B) Only II
 (C) Both I and II
 (D) Neither I nor II
33. Consider the following statements in relation to developing an alternate sea trade route between India and Russia—
 I. Chennai-Vladivostok sea route, known as the Eastern Maritime Corridor (EMC) is being reconsider as an economic sea trade route between India and the Russia.
 II. Prior to disintegration of the USSR Eastern Maritime Corridor was used for the movement of freight vessels between Chennai and Vladivostak.
 III. Trading through EMC route will reduce the transportation costs of coking coal, crude oil, Liquefied Natural Gas, Chemical fertilizers.
 How many statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) All 3
 (D) None of the above

34. Consider the following facts about PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan—
- This initiative was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 15, 2023 from Khunti (Jharkhand).
 - Total outlay of the programme is ₹ 24000 crore.
 - This programme was initially announced as Pradhan Mantri Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups Development Mission in Union Budget 2023-24.
 - The aim of the programme is to protect the tribes on the verge of extinction and nurture them.
- How many statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
35. Which of the following decisions of the Reserve Bank of India will reduce the loaning capacity of the commercial banks ?
- Increasing the Reverse Repo Rate.
 - Decreasing the Statutory Liquidity Ratio.
 - Increasing the cash reserve ratio.
 - Decreasing standing deposit facility rate.
- Correct code is—
- (A) Only I and III
(B) Only II and IV
(C) Only I and II
(D) Only I and IV
36. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on November 16, 2023 increased the risk weighting for unsecured loans from 100 per cent to 125 per cent. What will be the result of this move ?
- Banks have to set aside more capital while extending unsecured loans.
 - The banks will increase the lending rates on unsecured loans.
- Correct code is—
- (A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
37. Which of the following countries hosted the second edition of the Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS) in a virtual mode on November 17, 2023 ?
- (A) South Africa
(B) Kenya
(C) Bangladesh
(D) India
38. Consider the following agencies of the government—
- Reserve Bank of India.
 - Union Public Service Commission.
 - Securities and Exchange Board of India.
 - NITI Aayog
- Which of the above is/are statutory bodies ?
- (A) Only I and III
(B) Only II and IV
(C) Only I and IV
(D) Only II and III
39. Consider the following bodies of the government—
- Goods and Services Tax Council.
 - Finance Commission.
 - Election Commission of India.
 - National Commission for Safai Karamcharis.
- How many bodies given above are Constitutional bodies ?
- (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
40. Consider the following statements in relation to Public Accounts of India—
- This fund was constituted under Article 266(2) of the Constitution of India.
 - It accounts for flows for those transactions where the government is merely acting as a banker.
- Correct code is—
- (A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
41. Which of the following is not a source of 'Off Budget Borrowing' ?
- (A) Borrowing from RBI under 'ways and means advances'
(B) Borrowing by the Public Sector Enterprises on behalf of the government
(C) Establishing the Special purpose vehicle for a particular project
(D) Raising funds through small savings schemes

Answers with Hints

- (C) 2. (B)
- (B) The Eurasian Economic Union is an economic union of several post-Soviet states located in Eurasia. The Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union was signed on 29 May, 2014 by the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, and came into force on 1 January, 2015.
- (C) China's massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) completed a decade in October 2023 with President Xi Jinping seeking to infuse an element of benignity into this globe-girdling project that is widely seen as a disquieting projection of Chinese power. Mr Xi's initial vision encompassed creating a vast network of railways, energy pipelines, highways, and streamlined border crossings overland and maritime that would promote West and East Asian infrastructure connectivity and the international use of the renminbi. The BRI has made significant strides.
- (A) Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is Chinese President Xi Jinping's ambitious project, while Eurasian logistics Corridor (ELC) was announced by the Xi Jinping in 2023.
- (C) The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter-governmental body that sets anti-money laundering standards and places erring countries into the 'grey list'. Such steps are taken to ensure that countries strengthen their anti-money laundering (AML), counter terrorism financing (CFT) and proliferation of financing systems.
- (C) The scheme is subject to the approval of the respective shareholders of the transferor company (Fincare Small Finance Bank Ltd.) and transferee company (AU Small Finance Bank Ltd.), the Reserve Bank of

India (RBI), and the Competition Commission of India (CCI) and a capital infusion of ₹ 700 crore by the promoters of Fincare SFB. The appointed date of the scheme shall be 1 February, 2024.

8. (A) The Maitree Super Thermal Power Project under the Indian Concessional Financing Scheme loan of USD 1.6 billion, is a 1320 MW (2 x 660) Super Thermal Power Plant (MSTPP) located in Rampal in Khulna Division of Bangladesh. The project has been implemented by the Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Private) Limited (BIFPCL). It is a 50 : 50 Joint Venture company between India's NTPC Ltd. and the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB). Maitree-II unit was inaugurated jointly by PM Narendra Modi and Ms Sheikh Hasina, PM of Bangladesh virtually on November 1, 2023.
9. (C) The NITI Aayog, the Union government's think tank, is in the process of preparing a 25-year vision for the Indian economy. According to the road map, India would be expected to attain a size of \$ 6.69 trillion by 2030, \$ 16.13 trillion by 2040, and \$ 29.02 trillion in current dollars by 2047.
10. (C)
11. (A) Typically, based on behavioural analysis, about 30 per cent of CASA is considered stable and adjusted in the longer end asset-liability bucket.
12. (C) 13. (B)
14. (C) Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate (MCLR) is the minimum lending rate below which a bank is not permitted to lend. MCLR replaced the earlier base rate system to determine the lending rates for commercial banks.
15. (D)
16. (D) The new logistics policy has four features : Integration of Digital System (IDS); Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP); Ease of Logistics (ELOG); and System Improvement Group (SIG).
17. (C) The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/G20 countries agreed on the two-pillar approach in October 2021 under their Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) project. BEPS refers to tax planning by MNCs to benefit from the gaps in tax rules. The OECD estimates that as much as \$ 240 billion in global tax revenue is lost to BEPS every year. Together, the two pillars can generate \$ 150 billion in additional global tax revenues annually.
18. (B) ILO and OECD have jointly developed the report on Skill Gaps by using 12 fundamental and 14 expanded indicators.
19. (A) As per the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), India accounted for about 40 per cent of the total rice exports (56 million tonnes) in the world during calendar year 2022.
20. (A) Total value of exports of goods and services in the year were US \$ 759.9 billion, which were 22.4% of GDP at current Prices.
21. (A) The Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Textiles and Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal flagged off 100 mobile vans for sale of wheat flour (Atta) under 'Bharat' brand, on November 6, 2023 from Kartavya Path, New Delhi. The atta will be available at an MRP not exceeding ₹ 27-50 kg. 'Bharat' Atta will be available at all physical and mobile outlets of Kendriya Bhandar, NAFED and NCCF. In addition, the Centre is also providing Bharat Dal at ₹ 60 per kg through Kendriya Bhandar, NAFED and NCCF to provide relief to consumers.
22. (D) 23. (B) 24. (A) 25. (D) 26. (C)
27. (D)
28. (A) Air India has become the first airline to deploy a generative AI virtual agent called 'Maharaja'. The AI-based agent can answer 6,000 queries in four languages, with 80% of queries being successfully answered in seconds. The agent is trained to answer customer queries across 1,300 topics and can direct questions needing additional assistance to human agents.
29. (D) Indian business is getting increasingly oligopolistic, with the dominant players gaining ground in most sectors and leading therefore to economic concentration. Whether it is steel or cement, aviation or automobiles, telecom or banking, organised retailing or the media, ports or airports, the smaller players are either getting bought out (Future and Metro in retailing, GVK in airports, Krishna-patnam among ports), going bust (Kingfisher, Jet Air and Go First in aviation), becoming marginalised (many public-sector banks, Vi in telecom), or simply exiting the market (Ford and GM).
30. (D) Life has become easier for the small and midcap sectors because of tax changes (the goods and services tax replacing a plethora of indirect taxes), the advent of digital payments, the growth of cashflow-based lending easing access to finance, the growth of organised retailing making market penetration smoother, and improved logistics facilitating an expanded footprint for regional players.
31. (C)
32. (A) The 10,500 km-long CVMC, passing through the Sea of Japan, the South China Sea and Malacca Strait, will bring down transport time to 12 days, almost a third of what is taken under the existing St. Petersburg-Mumbai route of 16,000 km.
33. (C) In terms of distance as well, the new route is advantageous as it is 40 per cent down to 5,647 nautical miles (nm) compared to 9,450 nm taken during the current route between Chennai and St. Petersburg. The route presents geopolitical benefits for India as it will have a presence in the South China Sea through the eastern corridor. The trade corridor is expected to cover the Sea of Japan, East, and the South China Sea through Malacca Strait to reach the Bay of Bengal. According to officials, other countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore could also be part of this route in future.

Continued on Page 185

Multiple Choice Questions

Current Questionnaire

- Which of the following village has been awarded the best tourism village by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)?
(A) Dhordo (Distt. Kutch, Gujarat)
(B) Nawanpind Sardaran (Distt. Gurdaspur, Punjab)
(C) Sarmoli (Distt. Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand)
(D) Pochampally (Distt. Hyderabad, Telangana)
- ISRO's Mission Gaganyaan TV D1 Test Flight is accomplished on—
(A) September 28, 2023
(B) October 9, 2023
(C) October 21, 2023
(D) October 31, 2023
- Which country has been agreed to launch an inaugural Defence Artificial Intelligence dialogue and expand joint cyber training with India?
(A) The US (B) UK
(C) France (D) Japan
- Which countries/areas share Rafa border?
(A) Israel and Lebanon
(B) Israel and Egypt
(C) Egypt and Gaza strip
(D) Jordan and Gaza strip
- Joint bilateral training exercise "Exercise Harimau Shakti 2023", between Indian Army and was held during 23 October-September 2023 in Umroi Cantonment, India.
(A) Australia
(B) Indonesia
(C) Malaysia
(D) Sri Lanka
- Which of the following country has allowed free tourist visa facilities to Indian tourists?
(A) Bangladesh
(B) Vietnam
(C) Indonesia
(D) Sri Lanka
- Who among the following has won 2023's best player award, the Ballon d'Or?
(A) Lionel Messi (Argentina)
(B) Erling Haaland (Norway)
(C) Kylian Mbappe (France)
(D) Karim Benzema (France)
- Consider the following facts regarding the APAAR
I. APAAR is an acronym for Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry.
II. This initiative has been launched as a component of the National Education Policy 2020.
III. Each individual will possess a unique APAAR ID, linked to the Academic Bank Credit (ABC), a digital repository housing information about the credits earned by students throughout their educational journey.
IV. It is mandatory for each student to get register him/herself to get an APAAR ID.
How many statements given above is/are correct?
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
- The 1,000-day period of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' saw the India notch up several achievements—
I. Combating the COVID pandemic successfully.
II. Becoming the fifth largest economy.
III. Soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 at the south pole of Moon.
IV. Winning over 100 medals each in Asian Games and Asian Para Games.
V. Getting a new Parliament building and the passage of the women's reservation bill.
How Many of the above is/are correct?
(A) Only 2 (B) Only 3
(C) Only 4 (D) All 5
- Consider the following pairs in relation to UNESCO's list of 55 new creative cities 2023—
I. Udaipur—City of Crafts & Folk Art.
II. Kozhikode—City of Literature.
III. Gwalior—City of Music.
IV. Mumbai—City of Films.
How many pairs given above is/are matched correctly?
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
- Consider the following personalities of Asia—
I. Korvi Rakshand (Bangladesh)
II. Eugenio Lemos (Timor-Leste)
III. Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (Philippines)
IV. Dr. Ravi Kannan R. (India)
How many of the above have been chosen for 65th Ramon Magsaysay Award 2023?
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
- According to the Edel give Hurun India Philanthropy List 2023 Which of the following has emerged as India's most generous businessman to donate maximum amount in the FY 2022-23?
(A) Mukesh Ambani (Reliance Industries Ltd)
(B) Azim Premji (Wipro)
(C) Shiv Nadar (HCL Technologies)
(D) Anil Agarwal (Vedanta Industries Ltd.)
- Consider the following pairs with reference to The Hindu Businessline's Changemaker awards 2023—
I. Reserve Bank of India-Changemaker of the Year award.
II. Amul-Iconic changemaker of the year Award.
III. Stellapps Technologies-Digital transformation Changemaker Award.

- IV. Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana-Financial Transformation Award.
- V. Shrinidhi RS—Young Changemaker Award.
- VI. Herkey—Social Transformation Award.
- How many pairs given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 3 (B) Only 4
 (B) Only 5 (D) All the Six
14. An earthquake of magnitude 6.4 jolted on 3rd November, 2023 night.
 (A) Nepal (B) Pakistan
 (C) China (D) Afghanistan
15. Which political party is eligible to receive electoral bonds ?
 I. Political Parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
 II. Secured not less than one per cent of the votes polled in the last General Election to the Lok Sabha /the Legislative Assembly of the State.
 Correct code is—
 (A) Only I
 (B) Only II
 (C) Both I and II
 (D) Neither I nor II
16. Consider the following statements—
 I. Vector-borne diseases account for more than 17% of all infectious diseases.
 II. Malaria is a parasitic infection transmitted by Anopheles mosquitoes.
 III. Dengue is the most prevalent viral infection transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes.
 Correct code is—
 (A) Only I and II
 (B) Only II and III
 (C) All I, II and III all
 (D) None of the above
17. Consider the following agencies—
 I. Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT).
 II. National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM).
 III. Odisha Urban Academy.
 IV. Jal jeevan Mission.
- How many of the above is/are associated with Jal Diwali—“Water for Women, Women for Water Campaign.”
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4
18. 54th International Film Festival held from 20th to 28th November, 2023, in—
 (A) Goa
 (B) Mumbai
 (C) Hyderabad
 (D) Chennai
19. Swachh Diwali Shubh Diwali campaign was launched under which initiative ?
 (A) Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0
 (B) Swachhata Pakhwada
 (C) Jal Diwali
 (D) Meri Maatee Mera Gaurav
20. Consider the following Indexes—
 I. Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI).
 II. Human Development Index (HDI).
 III. Public Affairs Index (PAI-2021).
 IV. Social Education Quality Index.
 Which of the following state is at first place in the above Indexes ?
 (A) Tamil Nadu
 (B) Kerala
 (C) Karnataka
 (D) Punjab
21. Consider the following indicators of human Health—
 I. Maternal Mortality Ratio (2018-20).
 II. Infant Mortality Rate (2020).
 Which of the following state has the lowest values of the above indicators ?
 (A) Karnataka
 (B) Maharashtra
 (C) Kerala
 (D) Uttarakhand
22. Who among the following is the first cricketer in the world to be dismissed timed out ?
 (A) Angelo Mathews (Sri Lanka)
 (B) Shakib Al Hasan (Bangladesh)
 (C) Azmattullah Omarzai (Afghanistan)
 (D) Musa Ahmad (Netherlands)
23. Which of the following type of trains is/are not operated by the Indian Railways on regular basis ?
 (A) Vande Bharat Express
 (B) Tejas Express
 (C) Gati Shakti Superfast Special Express
 (D) Yuva Express
24. Which of the following facts is/are correct about 'deepfakes' ?
 I. Deepfakes constitute fake content.
 II. It is often found in the form of videos, pictures or audio.
 III. It is created using powerful artificial intelligence tools.
 Correct code is—
 (A) Only I and II
 (B) Only II and III
 (C) All 3
 (D) None of the above
25. As per the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005, the Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners are appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee. Which of the following is not a member of the search committee ?
 (A) Prime Minister
 (B) Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or his nominee
 (C) Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha (in case there is no recognized leader of opposition then the leader of the largest Opposition party)
 (D) Union Minister nominated by the Prime Minister
26. 5th India-US 2+2 Ministerial dialogues concluded in the second week of November 2023. It was between—
 (A) US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and India's Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar
 (B) US Secretary of Defence Lloyd J. Austin and India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
 (C) Both (A) and (B)
 (D) Neither (A) nor (B)
27. The International Cricket Council (ICC) Board on November 10, 2023 has suspended Cricket's membership of the ICC with immediate effect.

- (A) Sri Lanka
(B) Bangladesh
(C) Pakistan
(D) Afghanistan
28. Which country declared a state of emergency on November 10, 2023 after a series of powerful earthquakes rocked the country?
(A) Turkey (B) Iraq
(C) Iceland (D) Nepal
29. Which State Assembly passed a Bill to increase the reservations in government jobs and educational institutions from the existing 60% (including 10% mandated for the economically weaker sections by the Centre) to 75%?
(A) Jharkhand
(B) Bihar
(C) Andhra Pradesh
(D) Odisha
30. Consider the following facts in relation to recently passed a Bill in Bihar Assembly to increase reservation in educational institutions and government.
- Overall quota for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) from 50% to 65%.
 - Reservation for Extremely Backward Casts (EBCs) and Other Backward Casts (OBCs) have been raised from 12% to 25% and 8% to 18% respectively.
 - Reservation for Scheduled Casts has been increased from 14% to 20%
 - Reservation for Scheduled Tribes has been slashed from 14% to 20%.
 - Effective upper limit of reservation is now 75%.
 - In its 1992 decision in 'Indra Sawhney Vs Union of India', the Supreme Court had fixed the reservation ceiling at 50%.
- How many statements given above is/are correct?
(A) Only 3
(B) Only 4
(C) Only 5
(D) All 6
31. Consider the following statements—
- 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' is observed on November 15.
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi a scheme aimed at holistic development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) on November 15, 2023 in Jharkhand.
- Correct code is—
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
32. Consider the following statements in relation to recent reshuffle of Cabinet of British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak—
- British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak sacked Secretary of State for Home Department Suella Braverman on November 13, 2023.
 - Suella Braverman criticized the policing of pro-Palestinian protests in the UK.
 - Britain's former Prime Minister David Cameron has been made new foreign minister.
- How many statements given above is/are correct?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) All 3
(D) None of the above
33. Consider the following statements in relation to GPS tracker—
- GPS trackers are a precondition for bail in several countries including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Malaysia.
 - A prisoner-Ghulam Mohammad Bhat in Jammu and Kashmir was released on bail after he was tagged with a Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking device to monitor his movements.
- Correct code is—
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
34. India has agreed with which country to co-manufacture Infantry Combat Vehicle (ICV)?
(A) The US (B) Russia
(C) France (D) Norway
35. Consider the following in relation to 'deepfake' video—
- Body movement
 - Facial movement
 - Eye movement
 - Audio quality
- How many of the above can be used to identify the deepfake video?
(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
(C) Only 3 (D) All 4
36. Which country of the world has highest population of diabetes patients?
(A) India (B) Indonesia
(C) The US (D) China
37. Consider the following initiatives—
- 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra'
 - 'PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan'
- Which of the above initiatives has/have been launched on Janjatiya Gaurav divas November 15, 2023 by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi?
(A) Only I
(B) Only II
(C) Both I and II
(D) Neither I nor II
38. Consider the following—
- Women power
 - Youth power
 - Scientists and Researchers
 - Agricultural power
 - Soldiers
 - Power of our poor and middle class
- Which of the above have been described as the four Amrit stambhs of Amrit Kaal in India by the Prime Minister?
(A) Only I, II, IV and VI
(B) Only I, II, III and IV
(C) Only III, IV, V and VI
(D) Only II, III, IV and VII
39. Consider the following facts about cyclone 'Midhili'—
- The cyclonic storm named 'Midhili' crossed the Bangladesh coast during November 17 night or early hours of November 18, 2023.

Answers with Hints

- II. The name 'Midhili' was given by the Maldives.
- III. Countries affected by the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal cyclones rotationally give names of cyclones in a sequence.
- How many statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) All 3
(D) None of the above
40. Consider the following statements about Lockbit 3-0 which was in the news in November 2023—
- I. Lockbit 3-0 is the most popular strain of ransomware.
- II. LockBit 3-0 was created by Lockbit, a group which effectively sells its malware bad actors on the dark web
- III. It is believed that ransomware called Lockbit 3-0 was behind the cyber attack on the US arm of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC).
- How Many statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) All 3
(D) None of the above
41. Which of the following statements is incorrect about CAR-T cell therapy ?
- I. CAR-T modifies immune cells, specifically T-cells.
- II. T-cells are white blood cells that find and fight illness and infection.
- III. Through genetic modification, cells are transformed into cancer-fighting cells in CAR-T therapy.
- Correct code is—
- (A) Only I
(B) Only I and II
(C) All I, II and III
(D) None of the above
1. (A) India's Dhordo, a village in Kutch, has made it to the list of 54 best tourism villages 2023, announced by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) on October 19, 2023. The accolade recognises villages that are leading in nurturing rural areas and preserving landscapes, cultural diversity, local values, and culinary traditions.
2. (C) Mission Gaganyaan TV D1 Test Flight is accomplished. The purpose of this mission was to demonstrate the crew escape system for the Gaganyaan programme.
3. (A) The United States and India have also agreed to launch an inaugural Defense Artificial Intelligence Dialogue and expand their joint cyber training.
4. (C)
5. (C) Joint bilateral training exercise "Exercise Harimau Shakti 2023", between Indian & Malaysian Army commenced on October 23, 2023 in Umroi Cantonment, India. The Malaysian Army contingent comprises troops from 5th Royal Battalion of Malaysian Army. The Indian contingent is being represented by a Battalion of THE RAJPUT REGIMENT. Last edition of the Exercise was conducted in Pulai, Kluang, Malaysia in November 2022. Ex Harimau Shakti, scheduled till 5th November, 2023, will engage approximately 120 personnel from both sides.
6. (D) Sri Lanka on October 24, 2023 has announced visa-free entry for Indian tourists under a pilot project that has begun with immediate effect until March 21, 2024. Apart from India, six other countries have been added in the list. They are : China, Russia, Malaysia, Japan, Indonesia and Thailand.
7. (A) Messi earlier lifted the Ballon d'Or, also known as the Golden Ball, for four consecutive years in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. He also clinched the prestigious prize in 2015, 2019 and 2021.
8. (D) APAAR, an acronym for Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry, has been launched by the Ministry of Education. It is a specialized identification system designed for all students in India, beginning from an early age.
9. (D)
10. (B) UNESCO published the list of 55 new creative cities on October 31, 2023, World Cities Day, in which Kozhikode has been given the tag of City of Literature, the first to hold the title in the country. Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh bagged the City of Music tag. With the latest additions, there are 350 creative cities in the network, in more than 100 countries, representing seven creative fields; Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music.
11. (D) The Ramon Magsaysay Award, often called the 'Nobel Prize of Asia', is a notable accolade that represents exceptional spirit and influential leadership. Since its inception in 1958, the award has been granted to over three hundred remarkable individuals and groups. In 2023, four Asians were given the Ramon Magsaysay Award: Eugenio Lemos (Timor-Leste), Dr. Ravi Kannan R. (India), Miriam Coronel-Ferrer (Philippines), and Korvi Rakshand (Bangladesh).
12. (C) Overall, 119 Indian business tycoons donated ₹ 5 crore or more in FY23, together contributing ₹ 8,445 crore for philanthropic activities. That was more than 59 per cent of what they donated in FY22, according to the Edel Give Hurun India Philanthropy List 2023.
13. (D)
14. (A) An earthquake of magnitude 6.4 jolted Nepal on 3rd November, 2023 night, killing at least 128 people. Over 100 were left injured and the earthquake's impact was felt as far as Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and the Delhi-NCR region. The

- earthquake took place at 11:47 pm. Its epicentre was recorded at Jajrakot's Lamidanda, 142 km from Kathmandu, and 941 km from New Delhi.
15. (C) 16. (C)
 17. (C) The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) unveiled a progressive initiative "Women for Water, Water for Women Campaign" under its flagship scheme - Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), in partnership with the Ministry's National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM). is the knowledge partner. This campaign celebrated 'Jal Diwali' during 7-9 November, 2023.
 18. (A)
 19. (A) In line with the festive mood of the nation, Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 under the aegis of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), launches the Swachh Diwali Shubh Diwali campaign from the 06th to 12th Nov., 2023. The campaign aims at invoking the cultural significance of Diwali coupled with the journey of Swachh Bharat and the principles of Lifestyle for Environment (Mission LiFE).
 20. (B) 21. (C)
 22. (A) On November 6, 2023, veteran Sri Lankan all-rounder Angelo Mathews became the first cricketer to be dismissed timed out in ODI cricket. It happened in Bangladesh-Sri Lanka match in ICC World Cup 2023. 'timed out' is one of the 10 ways in which a batter can be adjudged out according to the laws established by Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC). After a wicket falls, a new batter—as per the MCC rules—gets 120 seconds (2 minutes) to take guard for the next ball. In case she/he fails to take strike for the next ball within this stipulated time, she/he can be adjudged out.
 23. (C) Indian Railways runs about 3,240 Mail/Express trains which include Vande Bharat Express, Gatimaan Express, Rajdhani Express, Shatabdi Express, Humsafar Express, Tejas Express, Duronto Express, Antyodaya Express, Garib Rath Express, Sampark Kranti Express, Yuva Express, Uday Express, Janshatabdi Express and other types of trains.
 24. (C) It is an amalgamation of the words 'deep learning' and 'fake' and it means fabricated videos generated from existing face-swapping techniques and technology. The origin of the word 'deepfake' can be traced back to 2017 when a Reddit user, with the username 25. 'deepfakes', posted explicit videos of celebrities.
 25. (B) 26. (C)
 27. (A) The ICC Board met on November 10, 2023 and determined that Sri Lanka Cricket is in serious breach of its obligations as a Member, in particular, the requirement to manage its affairs autonomously and ensure that there is no government interference in the governance, regulation and/or administration of cricket in Sri Lanka.
 28. (C) Iceland declared a state of emergency on November 10, 2023 after a series of powerful earthquakes rocked the country's southwestern Reykjanes peninsula, in what could be a precursor to a volcanic eruption. Some 24,000 tremors have been registered on the peninsula since late October, according to the IMO, with 'a dense swarm' of nearly 800 quakes registered between midnight and 1400 GMT.
 29. (B) The Bill, passed in Bihar Assembly on November 9, 2023, has provisions for an 18% quota for other backward classes (OBCs), 25% for extremely backward classes (EBCs), 20% for scheduled castes (SCs) and 2% for scheduled tribes (STs).
 30. (D)
 31. (C) Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a ₹ 24,000-crore scheme aimed at holistic development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) on the occasion of 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' on November 15, 2023 in Jharkhand.
 32. (C) British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, in a wider cabinet reshuffle, sacked Secretary of State for Home Department Suella Braverman on November 13, 2023. The development came after Suella Braverman's recent incendiary comments about the policing of pro-Palestinian protests in the UK. Current Foreign Secretary James Cleverly will replace Braverman as the interior minister. Britain's former Prime Minister David Cameron has been made foreign minister.
 33. (C) Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking device is used to monitor movements of animals (like rogue elephants in Kerala or the cheetahs in Kuno), accused released on bails (In some countries including the US, UK and Malaysia), and many a times on vehicles.
 34. (A) India and the US will co-produce an infantry combat vehicle as part of defence industrial cooperation. It was announced during the 2 + 2 dialogue between the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defence Secretary Lloyed J. Austin and Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
 35. (D) To identify deepfake videos, pay attention to visual and audio inconsistencies, along with other telltale signs : Facial expressions and anomalies: Look for unnatural facial expressions, mismatched lip-sync, or irregular blinking.
 36. (D) China has the highest population of diabetes patients in the world, followed by India.
 37. (C) Prime Minister on November 15, 2023 in Khunti (Jharkhand) launched 'Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra' and Pradhan Mantri Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups Development Mission (PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan).
 38. (A) 39. (C) 40. (C) 41. (C)

(Held on 28-9-2023)

General Studies**Paper-IV****SECTION 'A'**

Q. 1. What do you understand by Moral insight? How does it help in Moral situation of civil servants?

Ans. Moral Insight : Moral insight is the ability to perceive and understand the moral or ethical dimensions of a situation, issue, or decision. It involves having a deep understanding of what is right and wrong, as well as the ability to recognize and navigate complex ethical dilemmas. It helps individuals make morally sound choices, especially in situations where there may be conflicting values or interests.

For civil servants, who are often responsible for making decisions that can have a significant impact on society and the well-being of citizens, moral insight is of paramount importance. Here's how it can help in the moral situations of civil servants :

1. Ethical Decision-Making.
2. Identifying Moral Dilemmas.
3. Upholding Public Trust.
4. Promoting Accountability.
5. Promoting Equity and Social Justice.

In summary, moral insight is a crucial attribute for civil servants as it helps them make ethical decisions, navigate complex moral situations, and act in ways that uphold the values and interests of the public they serve.

Q. 2. Examine the relevance of the following in the context of civil service :

(a) Spirit of service

(b) Courage of firm conviction.

Ans. (a) Spirit of Service : The 'spirit of service' refers to a set of values, attitudes, and principles that inspire individuals to dedicate themselves to serving others, typically in a selfless and altruistic manner. It often involves a deep commitment to the

well-being of others, a sense of duty, and a desire to contribute to the betterment of society or a particular community.

(b) Courage of Firm Conviction : It is also known as moral or ethical courage, is the willingness and determination to stand up for one's deeply held beliefs and principles, even in the face of opposition, adversity, or potential harm. This form of courage is not about physical bravery but rather the strength to act in accordance with one's moral compass, no matter the challenges or consequences. It plays a crucial role in upholding one's values and making a positive impact on society.

Q. 3. "A child learns values by what he observes around him." Discuss the role of family and society in the formation of values in the light of this statement.

Ans. The statement "A child learns values by what he observes around him" emphasizes the significant role of family and society in shaping a child's values. We can understand this as below :

Role of Family :

1. Primary Influence.
2. Modeling Behavior.
3. Communication.
4. Conflict Resolution.

Role of Society :

1. Social Norms.
2. Peer Influence.
3. Educational Institutions.
4. Media and Technology.
5. Community and Civic Organizations.
6. Legal and Ethical Framework.

In summary, the formation of values in a child is heavily influenced by what they observe in their family and within the broader societal context. Family members serve as primary role models, while society provides the larger framework within

which these values are nurtured. A harmonious and values-driven family, reinforced by a supportive and ethical societal environment, can contribute to the well-rounded moral development of a child.

Q. 4. "In the era of Globalization International ethics is the need of hour for ensuring peace and stability among the nations". Explain critically.

Ans. Globalization, characterized by increased interconnectedness and interdependence among countries, has amplified the importance of ethical considerations in international relations. We can critically examine the idea as below :

1. Complex Interdependence : Globalization has created complex economic, political, and social interdependencies among nations. These necessitate a framework of international ethics to govern and guide behaviour on the global stage.

2. Economic and Trade Interactions : Such as fair labor standards and environmental protection, are crucial to ensure that global commerce benefits all parties involved.

3. Global Challenges : Issues like climate change, pandemics, terrorism, and migration. Addressing these challenges requires international cooperation and ethical principles to ensure that actions taken are just and equitable.

4. Peace and Conflict Resolution : Ethical principles, such as diplomacy, peaceful negotiation, and adherence to international law, are fundamental for conflict resolution.

5. Human Rights and Human Dignity : Therefore, international ethics is indeed the need of the hour to address the myriad challenges and opportunities of our increasingly interconnected world.

Q. 5. "Concealment of Information impedes public access and involvement". In the light of this statement discuss the importance of information sharing and transparency in Government.

Ans. The statement "Concealment of information impedes public access and involvement" underscores the critical importance of information sharing and transparency in government. We can understand this as follows:

1. Transparency helps ensure that government resources and benefits are distributed equitably and fairly among the population. It promotes social justice and minimizes favoritism.
2. It enables citizens to make informed decisions, ensuring that their choices align with their values and interests.
3. It fosters accountability by allowing the public to scrutinize government actions and decisions.
4. It builds trust between the government and its citizens, enhancing the legitimacy of public institutions.
5. Transparency helps prevent corruption and misuse of power, as public scrutiny acts as a deterrent.

In essence, information sharing and transparency in government empower the public, encourage civic engagement, and maintain the core principles of a democratic society, ultimately leading to better governance and the protection of citizens' rights.

Q. 6. Describe various components of attitude and discuss factors that influence attitude formation.

Ans. Attitude : It refers to an individual's enduring evaluation of people, objects, or ideas, shaping their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. The key components of attitudes include:

1. Cognitive Component : This involves a person's beliefs, thoughts, and knowledge about the attitude object. For example, if someone believes that regular exercise is beneficial for health, it forms the cognitive component of their attitude towards exercise.

2. Affective Component : This encompasses the emotional or affective responses associated with the attitude object. Using the exercise example, someone may feel positively about working out due to the emotional component of their attitude.

3. Behavioural Component : This component relates to a person's behavioural tendencies and intentions towards the attitude object. In our exercise example, it represents whether the person actually engages in physical activity or intends to do so.

Factors that Influence Attitude Formation

1. Social elements.
2. Cognitive elements.
3. Emotional elements.

They involve personal experiences, socialization, cultural norms, group memberships, and persuasive communication. Personal experiences, such as direct interactions with the attitude object, can strongly shape attitudes.

Overall, attitude formation is a complex interplay of individual, social, and cultural factors.

Q. 7. Discuss any two important attributes which you consider important for public servant. Justify your answer.

Ans. Two important attributes that I consider crucial for public servants are integrity and a strong commitment to the public interest.

1. Integrity : Public servants must exhibit unwavering honesty, transparency, and ethical behaviour in all their actions. Integrity is vital in building and maintaining public trust. It ensures that public resources are used responsibly and that the public's best interests are at the forefront of decision-making. Without integrity, corruption and unethical behaviour can erode trust in public institutions, hindering their ability to effectively serve the community.

2. Commitment to the Public Interest: This commitment involves prioritizing the common good over personal or political interests. It means making decisions that benefit the entire community, even when

those decisions are difficult or unpopular.

In summary, integrity and a commitment to the public interest are foundational attributes for public servants. They uphold the principles of accountability, ethics, and effective governance, ensuring that public institutions serve the people with honesty, transparency, and a focus on the common good.

Q. 8. How can liberality and objectivity be fostered among civil servants? Give your suggestion.

Ans. Fostering liberality (open-mindedness) and objectivity among civil servants is essential for good governance and effective decision-making. Here are some suggestions to promote these qualities:

1. Training and Education : That emphasize the importance of open-mindedness and objectivity. These programs can include case studies, workshops, and simulations that encourage critical thinking and unbiased analysis.

2. Diverse Exposure : Encourage civil servants to interact with a diverse range of people, backgrounds, and perspectives. Exposure to different viewpoints helps foster open-mindedness and objectivity.

3. Promote Ethical Guidelines : That emphasize the importance of impartiality and fairness in decision-making. Encourage adherence to these guidelines.

4. Regular Feedback and Evaluation : Recognize and reward those who consistently demonstrate these qualities.

5. Leadership Role Modeling : Senior civil servants and leaders should model the desired behaviour. It sets a positive example for others to follow.

By implementing these strategies, civil service organizations can promote liberality and objectivity, resulting in more effective, fair, and accountable governance.

Q. 9. Explain the role of emotional intelligence for good governance and administration.

Ans. Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and harness one's own emotions and the emotions of others. It encompasses several dimensions:

1. Self-Awareness : Recognizing one's own emotions and their impact on thoughts and actions.

2. Self-Regulation : Managing emotions effectively, including impulse control and adaptability.

3. Social Awareness : Perceiving and understanding the emotions of others, showing empathy and sensitivity.

4. Relationship Management : Nurturing positive interactions and relationships, which include effective communication, conflict resolution, and leadership skills.

In administration and governance, EI is highly valuable. It enhances interpersonal relationships, communication, and teamwork. It helps leaders make informed decisions, handle conflicts, and inspire their teams. EI fosters a collaborative, empathetic, and responsive administrative culture. It can improve public service by ensuring citizens' needs are met with understanding and care. Overall, EI enhances the effectiveness, ethics, and humaneness of administrative and governance processes.

Q. 10. What is the role of social influence in public administration ? Elucidate with examples.

Ans. Social influence plays a significant role in public administration as it can shape decisions, policies, and practices within government agencies. Here are a few key aspects of its role, along with examples :

1. Policy Formulation : Public administrators are influenced by the political climate, public opinion, and interest groups when crafting policies. For instance, a government might adjust environmental regulations in response to pressure from environmental advocacy groups.

2. Bureaucratic Behaviour : The internal culture and norms of a public organization can promote efficiency and accountability or hinder them, depending on its values and practices.

3. Leadership and Decision-Making : Elected officials and leaders can use their positions to exert influence on public administration.

4. Public Opinion and Accountability : A government may alter its stance on social issues or public

services based on feedback and public sentiment.

In summary, It reflects the dynamic relationship between government, the public, interest groups, and the broader societal context in which public administration operates.

SECTION 'B'

Q. 11. What do you understand by Ethical Governance ? Elucidate with example.

Ans. Ethical governance refers to a system of administration and leadership in which public officials and institutions uphold and practice ethical principles, values, and standards in their decision-making, actions, and interactions with citizens. Ethical governance aims to build trust between government and citizens while promoting responsible, equitable, and just governance.

In India, ethical governance is a critical aspect of public administration. While challenges exist, there are examples of efforts to promote ethical governance :

1. Transparency and Accountability : The Right to Information Act (RTI) in India is a significant example. It empowers citizens to access government information, promoting transparency and accountability in government operations. This has led to increased public scrutiny and better governance practices.

2. Digital Governance : Initiatives like Digital India are improving service delivery, reducing corruption, and increasing efficiency by promoting transparency and reducing bureaucratic red tape.

3. E-Governance : Various states in India have implemented e-governance programs to enhance service delivery and reduce corruption through digitization and streamlined processes.

4. Whistle Blower Protection : The Whistle blowers Protection Act aims to safeguard whistle blowers who expose corruption and wrong doing within the government and public sector organizations.

While ethical governance initiatives exist, challenges like political corruption, bureaucratic red tape, and the need for a more efficient judiciary still persist in India. How-

ever, these initiatives are essential steps toward building a more ethical and accountable governance system in the country.

Q. 12. While formulating public policies a civil servant must safely focus on the public welfare and while implementing those policies he must have a foresight to infer possible unexpected consequences". Do you agree with this statement ? Give arguments and justifications for your answer.

Ans. I agree with the above statement. Here are the arguments and justifications for this position :

1. Focus on Public Welfare during Policy Formulation : Policy formulation should be guided by a commitment to enhancing the well-being of the citizens. Policies should aim to address social issues, provide essential services, and promote economic and social development.

2. Ethical Responsibility : Ethical conduct involves prioritizing the common good, upholding principles of justice, fairness, and equality, and avoiding policies that may harm or exploit vulnerable populations

3. Accountability and Transparency : Focusing on public welfare during policy formulation ensures that policies are transparent, accountable, and rooted in democratic principles.

4. Foresight for Unintended Consequences : Policymakers must be aware of the potential unintended consequences of their decisions. Policies can have ripple effects, and being proactive in considering these consequences helps to mitigate harm and make necessary adjustments.

5. Long-Term Sustainability : Foresight helps policymakers think about the long-term impact of policies, ensuring they are sustainable and do not create more significant problems down the road.

In conclusion, a balance between a strong focus on public welfare during policy formulation and the ability to foresee and manage unintended consequences during implementation is essential for responsible and effective public administration. Public servants must be committed to the welfare of the public while also being mindful of the complexities and interrelated factors that can arise when policies are put into action.

Q. 13. Can Bhagavad Gita be an ethical guide for civil servants ? Comment.

Ans. The Bhagavad Gita, a 700-verse Hindu scripture that is part of the Indian epic Mahabharata, offers philosophical and ethical teachings that can serve as valuable guidance for civil servants. Here are some reasons why the Bhagavad Gita can be considered an ethical guide for civil servants :

1. Ethical Principles : The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes fundamental ethical principles such as duty (dharma), righteousness, truthfulness, and non-attachment. Civil servants, in their role of serving the public, can find inspiration in these principles.

2. Decision-Making : The text provides insights into ethical decision-making. It addresses moral dilemmas, the consequences of actions, and the importance of making choices that align with one's duties and values. Civil servants often face complex decisions.

3. Stress Management : The Gita offers guidance on managing stress and maintaining equanimity in the face of challenges. Civil servants often work in high-pressure environments.

4. Selfless Service : The concept of selfless service (seva) is central to the Bhagavad Gita. Which aligns with Civil servants commitment to serving the public's welfare without selfish motives.

5. Universal Appeal : The Bhagavad Gita's teachings are universal and not limited to any specific religion. Its ethical and philosophical principles can resonate with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

While the Bhagavad Gita offers valuable ethical insights, it's important to note that a civil servant's actions and decisions should also adhere to the legal and ethical frameworks of their respective countries and organizations. Ultimately, the Gita can be a source of inspiration and moral guidance, but its application in a professional context should be within the bounds of established legal and ethical standards.

Q. 14. What is meant by Human Action in Ethics ? Discuss the determinants and consequences of ethics in Human Action.

Ans. In ethics, human action refers to the intentional behaviour or conduct of individuals, guided by their moral and ethical principles, values, and beliefs. It is the choice and execution of actions that are influenced by one's understanding of what is right or wrong, good or bad.

Determinants of Ethics in Human Action

1. Moral Values : A person's moral values, shaped by factors like upbringing, culture, and personal experiences, play a significant role in determining the ethics of their actions.

2. Conscience : The individual's internal moral compass, often referred to as their conscience, guides their ethical decision-making.

3. Societal Norms : These norms often reflect the collective moral standards of the community, and influences human actions.

Consequences of Ethics in Human Action

1. Moral Accountability : Individuals are more likely to take ownership of their actions when they are aligned with their ethical principles.

2. Trust and Relationships : People tend to trust those who consistently act in accordance with their moral principles and values.

3. Social and Environmental Impact : Lead to social justice, environmental conservation, and the well-being of others.

In summary, human action in ethics involves the intentional choices individuals make based on their moral values, conscience, societal norms and ethical frameworks. These determinants guide the consequences of human actions, influencing personal accountability, trust, integrity, social impact, and overall moral progress in society. Ethical behaviour is fundamental to building a just and compassionate world.

Q. 15. Rajeev is an idealist. He believes that, "Service to humanity is service to God". One day he was going for an interview for government Job. He saw a severely injured person lying on the road who was asking for help. No one came forward to help. Rajeev took the injured person to the hospital and

saved his life. But due to this reason, he lost the opportunity to get a government Job. Comment on Rajeev's decision in the light of above circumstance.

Ans. Rajeev's decision to help the severely injured person at the cost of missing a job interview reflects his strong commitment to the ideal of "Service to humanity is service to God." His actions align with a deep sense of moral duty, compassion, and human values. There are several points to consider in the light of this circumstance :

1. Ethical Integrity : Rajeev's decision showcases his ethical integrity and commitment to his values. He prioritized saving a life over personal gain, embodying the principle that serving humanity is of utmost importance.

2. Empathy and Compassion : Rajeev's actions demonstrate empathy and compassion, which are crucial qualities in public service.

3. Moral Courage : Rajeev displayed moral courage by taking immediate action when no one else did. His decision serves as a powerful example of doing what is morally right even when it involves personal sacrifice.

4. Long-Term Impact : While he may have missed a job opportunity, Rajeev's actions may lead to other opportunities and a fulfilling career dedicated to humanitarian service.

5. Public Service : Rajeev's actions reflect the values and ethics often associated with public service.

In summary, Rajeev's decision to help the injured person despite losing a job opportunity exemplifies the ethical and moral values that are essential in public service. It is a testament to his character and commitment to making a positive impact on society, even if it comes at a personal cost.

Q. 16. What are the major principles of public life ? Discuss with suitable examples.

Ans. The major principles of public life, often referred to as the Nolan Principles, provide a framework for ethical conduct in the public sector. These principles are crucial for ensuring accountability, transparency, and trust in government and public administration. They include :

1. Selflessness : Public officials should act solely in the public interest and avoid actions that could benefit them personally. *e.g.*, a government official should not use their position to gain favors or personal advantages.

2. Integrity : Including honesty and moral courage. *e.g.*, politicians and civil servants should be truthful and avoid corrupt practices.

3. Objectivity : Decision-making should be based on evidence, not influenced by bias or personal prejudice. *Eg.* a judge should base legal judgments on the law and evidence presented, not personal beliefs.

4. Accountability : Public officials must be accountable for their decisions and actions. They should be open about how they make decisions and be willing to justify them.

5. Openness : The public has the right to know how and why decisions are made. An example is a local government publishing meeting minutes for citizens to review.

6. Honesty : They should not knowingly mislead the public or provide inaccurate information. *E.g.*, a government spokesperson should provide accurate information to the media.

7. Leadership : Public officials should lead by example, promoting and upholding these principles in their work and organizations.

By adhering to these principles, public officials can build trust with the public and ensure that government actions are carried out in the best interests of society.

Q. 17. Now a days social media is used to influence public opinion either in positive or in negative way. Being a civil servant, how will you solve this issue ?

Ans. Addressing the issue of social media being used to influence public opinion, whether positively or negatively, is a complex challenge for civil servants. Here are some strategies that civil servants can employ to mitigate the negative aspects and promote a balanced and informed discourse :

1. Transparency and Accountability : Civil servants should prioritize transparency in their own communications and actions, as well as those of their organizations.

2. Fact-Checking and Information Verification : Encourage the public to critically assess information and verify sources. Promote media literacy and critical thinking skills.

3. Combatting Disinformation : Develop strategies to identify and address disinformation and fake news.

4. Promote Positive Initiatives : Government initiatives, policies, and programs that have a positive impact on society.

5. Crisis Management : Develop strategies for managing crises and emergencies on social media, ensuring that accurate and timely information is disseminated to the public.

6. Regulations and Legislation : To develop regulations and legislation that address the spread of misinformation on social media while respecting freedom of speech and privacy rights.

7. Public Awareness Campaigns : In summary, civil servants can play a significant role in mitigating the influence of social media on public opinion by promoting transparency, fact-checking, constructive dialogue, and responsible use of these platforms. This requires a multi-faceted approach that involves collaboration with various stakeholders, including the public, to foster a more informed and discerning society.

Q. 18. "Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, but knowledge without integrity is dangerous and terrible". What do you understand by this statement ? Discuss.

Ans. The statement "Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, but knowledge without integrity is dangerous and terrible" underscores the vital balance between ethical principles (integrity) and knowledge. It emphasizes that both are essential, and an imbalance can lead to undesirable outcomes.

1. Integrity without Knowledge is Weak : This part highlights that having strong moral principles alone, without the necessary knowledge and competence, can limit one's effectiveness. For instance, a well-intentioned but uninformed decision-maker may make choices that have unintended

negative consequences due to a lack of understanding.

2. Knowledge without Integrity is Dangerous: On the other hand, this part emphasizes that knowledge and competence, when used without ethical guidelines and integrity, can lead to harmful and unethical actions. A knowledgeable person who lacks moral principles may misuse their expertise for personal gain or engage in unethical practices.

For example, a highly skilled financial advisor who uses their knowledge to defraud clients lacks integrity and poses a serious threat to the financial well-being of those they serve.

In essence, this statement serves as a reminder that both integrity and knowledge are crucial in any role, particularly in positions of responsibility. It highlights the importance of ethics and competence going hand in hand for effective and responsible decision-making and behaviour.

Q. 19. "Non-performance of duty by a public servant is a type of corruption". Do you agree with this statement ? Explain logically.

Ans. I do not entirely agree on the above statement, but it can contribute to a culture of inefficiency, negligence, and sometimes corruption. Here's a logical explanation:

1. Corruption Defined : Corruption typically involves dishonest or fraudulent conduct for personal gain. It includes activities like bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism.

2. Non-Performance of Duty : Non-performance of duty may involve a public servant not fulfilling their responsibilities, which can result from various factors, including incompetence, inefficiency, or lack of motivation.

3. Enabling Corruption : In some cases, the failure to perform one's duty can create opportunities for corruption to thrive.

4. Accountability and Responsibility : Public servants have a moral and legal obligation to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Failing to do so may not be corruption per se, but it is a violation of their professional code of conduct.

Continued on Page 160

General Studies

- Antibiotic such as penicillin blocks :
(A) Cell wall formation in bacteria
(B) RNA synthesis in bacteria
(C) DNA synthesis in bacteria
(D) Division in bacteria
- In human beings, the chromosomes that determine the birth of a normal female child are :
(A) One X chromosome from mother and one X chromosome from father
(B) One X chromosome from mother and one Y chromosome from father
(C) Two X chromosomes from mother and one X chromosome from father
(D) One X chromosome and one Y chromosome from father and one X chromosome from mother
- Which major economy announced to hike its defence spending by 70% in 2024 ?
(A) USA (B) Germany
(C) Canada (D) Russia
- Which institution is associated with the 'IGMS 2.0 Public Grievance portal' ?
(A) IIT Madras
(B) IIT Kanpur
(C) IIIT Hyderabad
(D) NIC
- Which one of the following statements about phloem is correct ?
(A) Phloem transports water and minerals
(B) Phloem transports photosynthetic products
(C) Phloem is a simple tissue
(D) Phloem gives support to the plant
- Which one among the following is a non-conventional source of energy ?
(A) Petroleum
(B) Coal
(C) Radioactive elements
(D) Solar energy
- Which country is the host of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Travel Mart 2023 ?
(A) Sri Lanka (B) Bangladesh
(C) India (D) Australia
- Identify the crop on the basis of the following characteristics :
1. It is a kharif crop.
2. Aus, Aman and Boro are its three different growing periods in an agricultural year.
3. About one-fourth of the total cropped area of India is under its cultivation.
Select the correct answer using the code given below :
(A) Wheat (B) Rice
(C) Pulses (D) Cotton
- The Pragyan rover installed in the Chandrayaan-2 mission had how many wheels ?
(A) 2 (B) 3
(C) 4 (D) 6
- Which one of the following lakes in India has a large quantity of substance found in the Moon ?
(A) Lonar Lake, Maharashtra
(B) Pangong Lake, Ladakh
(C) Chilika Lake, Odisha
(D) Loktak Lake, Manipur
- Which district of Uttar Pradesh has been selected for the production of 'Handmade Paper', under the "One District, One Product" scheme ?
(A) Saharanpur
(B) Jalaun
(C) Kannauj
(D) Kushinagar
- Who among the following moved the motion of Secret sitting session of the Assembly (1942) ?
(A) M.S. Aney
(B) G.V. Mavalankar
(C) C.M. Stephen
(D) A. Ayyangar
- Which one among the following is not correct about the Secretary General of the Lok Sabha ?
(A) The Secretary-General is the advisor to the Speaker.
(B) The Secretary-General acts under the authority in the name of the Speaker.
(C) The Secretary-General works under the Speaker with delegated authority.
(D) The secretary General passes orders in the name of the Speaker.
- Which footballer has become the first player to score in 5 World Cups ?
(A) Lionel Messi
(B) Cristiano Ronaldo
(C) Antony
(D) Neymar
- Who among the following formed the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts Association in 1914 ?
(A) Hriday Nath Kunzru
(B) S.G. Vaze
(C) Annie Besant
(D) Shri Ram Bajpai
- Which one among the following was India's first trade union in the proper sense of the term ?
(A) Bombay Labour Union
(B) Ahmedabad Labour Union
(C) Madras Labour Union
(D) Allahabad Labour Union
- Namira Salim, who was recently in news, is from which country ?
(A) Malaysia
(B) Indonesia
(C) Pakistan
(D) Bangladesh
- Who among the following created the first all India Trade Union Congress in 1920 ?
(A) B.P. Wadia
(B) S.A. Dange
(C) N.M. Joshi
(D) B.T. Ranadive

19. The Indian Air Force is set to replace all MiG-21 squadrons with which aircraft ?
 (A) LCA Mark 1A
 (B) LCA Mark-2
 (C) SU-30 MKI
 (D) HTT-40
20. Which public sector bank has launched 'Mobile Handheld Device' to enhance accessibility and convenience ?
 (A) Canara Bank
 (B) State Bank of India
 (C) Punjab National Bank
 (D) Indian Bank
21. In which one of the following places was the Ahmadiyya Movement started by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad ?
 (A) Patna (B) Aligarh
 (C) Bhopal (D) Gurdaspur
22. Who among the following gave evidence before the Joint Select Committee on the Government of India Bill, 1919 in favour of female franchise ?
 1. Mrs. Annie Besant
 2. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu
 3. Mrs. Hirabai Tata
 Select the correct answer using the code given below :
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 1 and 2
 (C) Only 2 and 3
 (D) All 1, 2 and 3
23. Asia's Largest Compressed Biogas Plant has been inaugurated in which state ?
 (A) Gujarat
 (B) Punjab
 (C) Haryana
 (D) Madhya Pradesh
24. Which one of the following cities is closest to the Equator ?
 (A) Mogadishu (B) Singapore
 (C) Colombo (D) Manila
25. The largest geographical area of India is covered by which one of the following types of soils ?
 (A) Inceptisols (B) Entisols
 (C) Alfisols (D) Vertisols
26. Cabinet declared which day as 'National Space Day' in India ?
 (A) August 20 (B) August 23
 (C) August 25 (D) August 27
27. Which one of the following indicates the Tropical Savannah climate ?
 (A) Aw (B) Dfc
 (C) Cwg (D) Am
28. The Isotherm Line, which divides India North-South into almost two equal parts in the month of January, is :
 (A) 10°C (B) 25°C
 (C) 15°C (D) 20°C
29. 'Antonín Dvořák', who was honoured as the Google Doodle, was associated with which profession ?
 (A) Writer
 (B) Musician
 (C) Sportsperson
 (D) Scientist
30. Decadal growth rate of population in percentage was highest in India in the year :
 (A) 1991 (B) 1981
 (C) 1971 (D) 1961
31. Timber vegetation is generally not found in which of the following regions ?
 (A) Subtropical region
 (B) Temperate region
 (C) Alpine region
 (D) Tundra region
32. Who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2023 ?
 (A) Volodymyr Zelensky
 (B) Narges Mohammadi
 (C) Ilham Tohti
 (D) Kyaw Moe Tun
33. The country's first Annapurna store has been opened in which village of Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh ?
 (A) Nawabganj
 (B) Parsakheda
 (C) Shergarh
 (D) Bhartaul
34. How many total medals did India win in the Asian Games 2023 ?
 (A) 103 (B) 107
 (C) 111 (D) 109
35. Match List-I with List-II and select the correct answer using the code given below the lists :
List-I
 (Active Volcano)
 (a) Mount Merapi
 (b) Sakurajima
- (c) Mount Vesuvius
 (d) Mauna Loa
List-II
 (Location)
 1. Hawaii
 2. Italy
 3. Japan
 4. Indonesia
- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| (A) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| (B) | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| (C) | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| (D) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
36. Which Union Ministry launched the 'Swachh Survekshan 2023—Mera Shehar, Meri Pehchan' survey ?
 (A) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
 (B) Ministry of Home Affairs
 (C) Ministry of Jal Shakti
 (D) Ministry of MSME
37. Which one of the following countries is not located on the Tropic of Capricorn ?
 (A) Chile (B) Brazil
 (C) Paraguay (D) Uruguay
38. Who among the following is the architect of the Ram Temple being constructed at Ayodhya, UP ?
 (A) P.O. Sompura
 (B) Chandrakant Sompura
 (C) Brinda Somaya
 (D) B.V. Doshi
39. Punjab has a large number of inundation canals drawing water from :
 (A) Jhelum River
 (B) Chenab River
 (C) Beas River
 (D) Sutlej River
40. What is 'Little Boy' ?
 (A) The fission bomb dropped at Hiroshima
 (B) The fusion bomb dropped at Nagasaki
 (C) The first nuclear bomb tested by America
 (D) The first nuclear bomb tested by North Korea
41. Match the following :
List-I
 (Vitamin)
 (a) K (B) B₂
 (b) D (D) B₁₂

List-II

(Chemical Names)

1. Calciferol
 2. Cyanocobalamin
 3. Riboflavin
 4. Phylloquinone
- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) |
| (A) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| (B) | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| (C) | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| (D) | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
42. According to the figures of Census 2011, which state has the maximum difference in the male and female literacy rate ?
(A) Rajasthan
(B) Bihar
(C) Uttar Pradesh
(D) Madhya Pradesh
 43. How many total matches will be played in FIFA World 2026 ?
(A) 48 (B) 64
(C) 102 (D) 104
 44. What is the rank of India in 'WCC's Global Competitiveness Index' 2023 ?
(A) 12 (B) 25
(C) 40 (D) 56
 45. Which one of the following statements in relation to Panchayats is not correct ?
(A) Legislature of a State may, by law, make provisions with respect to the composition of Panchayats
(B) Panchayat area means the territorial area of a Panchayat
(C) Gram Sabha includes all persons in the electoral rolls of the village within a Panchayat
(D) Reservation of seats of SCs and STs has nothing to do with the proportion of their population
 46. During which of the following Five-Year Plan, the growth rate of primary sector had been negative in context with the state of Uttar Pradesh ?
(A) First Five-Year Plan
(B) Second Five-Year Plan
(C) Third Five-Year Plan
(D) Fourth Five-Year Plan
 47. Which of the following option is not correctly matched ?
(A) Beriya Ghat Fair—Hardoi
(B) Soron Fair—Farrukhabad
(C) Kalinjar Fair—Banda
(D) Shakambhari Devi Fair—Saharanpur
 48. The socialist idea of Sapta Kranti (Seven Revolutions) was proposed by :
(A) Ram Manohar Lohia
(B) Jawaharlal Nehru
(C) M.G. Ranade
(D) Jayaprakash Narayan
 49. The National Disaster Management Authority functions under the Ministry of :
(A) Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(B) Home Affairs
(C) Commerce and Industry
(D) Finance
 50. Who among the following formed the National Liberation Federation (Liberal Party) ?
(A) Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das
(B) Muhammad Ali and C.R. Das
(C) T.B. Sapru and M.R. Jayakar
(D) M.R. Jayakar and C.R. Das
 51. UP Budget 2023-24 allocated 83 crore has been proposed for :
(A) Women Empowerment
(B) Rural Women Empowerment
(C) Urban Women Empowerment
(D) Girls Education
 52. Where is the Bharat-Kala-Bhawan situated in Uttar Pradesh ?
(A) Agra (B) Varanasi
(C) Prayagraj (D) Lucknow
 53. India's first green hydrogen fuel cell bus was launched in which state/UT ?
(A) Himachal Pradesh
(B) Delhi
(C) Jammu & Kashmir
(D) Assam
 54. The pillar inscription of which ruler is located in Mathura city of Uttar Pradesh ?
(A) Kanishka
(B) Samudragupta
(C) Ashoka
(D) Bindusara
 55. Who among the following founded the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association (1893) ?
(A) Auckland Colvin
(B) Badruddin Tyabji
(C) Theodore Beck
(D) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
 56. Which one of the following was not a demand made by the Congress Moderates ?
(A) Universal adult franchise
(B) Repeal of the Arms Act
(C) Extension of Permanent Settlement
(D) Higher jobs for Indians in the army
 57. During the 19th century, who among the following wrote Satapatra Series ?
(A) M.G. Ranade
(B) B.G. Tilak
(C) Bankim Chandra Chatterjee
(D) G.H. Deshmukh
 58. The largest barrier reef system in the world is found near :
(A) East Australian Coast
(B) West Australian Coast
(C) North Australian Coast
(D) South Australian Coast
 59. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act falls under which one of the following Parts of the Constitution of India ?
(A) Part I (B) Part II
(C) Part IV (D) Part VI
 60. How many scientists have been selected for the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award for the year 2022 ?
(A) 12 (B) 13
(C) 10 (D) 14
 61. In the Indian judicial system, writs are issued by :
(A) the Supreme Court only
(B) the High Courts only
(C) the Supreme Court and High Courts only
(D) the Supreme Court, High Courts and Lower Courts
 62. Who among the following was the advisor to the Constituent Assembly ?
(A) B.N. Rau
(B) B.R. Ambedkar
(C) Pattabhi Sitaramayya
(D) Alladi Krishnaswamy
 63. Which of the following terms were added to the Preamble of the Constitution of India by

- the Constitutional Amendment, 1976 ?
1. Socialist
 2. Secular
 3. Integrity
 4. Fraternity
- Select the correct answer using the code given below :
- (A) Only 1 and 2
(B) 1, 2 and 3
(C) 2 and 4
(D) 1, 3 and 4
64. Which one of the following is not a classified category of political parties as outlined by the Election Commission of India ?
- (A) National Parties
(B) State Recognised Parties
(C) Regional Parties
(D) Registered Unrecognized Parties
65. What is the name of the first-ever luxury cruise service on the holy Saryu river in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh ?
- (A) Saryu Cruise Tour
(B) Ayodhya Cruise Tour
(C) Ramayan Cruise Tour
(D) Bharat Cruise Tour
66. Which one of the following statements with regard to the appointment of the Members of the Parliamentary Committees is correct ?
- (A) The Members are only appointed
(B) The Members are only elected
(C) The members are only nominated
(D) The members are appointed or elected on a motion made and adopted or nominated by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha or the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha
67. Which of the following statements with regard to the privileges of the Members of the Parliament are correct ?
1. Privileges would not be fettered by the Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India.
 2. Privileges must be read subject to the Articles 20-22 and Article 32 of the Constitution of India.
 3. Immunity is available in relation to both civil and criminal prosecution.
4. Immunity is available in relation to freedom of speech even in his/her private or personal capacity.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below :
- (A) 1, 2 and 4
(B) Only 1 and 2
(C) 2 and 3
(D) Only 1 and 4
68. Al-Biruni's Kitab-ul-Hind was written in which language ?
- (A) Arabic (B) Persian
(C) Urdu (D) Turkish
69. Ibn Batuta went to China as the envoy of which one of the following Delhi Sultans ?
- (A) Alauddin Khilji
(B) Muhammad bin Tughluq
(C) Iltutmish
(D) Firoz Shah Tughluq
70. 'Bard' is the name of Artificial Intelligence-based chatbot developed by which institution ?
- (A) Google (B) Microsoft
(C) OpenAI (D) Chat GPT
71. Consider the following statements :
- The Azamgarh Proclamation refers to :
1. The declaration by the rebels of 1857.
 2. The statement by the leader of the underground movement in the Revolt of 1942.
- Which of the statements given above is/are not correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
72. Which of the following oxides shows both acidic and basic behaviour ?
- (A) Zinc oxide
(B) Copper oxide
(C) Magnesium oxide
(D) Calcium
73. Which one of the following towns was not a centre of the Revolt of 1857 ?
- (A) Ayodhya (B) Agra
(C) Delhi (D) Kanpur
74. At which of the following sessions of the Indian National Congress was the resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy passed ?
- (A) Tripuri session
(B) Lahore session
(C) Lucknow session
(D) Karachi session
75. Who among the following wrote The Philosophy of the Bomb ?
- (A) Sukhdev
(B) Chandrashekar Azad
(C) Bhagwati Charan Vohra
(D) Bhagat Singh
76. The 128th Constitution Amendment Bill, 2023, which was introduced recently, is associated with ?
- (A) Reserve 33% of seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies
(B) Identify Other Backward Classes (OBCs)
(C) Reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWSs)
(D) Goods and Services Tax
77. Which one of the following statements about Gupta coins is not correct ?
- (A) Gupta kings issued large number of gold coins known as Dinar
(B) Chandragupta II, Kumargupta I, Skandagupta and Budhagupta issued silver coins
(C) The obverse of coins are carved with the images of the kings and on the reverse are carved deities
(D) The largest number of coins issued by the Guptas were of copper
78. In the Gandhara School of Art, initially blue schist and green phyllite were used. When did stucco completely replace stone as main material used by Gandhara School sculptors ?
- (A) 1st century CE
(B) 2nd century CE
(C) 3rd century CE
(D) 5th century CE
79. Which one of the following is not a fluvial landform ?
- (A) Cirque (B) Gorge
(C) Braids (D) Canyon
80. Which one of the following countries does not have Tundra vegetation ?
- (A) Belarus (B) USA
(C) Russia (D) Canada

81. The four planets closest to the Sun are called :
 (A) terrestrial planets
 (B) giant planets
 (C) dwarf planets
 (D) gas planets
82. Which one of the following is considered as the deepest point of the oceans ?
 (A) Tonga Trench
 (B) Mariana Trench
 (C) Philippine Trench
 (D) Kermadec Trench
83. Which one of the following is not a major tectonic plate ?
 (A) Saudi Arabian plate
 (B) Antarctica and the surrounding oceanic plate
 (C) India - Australia - New Zealand plate
 (D) Pacific plate
84. Who among the following has won the Singles Title in Wimbledon Tennis Championship (Women) in the year 2022 ?
 (A) Karolina Pliskova
 (B) Elena Rybakina
 (C) Serena Williams
 (D) Ons Jabeur
85. Which Indian Coast Guard Ship has been deployed to ASEAN countries for Marine Pollution Response ?
 (A) Samudra Prahari
 (B) Samarth
 (C) Rajdhvaj
 (D) Sankalp
86. Buenos Aires and Montevideo are situated across the banks of :
 (A) River Plate
 (B) Orinoco River
 (C) Purus River
 (D) Madeira River
87. Which one among the following Union Territories of India is the smallest in geographical area ?
 (A) Chandigarh
 (B) Puducherry
 (C) Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu
 (D) Lakshadweep
88. Climax mine, the largest producer of molybdenum, is located in :
 (A) Canada
 (B) USA
 (C) Australia
 (D) South Africa
89. Sea of Azov is connected to :
 (A) Black Sea
 (B) Baltic Sea
 (C) Mediterranean Sea
 (D) North Sea
90. Which one of the following statements with regard to ozone is not correct ?
 (A) Ozone is found mostly at 15-55 km in the atmosphere
 (B) Ozone is produced by gaseous chemical reactions
 (C) 16th November is celebrated as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
 (D) Ozone is a form of oxygen in which three oxygen atoms are bounded together
91. A market, in which there are a large number of firms, homogeneous product, infinite elasticity of demand for an individual firm and no control over price by firms, is termed as :
 (A) oligopoly
 (B) imperfect competition
 (C) monopolistic competition
 (D) perfect competition
92. Normally, there will not be a shift in the demand curve when :
 (A) price of a commodity falls
 (B) consumers want to buy more at any given price
 (C) average income rises
 (D) population grows
93. Where is 'Jodha Bai Mahal' located in Uttar Pradesh ?
 (A) Fatehpur Sikri
 (B) Firozabad
 (C) Agra
 (D) Akbarabad
94. Which one among the following is not a coral reef island ?
 (A) Great Barrier Reef, Australia
 (B) Rainbow Reef, Fiji
 (C) Swaraj Island, India
 (D) Kyushu Island, Japan
95. Which racing driver won the Japanese Grand Prix title in 2023 ?
 (A) Max Verstappen
 (B) Lewis Hamilton
 (C) Charles Leclerc
 (D) Sebastien Vettel
96. Who is the current Lieutenant Governor/Administrator of Jammu & Kashmir ?
 (A) Girish Chandra Murmu
 (B) Manoj Sinha
 (C) Vinai Kumar Saxena
 (D) Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan
97. Who has been elected as the new Chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulation ?
 (A) Nita Ambani
 (B) Kumar Mangalam Birla
 (C) Srinivasan K. Swamy
 (D) Aloknath Sinha
98. 'Yashobhoomi' India's International Convention and Expo Center was inaugurated in which state/UT?
 (A) Delhi (B) Assam
 (C) Bihar (D) Ladakh
99. August 12 is celebrated as :
 (A) the World Environment Day
 (B) the World No-Tobacco Day
 (C) the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
 (D) the International Youth Day
100. Which one of the following Commissions is related to Article 338A ?
 (A) The National Commission for Scheduled Castes
 (B) The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes
 (C) The National Commission for Backward Classes
 (D) The National Commission for Women
101. Which one of the following is not the necessary condition for the issue of a writ of Quo Warranto ?
 (A) The office must be a public office
 (B) The office must be created by the Statute or by the Constitution itself
 (C) The office must not be a substantive one
 (D) There has been a contravention of the Constitution or a Statute in appropriating such person to that office
102. Which of the following Articles in the Constitution of India are exceptions to the Fundamental Rights enumerated in Article 14 and Article 19 ?

- (A) Article 31A and Article 31C
(B) Article 31B and Article 31D
(C) Article 12 and Article 13
(D) Article 16 and Article 17
103. Which of the following statements about the President's term of office is not correct?
(A) The President holds office for a term of five years
(B) The President may be removed from the office by way of impeachment
(C) The President may resign before the expiration of his/her term by writing to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha
(D) The President shall, not withstanding the expiration of his/her term, continue to hold office until his/her successor enters upon his/her office
104. Which gas in its solid state is also known as dry ice?
(A) Carbon dioxide
(B) Hydrogen
(C) Nitrogen
(D) Oxygen
105. How many districts of Uttar Pradesh lie adjacent to Nepal border?
(A) 6 (B) 7
(C) 8 (D) 9
106. Myanmar does not share its international boundary with:
(A) Bangladesh
(B) Thailand
(C) Vietnam
(D) India
107. Who attacked and looted the famous Somnath temple in 1026 AD?
(A) Mahmud of Ghazni
(B) Muhammad Ghori
(C) Nadir Shah
(D) Genghis Khan
108. Which Commission was appointed by the Central government to examine issues related to Centre-State relations?
(A) Mandal Commission
(B) Sarkaria Commission
(C) Nanavati Commission
(D) Kothari Commission
109. In which year was the first-ever motion to remove a Supreme Court Justice signed, by 108 members of the Parliament?
(A) 1984 (B) 1991
(C) 1978 (D) 1996
110. Which state released special postal covers in tribute to 'Alluri Sitarama Raju'?
(A) Tamil Nadu
(B) Andhra Pradesh
(C) Kerala
(D) Telangana
111. What is the primary function of the eccrine glands?
(A) To produce sweat
(B) To produce colour of the skin
(C) To produce body hair
(D) To produce growth hormones
112. 'Ali-Aye-Ligang', a spring festival, is associated with which state?
(A) Sikkim (B) Odisha
(C) Assam (D) Bihar
113. In which year did King George-V assume the crown of India?
(A) 1917 (B) 1906
(C) 1923 (D) 1911
114. What is the expansion of GBA, launched as a part of G-20 Summit?
(A) Geo Biofuels Alliance
(B) Global Biofuels Alliance
(C) G-20 Biofuels Alliance
(D) Great Biofuels Alliance
115. The Indian Air Force is set to replace all MiG-21 squadrons with which aircraft?
(A) LCA Mark 1A
(B) LCA Mark-2
(C) SU-30 MKI
(D) HTT-40
116. Leshalaptu is a folk dance of which Indian state?
(A) Kerala (B) Nagaland
(C) Karnataka (D) Goa
117. Who became the Nawab of Bengal after the death of Alivardi Khan in 1756?
(A) Mir Jafar
(B) Murshid Quli Khan
(C) Siraj ud-Daulah
(D) Sujan Khan
118. Which explorer discovered a sea route to India in 1498?
(A) Thomas Coryat
(B) Megasthenes
(C) Marco Polo
(D) Vasco da Gama
119. Who is the author of the book 'The Free Voice : On Democracy, Culture and the Nation'?
(A) Ravish Kumar
(B) Arnab Goswami
(C) Barkha Dutt
(D) Rahul Kanwal
120. What is India's ranking in the Global Hunger Index 2023?
(A) 111 (B) 86
(C) 91 (D) 117
121. In which year was the 'National Food for Work Programme' launched in India?
(A) 2000 (B) 1991
(C) 2002 (D) 2004
122. 'Jnanpith Award', one of India's highest literary award, was conceived in the year:
(A) 1972 (B) 1961
(C) 1957 (D) 1969
123. Which economist had developed the international trade theory in 1817 based on comparative advantage and specialization?
(A) Paul Krugman
(B) Gary Becker
(C) Milton Friedman
(D) David Ricardo
124. Which mineral is also known as 'fool's gold'?
(A) Quartz (B) Magnetite
(C) Pyrite (D) Fluorite
125. Which of the following ports is not located in Gujarat?
(A) Sikka Port
(B) Mundra Port
(C) Okha Port
(D) Dighi Port
126. 'Mahuri' is a traditional musical instrument belonging to the state of:
(A) Kerala
(B) Odisha
(C) Himachal Pradesh
(D) Arunachal Pradesh
127. In the context of capital markets, the abbreviation 'FPO' stands for:
(A) Free Public Offer
(B) First Portfolio Operation
(C) Follow-on Public Offer
(D) First Public Offer
128. Which of the following territories was the first to be a part of India after independence?

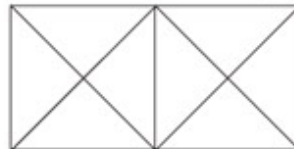
- (A) Puducherry
(B) Dadra and Nagar Haveli
(C) Sikkim
(D) Goa
129. Who started the Tamil weekly magazine 'Kudi Arasu' ?
(A) Chinnaswami Subramanya Bharathi
(B) T.M. Nair
(C) Periyar EV Ramasamy
(D) Natesa Mudaliar
130. Which of the following industries is not included in the 'Eight Core Industries' of India ?
(A) Fertilizers (B) Steel
(C) Cotton (D) Natural Gas
131. Four words have been given, out of which three are alike in some manner and one is different. Select the odd word ?
(A) Rabies
(B) Polio
(C) Measles
(D) Schizophrenia
132. Select the correct option that indicates the arrangement of the given words in the order in which they appear in an English dictionary :
- Thought
 - Throating
 - Throttlehold
 - Thorough
 - Thrombocyte
- (A) 4, 1, 2, 5, 3 (B) 1, 4, 2, 3, 5
(C) 1, 4, 2, 5, 3 (D) 4, 1, 2, 3, 5
133. What was the day on 7th April, 2008 ?
(A) Tuesday (B) Saturday
(C) Sunday (D) Monday
134. Dheeraj said to Sandeep, "My mother is the only daughter of your mother." How is Dheeraj's mother related to Sandeep ?
(A) Mother
(B) Aunt
(C) Sister
(D) Grandmother
135. John went straight from a hotel and turned left after covering 3 km and travelled 5 km in that direction to reach point X. From here, he took a right turn and travelled 4 km, and again took a right turn and travelled 4 km. From here, he took a turn to reach point X straight. If John is

now moving towards the North-West direction, in which direction did he start moving from the hotel ?

- (A) East (B) West
(C) North (D) South-East
136. Select the number from among the given options that can replace the question-mark (?) in the following series.
13, 15, 12, 17, 10, 21, 8, ?
(A) 27 (B) 22
(C) 24 (D) 25
- 137 'Sword' is related to 'Weapon' in the same way as 'Necklace' is related to '.....'.
(A) Goldsmith (B) Jewellery
(C) Women (D) Neck
138. Find the missing term in the given figure based number series :

4	5	6
5	?	3
3	4	2
56	78	23

- (A) 9 (B) 11
(C) 3 (D) 5
139. How many squares and triangles are there in the following figure ?



- (A) 2 Squares and 16 triangles
(B) 2 Squares and 14 triangles
(C) 3 Squares and 18 triangles
(D) 4 Squares and 16 triangles
140. In a certain code language, 'RAJU' is written as 'WFOZ' and 'SITA' is written as 'XNYF'. How will 'MONU' be written in that language ?
(A) RTSZ (B) UTRZ
(C) SRSY (D) TRSX

Answers with Hints

1. (A) Penicillin is one of those antibiotics which prevents the final cross-linkage step with the coordination of this macromolecule which results in the burst wall and kills the bacteria. It is safe for the host.

2. (A) A human being has 23 pairs of chromosomes in which one pair of X and Y chromosomes determine the sex of the human being. If there is one X chromosome from mother and one X chromosome from father, then two X chromosomes (XX) makes a girl whereas X chromosome from mother and Y chromosome from father then these chromosomes (XY) makes a boy.
3. (D) Russia's defence spending was set to jump by over 68 per cent year-on-year to almost 10.8 trillion rubles (USD 111.15 billion), totalling around 6 per cent of GDP.
4. (B) Recently, the Intelligent Grievance Monitoring System (IGMS) 2.0 Public Grievance portal and Automated Analysis in Tree Dashboard portal were launched. IIT Kanpur has developed the IGMS 2.0 Dashboard, following a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DARPG. This MoU was aimed at enhancing the DARPG Information Systems (CPGRAMS) by integrating Artificial Intelligence features.
5. (B) Phloem is the living tissue in vascular plants that transports the photosynthetic products which are the soluble organic compounds obtained during photosynthesis, mainly sugar sucrose to the parts of the plants where it is needed. This process is called translocation.
6. (D)
7. (C) The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Travel Mart 2023 was inaugurated in New Delhi by the Ministry of Tourism.
8. (B) **Characteristics of rice crop :** Rice is a Kharif crop. Rice requires the temperature, above 25 Degree Celcius and annual rainfall above 100 cm. The major rice-producing states are Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Bangladesh possesses three rice seasons, the aus (March-April), aman (June-July), and boro (Dec.-Jan.). About 1/4th of the total cropped area of India is under rice cultivation. Rice is one of the most important food crops

- and feeds more than 60% population of India.
9. (D) Pragyan, which signifies 'wisdom' in Sanskrit was a rover and the third component of the Chandrayaan-2 mission. Pragyan was a robotic vehicle that would traverse the lunar surface on the six wheels that were painted in the colours of the tiranga.
 10. (A) The Mineral contents of samples from the Lonar crater-cum-lake in the Buldhana district, Maharashtra, which was established after a meteorite crash around 50,000 years ago, are similar to the moon rocks obtained from the first and the third manned moon missions, as per the study led by the IIT (Indian Institute of Technology), Bombay.
 11. (B)
 12. (A) It was M.S. Aney who moved the motion of Secret sitting session of the Assembly in the year 1942. Dr. Madhav Shrihari Aney popularly referred to as Loknayak Bapuji Aney/Bapuji Aney, was an ardent educationist, statesman, freedom fighter, a modern Sanskrit poet and a politician. He was even designated with the title of 'Loknayak Bapuji', which means 'The People's Leader and Respected Father'.
 13. (D) The Lok Sabha's Secretary-General is the administrative head of the Lok Sabha Secretariat. He or she is appointed by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. The post of the Secretary-General is equivalent to the rank of the Cabinet Secretary in the Government of India, who is the senior-most civil servant to the Indian Government.
 14. (B) Cristiano Ronaldo has become the first player in football history to score in five different World Cups (2006, 2010, 2014, 2018, 2022).
 15. (D) Shri Ram Bajpai founded the Seva Samiti Boy Scouts Association in the year 1914 at Bombay on the lines of the world-wide Baden-Powell Organisations, which at that time banned Indians from joining it. Though later Baden-Powell, after a private visit to India, lifted the colour ban, Bajpai's organisation continued its separate existence, for it had the aim of bringing about the complete Indianisation of the Boy Scout movement in India.
 16. (C) **Origin of Trade Unions Act in India :**
1918 : First Registered Organized Trade Union – Madras Labour Union led by B.P. Wadia and V. Kalyanasundaram Mudaliar, in the year 1918. The strike was started by the workers of the Buckingham and Carnatic Mills in Madras, against the managing company, Binny & Co.
1919 : ILO (International Labour Organisation) got formed.
1920 : First Trade Union Federation—All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in the year 1920. The founding Presidents were Lala Lajpat Rai, N.M. Joshi & Joseph Baptista.
 17. (C) Virgin Galactic recently launched the first Pakistani woman into space on its fourth commercial spaceflight, Galactic 04. The mission took off from Spaceport America in New Mexico. The previous three commercial spaceflights launched in June, August and September.
 18. (C) Narayan Malhar Joshi was an Indian trade union leader and the follower of Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Joshi got involved in labour issues and initiated the All India Trade Union Congress in the year 1920 along with the Lala Lajpat Rai. Malhar Joshi was the General-Secretary of AITUC from the year's 1925 to 1929 and from 1940 to 1948. In the year 1931, he left AITUC and established the All India Trade Union Federation.
 19. (A) The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to replace all Russian-origin MiG-21 squadrons with the LCA Mark 1A by 2025.
 20. (B)
 21. (D) A remote and unknown town, Qadian in Gurdaspur emerged as a centre of religious learning in the year 1889, when Mirza Ghulam Ahmad established the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, and in the year 1891, it became the venue for the annual gatherings of the communities.
 22. (D) Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, Hirabai Tata, Mithan Tata went to London in the year 1919 to give evidence before the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Government of India Bill and received a warm support from the British Women's organizations like the Women's freedom League and the Women's International League.
 23. (B) Asia's largest Compressed Biogas plant has been inaugurated by the Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri in Punjab's Sangrur.
 24. (B) Among the given cities, Singapore is closest to the equator.
 25. (A) **Inceptisols :** General characteristics : These are usually the weakly developed young soil though they are more developed than entisols.
Area (in Thousand Hectares) : 130372.9
Percentage of the total area of India : 39.74
 26. (B) Union Cabinet has declared August 23 as 'National Space Day' to commemorate Chandrayaan-3's successful landing on the Moon. The Cabinet also applauded the designation of two moon locations as 'Tiranga Point' (the imprint of Chandrayaan-2) and ShivShakti Point (the landing site of Chandrayaan-3) in the release.
 27. (A) In the Koppen classification, the climate is designated as Aw or As.
 28. (D) The Isotherm Line, which divides India North-South into almost two equal parts in the month of January, is 20°C. Isotherms are the lines that connect points of equal temperature on weather maps, so at every point along a given isotherm, the temperature values are the same. Isotherms help to visualize and to interpret the horizontal temperature distribution of an area by showing the patterns of temperature on a weather or oceanography map.

29. (B) Google Doodle honoured the 182nd birthday of Czech composer and musician Antonín Dvořák, known for his significant contributions to classical music. He gained recognition in Prague with his hymn, "The Heirs of the White Mountain," and later composed renowned pieces like the "Symphony No. 9 From the New World." Dvořák's time in the US, where he was inspired by Black and Native American music, also led to his famous symphony being taken to the moon by astronauts.
30. (C) The Decadal growth rate of population in terms of percentage was highest in India in 1971. The population growth rate peaked during the decade 1971-81, perhaps in the year's 1972-73 (based on the Sample Registration Scheme data). The average annual exponential growth rate declined marginally to 2.11 per cent (4.5%) after having remained at a plateau for the previous two decades of 1961-71 & 1971-81.
31. (D) Timber is a type of wood that has been processed into beams and planks. It is also known as 'lumber' in the US and Canada. Any wood capable of yielding a minimum dimensional size can be termed as timber or lumber. It is a stage in the process of wood production.
32. (B) Narges Safie Mohammadi is an Iranian human rights activist, scientist and the Vice-President of the Defenders of Human Rights Center, headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Shirin Ebadi. In October 2023, while in prison, she was awarded the 2023 Nobel Peace Prize "for her fight against the oppression of women in Iran and her fight to promote human rights and freedom for all." The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran condemned the decision to award Mohammadi.
33. (D) The first Annapurna store in India and Uttar Pradesh opened in the village of Bhartaul in Bareilly. The store was inaugurated on July 13.
34. (B) India ended its Asian Games 2023 campaign with a record tally of 107 medals including 28 gold, 38 silver and 41 bronze.
35. (D)
36. (A) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched the Field Assessment for Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2023. This is 8th edition of world's largest Urban Swachhata Survey, Swachh Survekshan 2023—Mera Shehar, Meri Pehchan. The assessors will study performances of 4500+ cities across 46 indicators and it is expected to be completed within a month.
37. (D) The Tropic of Capricorn, also called the Southern Tropic, is an imaginary line (a latitude circle) which indicates the southernmost point where the Sun is directly overhead at noon. This occurs during the solstice on December 21. The Tropic of Capricorn is one among the five crucial latitudinal circles marked on the globe. It is 23°26'13.3" south of the Equator.
- It passes through the following countries or overseas territories :** Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Mozambique, Madagascar, Australia and French Polynesia.
38. (B) Chandrakant Sompura, the Ahmedabad-based architect whose design has been adopted by Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra for the construction of the temple.
39. (D) The Sutlej River is the longest of the five rivers that flow through the historic crossroads region of Punjab in northern India and Pakistan. The Sutlej River is also known as Shutudri. It is the easternmost tributary of the Indus River. The Bhakra Dam is built around the river Sutlej to provide irrigation and other facilities to the states of Punjab, Rajasthan and Haryana.
40. (A) The Little Boy was developed by Lieutenant Commander Francis Birch's group at the Manhattan Project's Los Alamos Laboratory during the World War II, a reworking of their unsuccessful Thin Man nuclear bomb. Like that of the Thin Man, it was a gun-type fission weapon, but it derived its explosive power from the nuclear fission of

uranium-235, whereas Thin Man was based on fission of plutonium-239.

41. (C)

Vitamin	Chemical Names
1. K	(d) Phylloquinone
2. B ₂	(c) Riboflavin
3. D	(a) Calciferol
4. B ₁₂	(b) Cyanocobalamin

42. (A) According to the figures of Census 2011, Rajasthan has the maximum difference in the male and female literacy rate :

State	Female literacy rate	Male literacy rate	Difference
Rajasthan	52-66%	80-51%	27-85
Bihar	53-57%	70-32%	16-75
Uttar Pradesh	59-26%	79-24%	19-98
Madhya Pradesh	60-02%	78-73%	18-71

43. (D) 44. (C)

45. (D)

Article 243C : The Legislature of a State may, by the law, make provisions with respect to the composition of Panchayats.

46. (C) Five Year Plan : Growth Rates of primary sector :

Five Year Plan	Growth Rates
First	1.8
Second	1.5
Third	- 0.2
Fourth	0.9

47. (B)

Fairs	Region
Beriya Ghat Fair	Hardoi
Soron Fair	Kasganj
Shringirampur Fair	Farrukhabad
Kalinjar Fair	Banda
Shakambhari Devi Fair	Saharanpur

48. (A) Ram Manohar Lohiya was an activist for the Indian freedom struggle and the socialist movement in India.

Lohia's Seven Revolutions (i.e. Sapta Kranti) :

- for equality between man and woman;
- against the political, economic and race-based inequalities;

- (c) for the destruction of castes;
 (d) against foreign domination
 (e) for economic equality, planned production and against the private property;
 (f) against interference in private life;
 (g) against the arms & weapons and for Satyagraha.
49. (B)
50. (C) The Liberal Party was formed in the year 1910, and British intellectuals and British officials were often participating members of its committees. The party was founded by Surendra Nath Banarjee, and some among its prominent leaders were Tej Bahadur Sapru, V.S. Srinivasa Sastri and M.R. Jayakar.
51. (B) In UP Budget 2023-24, to empower rural women, allocated ₹ 83 crore has been proposed for Self Help Groups.
52. (B) Bharat Kala Bhavan is a university museum located in Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, India. It has been instrumental in the dissemination of knowledge on Indian art and culture. It is one of the important touristic attractions in the Banaras Hindu University and in the city of Varanasi.
53. (B) Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched the first of its kind hydrogen fuel cell bus from India Gate in New Delhi on 25th September, 2023. The trial period will generate vital data for the future of zero-emission mobility in India.
 Under this initiative, Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL) has embarked on a meticulously designed program to conduct operational trials of 15 Fuel Cell buses powered by Green hydrogen.
54. (C) The Mathura pillar inscription was erected by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE. It is a major source of information about Ashoka's reign and his policies. The inscription mentions the names of several people who were involved in the spread of Buddhism and the construction of religious monuments.
55. (D) Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association was founded in the year 1893 by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan as a part of the Aligarh movement.
56. (C) **The Moderates' constitutional demands were** : Expansion of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assemblies, both Central and Provincial. Increase in the membership of Indians by involving some members elected by local bodies such as chambers of commerce, universities, etc. in these councils and by giving much more powers to them. They demanded the Indian control over the public purse and raised the slogan 'No taxation without representation'.
57. (D)
58. (A) The Great Barrier Reef is the largest among the living structures on the Earth. It is a site of the remarkable variety and beauty on the north-east coast of Australia. The reef is situated off the coast of Queensland, Australia, in the Coral Sea. It comprises the world's largest collection of coral reefs, with 400 types of the coral, 1,500 species of fish and about 4,000 types of mollusc.
59. (B) 60. (A)
61. (C) Article 32 of Indian Constitution empowers the Supreme Court of India to issue writs : habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto and certiorari, for the enforcement of fundamental rights. By Article 226, the High Courts have also been empowered to issue writs, for the implementation of Fundamental Rights. Hence, both Supreme Court and High Courts can issue writs.
62. (A)
63. (B) The 42nd Amendment to the Constitution of India was enacted in 1976.
64. (B) National Party, State Party and registered unrecognized parties. As of now, the ECI has recognised eight parties as national parties—the BJP, Congress, Trinamool Congress, CPI(M), CPI, Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), National People's Party (NPP) and AAP (2022).
65. (C) Ramayan Cruise Tour is the first-ever luxury cruise service on the holy Saryu river in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. It was announced by the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterway in 2020. It is equipped with all the appropriate comfort facilities along with safety measures. The interior of the cruise is based on the theme of Ramcharitmanas.
66. (D) 67. (B)
68. (A) Al-Biruni was a scholar from Uzbekistan, who visited India in the 11th century CE. He was captured as slave by Mahmud of Ghazni and spent most of his years in city of Ghazni. He visited India in 1017 CE. Al-Biruni's Kitab-ul-Hind is written in Arabic and is divided into 80 chapters on subjects such as religion and philosophy, festivals, astronomy, alchemy, manners and customs, social life, weights and measures, iconography, laws and metrology.
69. (B) Ibn Batuta was a Moroccan traveller who visited India in 14th century CE. Before he set off for India in 1332-33, he had made pilgrimage trips to Mecca, and had already travelled extensively in Syria, Iraq, Persia, Yemen, Oman and a few trading ports on the coast of East Africa. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq, the sultan of Delhi was impressed by his scholarship and appointed him the qazi or judge of Delhi. He also went to China as the envoy of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. Ibn Batuta wrote a book titled Rihla in Arabic.
70. (A) Google is introducing Bard, its artificially intelligent chatbot, to other members of its digital family including Gmail, Maps and YouTube. Bard's expanded capabilities will be provided through an English-only extension that will enable users to allow the chatbot to mine information embedded in their Gmail accounts as well as pull directions from Google Maps and find helpful videos on YouTube.

71. (B) The Azamgarh proclamations, issued on 25th August, 1857 stressed on the issue of unity among Hindus and the Muslims of the country. While the real author of the proclamation is not known, many sources have indicated that the proclamation was written by Firoz Shah, grandson of the Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar.
72. (A) Zinc oxide is an amphoteric oxide that shows both properties of acidic and basic behaviour. It dissolves in most of the acids but insoluble in water. An amphoteric oxide reacts with both acid and base to form salt and water.
73. (B) **Important leaders and places of the revolt were :**

Place	Leader
Barrackpore	Mangal Pandey
Arrah	Veer Kunwar Singh
Delhi	Bahadurshah II, General Bakht Khan
Lucknow	Begum Hazrat Mahal, Birjis Qadir
Kanpur	Nana Sahib, Rao Sahib, Tantia Tope, Azimullah Khan
Jhansi	Rani Laxmibai
Faizabad	Maulvi Ahmadullah

74. (D) The resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy was passed at the Karachi session of Indian National Congress in 1931. The session was presided by Sardar Patel. The Congress also endorsed the Gandhi-Irwin pact at the Karachi Session. The Congress passed the historic 'Purna Swaraj' resolution at its Lahore Session in 1929.
75. (C) 76. (A)
77. (D) The rulers of the Gupta dynasty issued largest number of gold coins (called Dinars) in India. The Gupta rulers also issued silver coins but the coins made of copper are very scarce. The gold coins of the Gupta rulers are the extraordinary examples of artistic excellence. The coins depicted the ruling monarch on the obverse and carried legends with the figure of a goddess on the reverse. Chandragupta II, Kumaragupta I, Skandagupta and Budhagupta issued silver coins.

78. (C)
79. (A) The landforms formed as a result of erosional and depositional action of running water (mainly rivers) are known as fluvial landforms. Gorge, braids, Canyon, Alluvial Fans and Cones, Natural Levee, Waterfalls, potholes, Meanders, oxbow lakes and deltas are examples of fluvial landforms. When the discharge of a river is low, the river takes the route of less resistance, thus forming braided channels. Cirque is a landform formed by glacial erosion.
80. (A) Tundra vegetation is characterized by extremely low temperatures and low biodiversity. It is found in the polar areas of Europe, Asia and North America. The vegetation is composed of dwarf shrubs, sedges and grasses, mosses, and lichens. Belarus does not have a Tundra Vegetation.
81. (A) The four innermost planets (planets closer to the Sun *i.e.*, Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars) are referred to as terrestrial planets. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune are referred to as gas giants as well as Jovian planets.
82. (B) Mariana Trench located in the Pacific Ocean is considered as the deepest point (11,034 meters deep) of the oceans. Tonga Trench, located in the south-west Pacific Ocean is the second deepest trench of the world. The Kermadec Trench is an ocean trench in the South Pacific Ocean.
83. (A) The Seven Major tectonic plates are :
1. Antarctica and the surrounding oceanic plate
 2. North American plate
 3. South American plate
 4. Pacific plate
 5. India - Australia - New Zealand plate
 6. Africa with the eastern Atlantic floor plate
 7. Eurasia and the adjacent oceanic plate
84. (B)
85. (A) The Indian Coast Guard Ship Samudra Prahari is on an over-

seas deployment to ASEAN countries from September 11 to October 14, 2023, as part of India's ASEAN initiatives for Marine Pollution Response. Equipped with a Chetak Helicopter in Pollution Response configuration, the ship aims to showcase the Indian Coast Guard's capabilities and commitment to addressing marine pollution issues in the region. During this deployment, it will make port calls in Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh, and Jakarta.

86. (A)
87. (D) As of now, India has eight Union Territories. The following table mentions Union Territories and their geographical area :

Union Territory	Area
Ladakh	174,852 km ²
Jammu & Kashmir	55,538 km ²
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	8,249 km ²
Delhi	1,490 km ²
Dadara & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	603 km ²
Puducherry	492 km ²
Chandigarh	114 km ²
Lakshadweep	32 km ²

88. (B) The Climax mine is a major molybdenum mine located in Colorado (United States of America). Molybdenum is an essential trace mineral. China, Chile and the US are the three largest producers of molybdenum.
89. (A) The Sea of Azov is connected to the Black Sea by the Strait of Kerch. The Don River and Kuban River flow into the Sea of Azov. The Sea of Azov, a northern extension of the Black Sea, is an important geopolitical region located on the southern coastlines of Russia and Ukraine.
90. (C) Ozone layer in Earth's stratosphere absorbs most of the ultraviolet radiation of the Sun and thus stops them from reaching Earth's surface. The thickness of the Ozone in a column of air from the ground to the top of the atmosphere is measured in terms of Dobson units (DU). Ozone depletion (thinning of the ozone layer) is a result of an increase in Chloro-

fluorocarbons (CFCs) in the Earth's atmosphere. International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is observed on 16th September every year.

91. (D) A perfectly competitive market has the following defining features : The market consists of a large number of buyers and sellers. Each firm produces and sells a homogenous product. i.e., the product of one firm cannot be differentiated from the product of any other firm. Entry into the market as well as exit from the market are free for firms. Information is perfect
92. (A) A demand curve graph depicts the relationship between price of a commodity (the y-axis) and the quantity of that commodity that is demanded at that price (the x-axis). Demand curve will shift to left or right as a result of change in any non-price determinant of demand. Thus, normally there is no shift in demand curve when price of a commodity falls. Several factors like rising income, change in population, changes in expectations and changes in tastes and preferences affect individual and market demand.
93. (A) 'Jodha Bai Mahal' also known as 'Jodh Bai Mahal' is the largest palace in Fatehpur Sikri commissioned by Mughal Emperor Akbar in 1569.
94. (D)
95. (A) Max Verstappen won the Japanese Grand Prix by a comfortable margin to seal Red Bull's second consecutive Constructors' Championship. The McLaren duo of Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri followed Verstappen in the second and third positions.
96. (B) Manoj Sinha is the second and current Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Shri Sinha is a seasoned Politician from Uttar Pradesh. Girish Chandra Murmu, a 1985-batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre was the first Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

97. (C) 98. (A) 99. (D)

100. (B)

Commission	Article
The National Commission for Scheduled Castes	Article 338
The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes	Article 338A
The National Commission for Backward Classes	Article 338B

101. (C) Article 32 of Indian Constitution empowers the Supreme Court of India to issue writs: habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto and certiorari, for the enforcement of fundamental rights.

By Article 226, the High Courts have also been empowered to issue writs, for the implementation of Fundamental Rights. The writ of Quo Warranto, which literally translates to 'by what authority' is issued against a person holding a public office. This writ is issued to restrain a person from holding a public office which he is not entitled. The writ of Quo Warranto is filed if there has been a contravention of the Constitution or a statute or statutory instrument, in appointing such person to that office.

102. (A) Article 31A and Article 31C in the Constitution of India are exceptions to the Fundamental Rights enumerated in Article 14 and Article 19.

The six Fundamental Rights are enshrined in Part III (Articles 12 to 35) of the Indian Constitution.

- The Fundamental Right to equality is guaranteed by Articles 14 to 18 and Articles 19 to 22 deals with the Fundamental Right to freedom.
- Article 31A contains laws regarding the acquisition of any estate or properties by the government or management of any property.
- Article 31C states that no law which gives effect to the provisions contained in Article 39B and Article 39C can be challenged under Article 14, Article 19, or Article 31.

103. (C)

104. (A) Dry Ice is the common name for solid carbon dioxide (CO₂). It does not melt into a liquid when heated; instead, it changes directly into a gas (This process is known as sublimation).

105. (B) 7 districts of Uttar Pradesh lie adjacent to Nepal border. They are Maharajganj, Sidharthanagar, Balrampur, Shravasti, Bahraich, Lakhimpur, and Pilibhit.

106. (C) Myanmar is bound by China to the north and northeast, Laos to the east, Thailand to the east and southeast, India to the northwest, Bangladesh to the west and the Andaman Sea to the south.

107. (A) In 1025 AD, Somnath Temple was destroyed and plundered by the Afghan ruler, Mahmud of Ghazni. The temple was dedicated to Lord Shiva, was rebuilt by the Paramara king Bhoja of Malwa and the Solanki king Bhimdev I of Anhilwara between 1026 and 1042 AD.

108. (B) Sarkaria Commission was set up in 1983 by the Central government of India. The Sarkaria Commission's charter was to examine the Centre-State relationship on various portfolios and suggest changes within the framework of Constitution of India.

109. (B) In 1991 the first-ever motion to remove a Supreme Court Justice was signed by 108 members of Parliament. Justice Ramaswamy, during his tenure as the Chief Justice of the Punjab High Court was accused of misappropriating funds.

110. (B) Andhra Pradesh Governor S. Abdul Nazeer has unveiled six special postal covers in tribute to Alluri Sitarama Raju. These commemorative postal covers mark the centenary of the Chilli Post, issued by the Department of Posts as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations. Alluri Sitarama Raju's unique method of sending advance messages to officials, using arrows with attached messages and chili peppers, became known as the "CHILLI POST." The Rampa Rebellion, initiated by Alluri in 1922 with tribal support, continued until 1927 when Alluri martyred himself.

111. (A) Eccrine glands are the major sweat glands of the human body, found in virtually all skin, with the highest density in palm and soles.
112. (C) The Ali Ai Ligang Festival is celebrated in the State of Assam, northeast of India. The State of Assam is a land of fairs and festivals, the majority of which are celebrated with the flavor of brotherhood and harmony.
113. (D) The Imperial Crown of India is the crown used by King George V in his capacity as Emperor of India at the Delhi Durbar of 1911.
114. (B)
115. (A) The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to replace all Russian-origin MiG-21 squadrons with the LCA Mark 1A by 2025.
This was announced by Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari ahead of the upcoming Air Force Day celebration. The Indian Air Force celebrated its 91st anniversary on October 8 with the theme—"IAF-airpower beyond boundaries".
116. (B) **Different dance forms of Nagaland are :** Modse, Agurshikukula, Butterfly Dance, Aaluyattu, Sadal Kekai, Changai Dance, Kuki Dance, Leshalaptu, Khamba Lim, Mayur Dance, Monyoasho, Rengma, Seecha and Kukui Kucho, Shankai and Moyashai.
117. (C) Alwardi Khan was nawab of Bengal from 1740 to 1756. He succeeded Nasiri Dynasty and took powers of Nawab. Siraj ud-Daulah became a Nawab of Bengal after the death of Alivardi Khan in 1756.
118. (D) Vasco da Gama was a Portuguese explorer and the first European to reach India by sea. His initial voyage to India (1497–1499) was the first to link Europe and Asia by Atlantic and the Indian Oceans.
119. (A) Ravish Kumar is the author of the book 'The Free Voice : On Democracy, Culture and the Nation'.
120. (A) India ranked 111 out of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2025.
121. (D) National Food for Work Programme was launched on 14th November, 2004 in 150 most backward districts of the country, identified by the Planning Commission in consultation with the Ministry of Rural Development and the State Governments.
122. (B) The Jnanpith award is the highest literary honour conferred in India. It was founded by the Sahu Jain family, the publisher of the 'Times of India'. The award was instituted in 1961.
123. (D) David Ricardo developed the classical theory of comparative advantage in 1817 to explain why countries engage in international trade even when one country's workers are more efficient at producing every single good than workers in other countries.
124. (C) Pyrite is considered the most common form of sulfide minerals. Pyrite's metallic luster and pale brass-yellow hue give it a superficial resemblance to gold, hence the well-known nickname of fool's gold.
125. (D) Dighi port is located on the banks of the Rajpuri Creek, in the Raigad District of Maharashtra on the West Coast of India.
126. (B) 'Mahuri' is a traditional musical instrument belonging to the state of Odisha.
127. (C) In the context of capital markets, the abbreviation 'FPO' stands for Follow-on Public Offer. A follow-on public offering (FPO) is the issuance of shares to investors by a company listed on a stock exchange. A follow-on offering is an issuance of additional shares made by a company after an initial public offering (IPO). Follow-on offerings are also known as secondary offerings.
128. (B) The territory of (Puducherry) comprises the former French establishment Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam, which lie scattered in South India. Puducherry, the capital of the territory was once the original headquarters of the French in India. It was under the French rule for 138 years and merged with the Indian Union on 1st November, 1954.
129. (C) Kudi Arasu (also pronounced as Kudiyarasu) was a Tamil weekly magazine published by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy in Madras Presidency (present-day Tamil Nadu) in India. In 1925 Periyar started a journal, Kudi Arasu (People's Rule), which was followed in 1928 by Revolt. During the 1930s the colonial government, suspecting Periyar of propagating communism, targeted his journals.
130. (C) The industries covered in the Index of Eight Core are namely Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity.
Index of Industrial Production : IIP is an indicator that measures the changes in the volume of production of industrial products during a given period. It is compiled and published monthly by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
131. (D) Rabies, Polio and Measles all are caused by virus except Schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is a severe, chronic mental disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. It can cause psychosis and can affect all areas of life.
132. (A) The correct sequence of the given words in the English dictionary is given below :
4. Thorough
 1. Thought
 2. Throating
 5. Thrombocyte
 3. Throttlehold
133. (D) Total odd days = 0 odd days till 2000 years (every 400 years have zero odd days)
From 2001 to 2007, there are 1 leap year and 6 normal years.
Therefore, in 1 leap years odd days $[366/7 = 52 \text{ weeks} + 2 \text{ odd days}] = 2 \times 1 = 2 \text{ odd days}$ (i)
6 odd days $[365/7 = 52 \text{ weeks} + 1 \text{ odd day}] = 1 \times 6 = 6 \text{ odd days}$ (ii)
Total odd days (2001 to 2007) = (i) + (ii)
 $= 2 + 6 = 8 \text{ days} / 7 = 1 \text{ odd day}$

Now, from 1st January to 7th April, the number of odd days = $(31+29+31+7)/7 = 98/7 = 7$ odd days

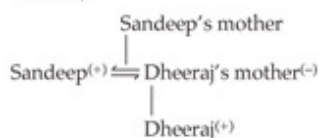
Hence, total odd days up to 7th April 2008 = $1 + 7 = 8/7$ odd days = 1 odd day

Now from the list of odd days :

Sunday	1
Monday	2
Tuesday	3
Wednesday	4
Thursday	5
Friday	6
Saturday	7

Hence, 7th April, 2008 was Monday.

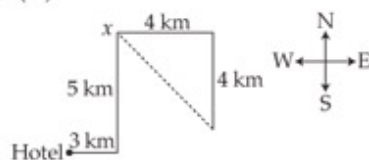
134. (C) As per given information the blood relation tree is given below ;



Symbol :	
← Spouse	⇌ Siblings
A Generation Gap	
(+) Male	(-) Female

Hence, it is clear that Dheeraj's mother is the sister of Sandeep.

135. (A)



Hence, John started moving in the east direction from the hotel.

136. (D)

The pattern follows as :

13, 15, 12, 17, 10, 21, 8, ?

$$13 + 2 = 15$$

$$15 - 3 = 12$$

$$12 + 5 = 17$$

$$17 - 7 = 10$$

$$10 + 11 = 21$$

$$21 - 13 = 8$$

$$8 + 17 = 25$$

137. (B) As, a sword is an edged weapon. Similarly, Necklace is a Jewellery.

138. (A) The logic is as follows :

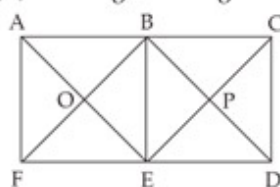
In Column I : $4 + 5^2 + 3^3 = 4 + 25 + 27 = 56$

In Column II : $5 + 3^2 + 4^3 = 5 + 9 + 64 = 78$

In Column III : $6 + 3^2 + 2^3 = 6 + 9 + 8 = 23$

Hence, the correct missing term is 9.

139. (C) Let imagine the figure :



Here, we have 3 squares, ABEF, BCDE AND OBPE

Here, we have 2 diagonals and 8 blocks.

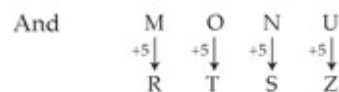
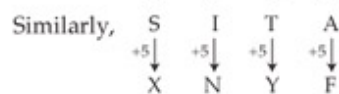
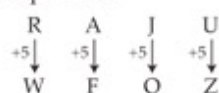
So the total number of triangles = $2 \times 8 = 16$ triangles

And we have two more triangles: AEC and FBD

So, the total number of triangles = $16+2 = 18$ triangles.

Hence, there are 3 squares and 18 triangles in given figure.

140. (A) Here, the pattern follow as : In the given question



So, 'MONU' can be written as RTSZ.

Pilapan

Continued from Page 146

For example, consider a public official responsible for approving construction permits who consistently delays or refuses to process permits for businesses unless they pay a bribe. In this scenario, non-performance is a form of corruption because it is used to extort money for personal gain. On the other hand, if a public servant is inefficient or fails to perform their duties due to a lack of competence or excessive bureaucracy, it may not be corruption in the traditional sense, but it is still a serious issue that hampers public service and can have detrimental effects on society. Both corruption and non-performance are issues that public

service ethics and accountability mechanisms aim to address.

Q. 20. Describe the strategies that civil servants can employ to overcome resistance to change and effectively persuade stakeholders to support new policies and initiatives.

Ans. Civil servants often encounter resistance to change when introducing new policies and initiatives. To overcome this resistance and persuade stakeholders, they can employ the following strategies :

1. Effective Communication : Use a variety of communication channels to reach different stakeholders, ensuring that the message is accessible and understandable.

2. Stakeholder Engagement : Involve stakeholders in the decision-making process. Seek their input, listen to their concerns, and address them in the policy design.

3. Education and Training : Provide training and resources to help stakeholders adapt to the changes. Offer workshops, seminars, and materials that explain the benefits and implementation process.

4. Building Coalitions : Identify key influencers and allies who can support and advocate for the changes.

5. Pilot Programs : Implement pilot programs or small-scale trials to demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed changes before full-scale implementation.

6. Incentives : Offer incentives or benefits to stakeholders who embrace the new policies, such as financial incentives, recognition, or other rewards.

7. Clear Messaging : Develop a clear and compelling message that highlights the positive outcomes and potential risks of not adopting the changes.

8. Feedback Mechanisms : Create feedback mechanisms for stakeholders to express concerns, provide input, and monitor the progress of the initiatives.

By using these strategies, civil servants can enhance their ability to navigate resistance to change and gain the support needed for the successful implementation of new policies and initiatives.

Pilapan

General Studies-I

1. With reference to Backward classes, consider the following statements—
- Currently, the constitution of India does not define the term 'backward classes'.
 - National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
 - NCBC shall perform other supplementary tasks based on the development, protection, welfare, and progress of the socially and academically underprivileged.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
 (A) Only one (B) Only two
 (C) All three (D) None
2. The writ of 'Quo Warranto' can be issued to address which of the following ?
 (A) If a lower court has usurped illegal jurisdiction
 (B) If an official is not doing her duties properly
 (C) If someone has been detained illegally
 (D) If a legislator holds such office which makes him ineligible to become an MP
3. Consider the following statements with respect to Social Justice—
- It refers to a political and philosophical theory that focuses on the concept of fairness.
 - Equity contrasts with equality, where everyone is offered the same tools to move towards the same outcome.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Consider the following statements, with respect to no-confidence motion—
- It can be introduced only in Lok Sabha.
 - It need not state the reasons for its adoption in Lok Sabha.
 - If it is passed in the Lok Sabha, the council of ministers must resign from office.
 - It can be moved against the entire council of ministers only.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below—
 (A) Only 1 and 3
 (B) Only 1, 2 and 4
 (C) Only 2 and 4
 (D) All 1, 2, 3 and 4
5. For simultaneous elections to be implemented, changes need to be made in which of the following related articles of the Constitution ?
- Duration of Houses of Parliament.
 - Dissolution of Lok Sabha by the President.
 - President's Rule.
- How many of the above options is/are correct ?
 (A) Only one (B) Only two
 (C) All three (D) None
6. With reference to the 'GST council', consider the following statements—
- It is a statutory body.
 - It is responsible for making recommendations on issues related to the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
7. Consider the following statements—
- The First Lok Sabha met on the eve of the first republic day.
 - India ceased to be a British dominion immediately post-enactment of the constitution.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Which of the following statements is/are correct about Election of the Vice-President ?
- It is in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferred vote and the voting is by secret ballot.
 - The Electoral College to elect a person to the office of the Vice-President consists of only members of Rajya Sabha.
- Select the correct answers using the codes given below—
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
9. Consider the following statements, with respect to National Green Tribunal (NGT)—
- It is a statutory body which is set up for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests.
 - The Tribunal is not bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure but guided by principles of natural justice.

3. It has power to giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 2
(C) Only 1 and 3
(D) All 1, 2 and 3
10. Which of the following Parliamentary committees are not chaired by Speaker ?
1. Public Accounts Committee.
 2. Business Advisory Committee.
 3. Estimates Committee.
 4. Rules Committee.
 5. Committee on Public Undertakings.
 6. General Purposes Committee.
- How many of the above options are correct ?
- (A) Only three
(B) Only four
(C) Only five
(D) All six
11. Which of the following statements is/are correct about Anti-defection law ?
1. Under the law which legislators may be disqualified on grounds of defection by the presiding officer of a legislature.
 2. The law applies only to Parliament and not to state legislature.
- Select the correct answers using the codes given below—
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
12. Consider the following statements regarding the Speaker Pro Tem—
1. He/She is elected by the Lok Sabha from amongst the members of the house.
 2. He/She is responsible for chairing the meetings of Lok Sabha until the new elected Speaker becomes acquainted with the Parliamentary procedures.
 3. The Speaker Pro Tem has all the powers of the Speaker.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) All three (D) None
13. Consider the following statements with respect to Finance Commission—
1. It is constituted by the President under article 280 of the Constitution.
 2. President lays the reports of the Finance commission before both the Houses of the Parliament.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
14. Consider the following statements, with respect to Law Commission of India—
1. It is a non-statutory body and it is constituted by a notification of the Government of India.
 2. The first law commission was established under the Charter Act of 1833.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
15. Which of the following Parliamentary committees does not witness any participation from Rajya Sabha ?
- (A) Public Accounts Committee
(B) Committee on Empowerment of Women
(C) Committee of Privileges
(D) Estimates Committee
16. Which of the following statements is/are correct about Comptroller and Auditor General ?
1. Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India was created by legislative action and not mentioned in constitution.
 2. CAG is the head of the Indian Audit & account department and the chief Guardian of Public purse.
- Select the correct answers using the codes given below—
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
17. T.N. Godavarman Thirumulpad Vs Union of India case, is related to—
- (A) Forest conservation
(B) Prescribing the limit for hydrocarbon emission
(C) Regulation of carbon emission vehicles in Taj Trapezium region
(D) Uniform civil code
18. Article 131 of the Indian Constitution deals with—
- (A) Power of the President to seek an opinion from the apex court
(B) States can move directly to the Supreme Court in matters of dispute with the Centre
(C) Appellate jurisdiction of Supreme Court in appeals from High Courts in certain cases.
(D) Special leave to appeal by the Supreme Court
19. Consider the following statements with respect to Council of Ministers—
1. All the ministers own joint responsibility to the legislative assembly for all their acts of omission and commission.
 2. The ministers shall hold office during the pleasure of the Chief Minister.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
20. Consider the following statements regarding President's rule that is imposed under Article 356 of the Constitution—
1. It cannot be imposed without the written recommendation of the Governor of the concerned state.
 2. Every proclamation of President's rule must be approved by both the houses of Parliament within a stipulated time.

- Which of the above statements is/are incorrect ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
21. Which of the following countries share boundaries with South China sea ?
 1. China
 2. Taiwan
 3. Philippines
 4. Malaysia
 Select the correct answer using the code given below—
 (A) Only 1, 2 and 4
 (B) Only 2, 3 and 4
 (C) Only 1 and 3
 (D) All 1, 2, 3 and 4
22. With reference to 'Super Blue Moon', consider the following statements—
 1. It is the convergence of three lunar occurrences a full moon, a Super moon and Blue moon.
 2. Super moon happens when the moon is passing through or is close to apogee and is also full moon.
 Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
23. With reference to Aurora or Northern lights, consider the following statements—
 1. Auroras are the glowing lights at high latitude.
 2. Auroras can be normally observed in stratosphere.
 3. Change in the atmospheric temperature cause Auroras.
 How many of the above statement is/are correct ?
 (A) Only one
 (B) Only two
 (C) All three
 (D) None
24. Consider the following statements with respect to Distribution of Rainfall—
 1. The monsoon rainfall has a declining trend with increasing distance from the sea.
 2. Rainfall in sub-Himalayan areas in the northeast and the hills of Meghalaya exceeds 200 cm.
 Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
25. Hot Spots within the earth help produce Geothermal Energy. What are these 'Hot Spots' ?
 (A) Areas of intense magnetic activity within the upper mantle
 (B) Areas of intense pressure inside the mantle
 (C) Regions of high volcanism on earth's surface
 (D) Region in crust where hot molten rocks are trapped
26. Consider the following statements, with respect to Millets—
 1. India is largest producer of millets globally.
 2. India is second largest exporter of millet in the world
 3. United Nation's General assembly declared year 2023 as International Year of Millets.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1 and 2
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 1 and 3
 (D) All 1, 2 and 3
27. Which of the following conditions are good for fisheries production & catch ?
 1. Shallow continental shelves in cold regions.
 2. Abundance of phytoplankton.
 3. Meeting of warm and cold currents.
 4. Coastal upwelling of nutrient rich colder water.
 Select the correct answer code—
 (A) 1, 2, 3 (B) 1, 3, 4
 (C) 2, 3, 4 (D) 1, 2, 3, 4
28. Consider the following statements with respect to Mediterranean Climate—
 1. The Mediterranean region is characterized by warm dry summers and cool wet winters.
 2. The main crops of this region are wheat, olives, vine, citrus fruits, barley, etc.
 Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
29. Consider the following statements regarding Fold Mountains—
 1. Fold Mountains are created when large areas are broken and displaced vertically.
 2. They are least likely to have conical peaks.
 Which of the above statements is/are incorrect ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
30. Which of the following statements are correct about Cyclone ?
 1. It is an intense vortex or a whirl in the atmosphere with very strong winds.
 2. The centre of the cyclone is called Eye, which is a calm area.
 Select the correct answers using the codes given below—
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
31. The speed of tsunami waves in Ocean largely depends on—
 (A) Ocean depth
 (B) Distance from mid-oceanic ridges
 (C) Distance from the source of the wave
 (D) Density of water
32. Which of the following rivers flows through Kaziranga National Park ?
 1. Brahmaputra
 2. Mora Diphlu
 3. Dharla
 4. Diphlu
 5. Rangpo
 Select the correct answer code—
 (A) 1, 3, 4, 5
 (B) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
 (C) 1, 2, 3
 (D) 1, 2, 4

33. Consider the following statements with respect to types of Winds—
1. The trade winds, westerlies and easterlies, constantly blow throughout the year in a particular direction are permanent winds.
 2. Winds blow only during a particular period of the day or year in a small area like sea breeze, and loo are seasonal winds.
- Which of the above statements is/are incorrect ?
- (A) Only 1
 - (B) Only 2
 - (C) Both 1 and 2
 - (D) Neither 1 nor 2
34. Consider the following statements regarding Amazon Rainforest—
1. The area covered by Amazon rainforest is larger than Australia.
 2. The Andes mountains is located to the east of Amazon rainforest.
 3. The entire Amazon rainforest area is located between equator and Tropic of Capricorn.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one
 - (B) Only two
 - (C) All three
 - (D) None
35. Consider the following statements with respect to Solar zenith angles—
1. It is the angle between the sun's rays and the vertical direction.
 2. It was used by ancient mariners to navigate the oceans.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
 - (B) Only 2
 - (C) Both 1 and 2
 - (D) Neither 1 nor 2
36. Consider the following statements—
1. The soil develops on crystalline igneous rocks in areas of low rainfall.
 2. They are fertile when fine-grained and are poor in fertility when they are coarse-grained.
 3. They are generally poor in nitrogen, phosphorous and humus.
- The above statements refer to—
- (A) Black Soil
 - (B) Laterite soil
 - (C) Red and Yellow Soil
 - (D) None of the above
37. Which of the following are considered as Ex-situ crop residue management (CRM) ?
1. Use of paddy straw for co-firing in thermal power plants.
 2. Use of paddy straw for biomass power projects.
 3. Incorporation of paddy straw in the soil using heavy machinery.
 4. Use of paddy straw as feedstock for 2G ethanol plants.
- Select the correct answer code—
- (A) 2, 3, 4
 - (B) 1, 2, 3
 - (C) 1, 2, 4
 - (D) 1, 2, 3, 4
38. Consider the following statements with respect to distance of sun from Earth—
1. The farthest distance of the earth from the Sun is 152 million km on 4th July.
 2. The position of the earth when it is nearest to the Sun is called Aphelion.
- Which of the following statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
 - (B) Only 2
 - (C) Both 1 and 2
 - (D) Neither 1 nor 2
39. Dzūko Valley hill station is located in the border of which of the following pair of states ?
- (A) Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh
 - (B) Manipur and Mizoram
 - (C) Manipur and Meghalaya
 - (D) Nagaland and Manipur
40. Which of the following are considered as Primary Nutrients which contribute to plant growth ?
1. Potassium
 2. Nitrogen
 3. Calcium
 4. Iron
- Select the correct answer code :
- (A) 1, 3, 4
 - (B) 1, 2
 - (C) 1, 2, 3
 - (D) 1, 2, 3, 4
41. Diversity for Restoration (D4R), often seen in the news, is associated with which of the following ?
- (A) Initiative of Human Rights to restore people displaced by Ukraine-Russia war
 - (B) Programme by United Nations for restoration of mangroves along the coasts in Pacific Countries
 - (C) It is a tool that aids in agroforestry and systematic restoration of the ecosystem
 - (D) It is the initiative of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to provide skilled employment to tribal people
42. Consider the following statements regarding Rhododendrons—
1. Most species are native to eastern Asia and the Himalayan region.
 2. It is the state flower of Arunachal Pradesh.
 3. All rhododendrons are deciduous.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) None
 - (B) Only One
 - (C) Only Two
 - (D) All three
43. Consider the following statements regarding Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).
1. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is a United Nations body that strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services.
 2. It is intended to serve a similar role to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
 3. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides secretariat services to IPBES.

- How many of the above statements are correct?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) All three (D) None
44. Consider the following statements regarding National Tiger Conservation Authority—
1. The National Tiger Conservation Authority has been fulfilling its mandate within the ambit of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
 2. Its mandate included setting up the Tiger Protection Force and funding the relocation of villages from the protected areas.
 3. It is headed by the Prime Minister of India.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) All three (D) None
45. The recently discovered life forms, *Actias smetaceki* and *Actias loeffleri*, are species of—
(A) Butterflies
(B) Birds
(C) Mammals
(D) Amphibians
46. Consider the following statements with respect to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)—
1. It is statutory organization constituted under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.
 2. It aims to improve the quality of air and to prevent, control or abate air pollution in the country.
- Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
47. Biodiversity Heritage Sites in India are protected under—
(A) Forest Conservation Act, 1980
(B) Environment Protection Act, 1986
(C) Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
(D) None of the above
48. Consider the following statements with respect to Montreal Protocol—
1. It is a global agreement to protect the Earth's ozone layer by phasing out the ozone-depleting chemicals.
 2. It includes both production and consumption of ozone-depleting chemicals.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
49. When coal is burned, it releases a number of airborne toxins and pollutants like—
1. Mercury
 2. Lead
 3. Sulfur dioxide
 4. Nitrogen oxides
 5. Heavy Metals
- How many of the above options are correct?
(A) Only two (B) Only three
(C) Only four (D) All five
50. Consider the following statements with respect to National Ganga River Basin Authority—
1. It is responsible for the implementation of the national mission for Clean Ganga.
 2. One of the Chief Ministers of the States through which the Ganga flows becomes the Chairman of NGRBA on rotation basis.
- Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
51. Consider the following statements regarding Mauryan art and architecture—
1. Stone was the principal building material.
 2. Lauria Nandangarh pillar in Champaran was built during the time of Ashoka.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
52. Consider the following statements about Temple Architecture—
1. The most characteristic feature is that they grow extremely complex with many projecting angles emerging from the previously square temple.
 2. Its plan looks familiar to a star and thus known as Stellate Plan.
 3. They are made out of soapstone, a relatively soft stone where sculptures were made intricately.
- The above statements describe which of the following architecture?
(A) Chola Temples
(B) Pandya Temples
(C) Vijayanagara Temples
(D) Hoysala Temples
53. Consider the following statements regarding religious practices of the Harappan civilization—
1. Linga worship was prevalent during Harappan civilization.
 2. Religion was strictly masculine and patriarchal in nature.
- Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
54. Consider the following statements in respect of the Indigo revolt—
1. Communal unity was observed throughout the revolt.
 2. Hem Chandra Kar was one of the prominent leaders of the peasants.
 3. The peasants maintained a great organisation and discipline.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
(A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 2 and 3
(C) Only 1 and 3
(D) All 1, 2 and 3

55. Consider the following statements about Ashokan Inscription—
1. Kandahar inscription is written in Greek and Aramaic languages.
 2. Ashoka is addressed as 'Devanampiya' in Aramaic language in Lampaka inscription in Afghanistan.
 3. James Prinsep, an officer of the East India Company deciphered both Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts used in the Ashokan Inscription.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2 and 3
(C) Only 1 and 3
(D) All 1, 2 and 3
56. 'Maseetkhani' style is associated with the family of—
- (A) Dara Sikoh
(B) Jahangir
(C) Ibrahim Lodi
(D) Tansen
57. Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Sikh Guru, is known for which of the following events ?
1. Foundation of Khalsa
 2. Introduction of 5 Ks among Sikhs
 3. Compilation of Adi Granth
 4. Construction of Golden Temple at Amritsar
- Select the correct answer using the code given below—
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 1 and 2
(C) Only 1, 2 and 3
(D) 1, 2, 3 and 4
58. What is the major theme running common between the Central Indian and Rajasthani schools of painting ?
- (A) They are rooted in the Indian traditions
(B) They use light colours to portray extra-terrestrial themes
(C) They are unaffected by historical developments and carry a unique style
(D) They are highly secular in nature
59. The first Famine Commission of British India under Sir Richard Strachey was appointed during the administration of—
- (A) Lord Canning
(B) Lord Lytton
(C) Lord Ripon
(D) Lord Lansdowne
60. Arrange the following treaties in the chronological order—
1. Treaty of Allahabad
 2. Treaty of Bassein
 3. Treaty of Srirangapatnam
- Select the correct answer code—
- (A) 3-1-2 (B) 1-2-3
(C) 1-3-2 (D) 3-2-1
61. Consider the following statements regarding Wood's Despatch—
1. It made English compulsory as the medium of instruction at all levels.
 2. It laid stress on female and vocational education.
 3. It laid down that the education imparted in government institutions must be secular.
- Which of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 3 (B) 1, 2
(C) 1, 2, 3 (D) 2, 3
62. Consider the following statements—
1. There were no evidence of musical instruments found at the sites of Indus valley civilization.
 2. Jaimini Brahmana speaks collectively of dance and music.
 3. In Hindustani music, Dhrupad is the pure music without distraction of words.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct ?
- (A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None
63. Consider the following statements about Lingaraj Temple—
1. It is one of the earliest structural temple still standing in its original condition, located in Aihole, Karnataka.
 2. It is dedicated to Lord Shiva.
 3. It is built in red sandstone in Kalinga Style of Architecture.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 2
(C) Only 2 and 3
(D) All 1, 2 and 3
64. Welby Commission setup in British India concerned an enquiry into the—
- (A) Royal Indian Navy (RIN) mutiny
(B) Atrocities of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre
(C) Educational reforms in Indian Universities
(D) Drain of wealth issue
65. Consider the following Pairs—
1. Lord Wellesley
—Subsidiary Alliance
 2. Lord Cornwallis
—Asiatic society of Bengal
 3. William Bentinck
—Abolition of Sati
- Which of the above given pairs is / are not correctly matched ?
- (A) Only 2
(B) Only 2 and 3
(C) All 1, 2 and 3
(D) None of the above
66. Consider the following Statements about Doctrine of Lapse—
1. Those states which, directly or indirectly, were created by the English would not be allowed to adopt heirs to their throne.
 2. Independent states were free to adopt their heirs.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
67. With reference to Buddhism, consider the following statements—
1. Dhyana Mudra, also called Samadhi, in which both the hands of the Buddha are on his lap facing upwards.
 2. The Abhaya Mudra signifies fearlessness and symbolises strength and energy security.
 3. Bhumisparsha Mudra was exhibited by Buddha while preaching the first sermon.

- Which of the statements given above is/ are correct ?
 (A) Only 1 and 2
 (B) Only 3
 (C) Only 2 and 3
 (D) None of the above
68. Consider the following statements regarding Kuchipudi—
 1. It is mentioned in Natya Shastra.
 2. As per tradition, the dance must be accompanied by live vocals and not music.
 3. It is recognized as an Indian classical dance.
 How many of the above statements is/ correct ?
 (A) Only one (B) Only two
 (C) All three (D) None
69. How the Mughal architecture is different from the architecture during the period of Delhi Sultanate ?
 1. The former used Red sandstones and Marbles while the latter used only Marbles.
 2. The former introduced Pietra dura ornamentation while the latter introduced Charbagh style of gardens.
 Select the correct answer using the codes given below—
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) Both 1 and 2
 (D) Neither 1 nor 2
70. With reference to various political organisations formed in the second half of 19th century, consider the following pairs—
- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Political Associations/ Organisations | Associated people/ Leaders |
|--|-----------------------------------|
- Landholders' Society — Debendranath Tagore
 - British India Association — Dwarkanath Tagore
 - Indian League — Sisir Kumar Ghosh
 - Madras Mahajan Sabha — P. Ananda Charlu
- Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched ?
 (A) Only 1 and 3
 (B) Only 1 and 2
 (C) Only 3 and 4
 (D) Only 2 and 4
71. Consider the following facts about a pioneer social reformer—
 1. He is widely considered to be the first journalist and editor in Marathi Language.
 2. He started a weekly Bombay Darpan in 1832 and Digdarshan in 1840.
 3. His many works include the books in history and math for children.
 Identify the personality—
 (A) Jagannath Sheth
 (B) Gopal Ganesh Agarkar
 (C) Tulsi Ram
 (D) Bal Shastri Jambhekar
72. Who among the following Governor General followed the policy of non interference in the affairs native states ?
 (A) Warren Hastings
 (B) John Shore
 (C) William Bentinck
 (D) Lord Hastings
73. Ahmadabad Mill Strike 1918 led by Gandhiji was based on the issue of—
 (A) Inhuman treatment of mill workers by the management
 (B) Objection of management on participation of workers in the freedom struggle
 (C) Plague Bonus of the previous year to workers
 (D) Large-scale layoffs of mill workers
74. In the Mughal Empire, Duaspa-Sihaspas means—
 (A) A Revenue system introduced by Akbar
 (B) A decorative method introduced by Shahjahan
 (C) A Sub rank in Sawar introduced by Jahangir
 (D) A new painting method introduced by Aurangzeb
75. The truly all-India nature of the Non-Cooperation-Khilafat upsurge is best indicated by its penetration of the south. Which one of the linguistic regions of south India, remained largely unaffected ?
 (A) Madras
 (B) Karnataka
 (C) Coastal Andhra
 (D) None of the above
76. What does the phrase 'financial inclusion' mean to you ?
 (A) A marketing strategy for luxury brands
 (B) The process of making financial services accessible to all individuals and businesses, especially those in underserved or remote areas
 (C) A stock market trading technique
 (D) The exclusive financial services offered to high-networth individuals
77. World Economic Outlook is published by which organisation ?
 (A) World Bank
 (B) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
 (C) World Trade Organisation (WTO)
 (D) Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
78. With reference to Internal Ombudsman Scheme for Scheduled Banks, consider the following statements—
 1. There is no provision of statutory powers under this scheme.
 2. Scheduled commercial Banks in India have an Internal Ombudsman and they are appointed from within bank staff.
 3. It is not applicable for Regional Rural Banks.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 3
 (B) Only 1 and 3
 (C) Only 2 and 3
 (D) All 1, 2 and 3
79. Consider the following pairs regarding the idea of planning in India—
 1. Visvesvaraya Plan – Focus on shifting the labour from industrial sector to agriculture sector.
 2. Gandhian Plan – Emphasis on cottage and village level industries.
 3. Bombay Plan – Emphasised on the development of essential consumer goods industries in India.

How many of the above statements is/are correct ?

- (A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) All three (D) None

80. Consider the following statements, with reference to Gig economy—

1. In a gig economy, jobs are permanent and flexible in nature.
2. The gig economy tends to be costlier but efficient in nature.

Which of the statement given above is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

81. Consider the following statements—

1. A product is said to be dumped when the product has been exported at a price below normal value in Indian markets.
2. Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), imposes antidumping duties in India.
3. Antidumping duty is imposed based on the recommendations of Union Finance Ministry's investigation arm, the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR).

How many of the above statements is/are correct ?

- (A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None

82. Consider the following statements regarding Carbon nanotubes (CNT)—

1. Carbon Nanotubes (CNT) are cylindrical molecules consisting of rolled-up sheets of single-layer carbon atoms, namely, graphene.
2. Carbon nanotubes are used in applications that require high strength, electrical conductivity and thermal conductivity as compared to the other conventional materials.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect ?

- (A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

83. Which of the following is not an artificial sweetener ?

- (A) ASPARTAME
(B) Sucralose
(C) Sucrose
(D) Alitame

84. In the context of cybersecurity, what are Botnets ?

- (A) A stand-alone malware computer programme that replicates itself in order to spread to other computers
(B) Network of private computers infected with malicious software and controlled as a group without the owners' knowledge
(C) A set of web pages that may intentionally be used to cause a web crawler to make an infinite number of requests
(D) A computer programme designed to assist in the sending of spam

85. Which of the following are the inventions/fields that employ Quantum Science ?

1. Semiconductor transistors.
2. Creation of thermoelectric materials.
3. Clean energy.
4. Lasers.
5. Secure communication.
6. Study of Gravity and Blackholes.

Select the correct answer using the code given below—

- (A) Only 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
(B) Only 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6
(C) Only 2, 3, 5 and 6
(D) All 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

86. With reference to 'Hydrothermal Carbonisation Technology (HTC)', consider the following statements—

1. HTC technology is aimed at the conversion of wet biomass into hydro-char under suitable temperature and pressure conditions.
2. It has the lowest greenhouse gas emissions of any organic

waste to the biofuel conversion process.

3. It has a very high carbon efficiency of more than 80 per cent when compared to the anaerobic digestion and composting process.

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

- (A) Only 1 and 2
(B) Only 2 and 3
(C) Only 1 and 3
(D) All 1, 2 and 3

87. Consider the following—

1. Food irradiation
2. Carbon dating
3. Desalination
4. Sterilisation
5. Insect control
6. Plant mutation and breeding

Which of the above mentioned are the applications of nuclear technology ?

- (A) Only 1, 2 and 5
(B) Only 1, 2, 3 and 6
(C) Only 1, 2, 3, and 4
(D) All 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6

88. Consider the following statements regarding Artemis program—

1. The Artemis program is a robotic Moon exploration program led by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).
2. The program's long-term goal is to establish a permanent base on the Moon, to facilitate human missions to Mars became feasible.
3. The Artemis program attempts to study the possibility of running the International Space Station from the surface of the moon.

How many of the above statements is/are correct ?

- (A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) All three (D) None

89. 'Synthetic DNA technology' aims at—

- (A) Altering genetic material outside an organism to obtain desired characteristics
(B) Adding, removing or altering genetic material to be at particular locations in the genome

- (C) Creation of self-replicating artificial synthetic cells
(D) Regulation of gene expression in a cell to prevent the expression of a certain gene
90. The phenomenon of increasing concentration of a substance, such as a toxic chemical, in the tissues of tolerant organisms at successively higher levels in a food chain is known as:
(A) Bioaccumulation
(B) Biosparging
(C) Biomagnification
(D) Biodilution
91. Consider the following statements about the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)—
1. It is a statutory body of the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
2. It was established under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, but was founded in 1990.
3. It is a nodal body for the adoption of Indian children.
How many of the above statements are correct?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) All three (D) None
92. Consider the following statements with respect to World Local Production Forum—
1. The platform is an initiative of the World Trade Organisation that aims to increase access to medicines and other health technologies.
2. The 2nd edition of World Local Production Forum was held recently at New Delhi, India.
Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
93. Consider the following statements regarding 'Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII)'—
1. It is an infrastructure plan launched by the European Union (EU).
2. It aims to mobilize up to USD 600 billion by 2027.
- Which of the above-mentioned statements are correct?
(a) Only 1
(b) Only 2
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
94. Recently, 'NEST initiative' was in the news. It is launched by which one of the following institutes/organisations?
(A) Indian Green Building Council (IGBC)
(B) National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER)
(C) Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)
(D) National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM)
95. With reference to Intellectual Property Rights Policy 2016, consider the following statements—
1. It is entirely in compliant with the WTO's agreement on TRIPS
2. It aims to remove Compulsory Licensing clauses from India's Patents Act.
Which of the above statements is/are correct?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2
96. The flagship Shakti scheme of Karnataka's state government is directly related to—
(A) Promoting women SHGs
(B) Public transportation facilities for women
(C) Socio-cultural empowerment of women
(D) Promoting traditional textiles
97. Consider the following nations—
1. Egypt 2. Syria
3. Lebanon 4. Jordan
5. Israel
How many of the above nations share borders with the Gaza strip?
(A) Only one (B) Only two
(C) Only three (D) Only four
98. Consider the following statements about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)—
1. It is the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons.
2. It was passed in 1974 after India conducted its first nuclear test.
3. The treaty prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of nuclear weapons for all the UN member countries.
How many of the above statements are correct?
(A) Only one
(B) Only two
(C) All three
(D) None
99. Which organisation releases Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI)?
(A) World Bank
(B) IMF
(C) UNESCO
(D) Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)
100. Consider the following statements about United Nations Commission on International Trade Law—
1. It is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly of the United Nations.
2. It is responsible for helping to facilitate international trade and investment.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(A) Only 1
(B) Only 2
(C) Both 1 and 2
(D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answers with Hints

1. (B) The backward classes are not currently defined under the Indian Constitution, but they refer to economically and academically underprivileged individuals compared to other social groups. The National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC), established in 1993, is a constitutional body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

NCBC shall perform other supplementary tasks based on the development, protection, welfare, and progress of the socially and academically underprivileged that the President shall appoint by regulation, bound by the rules of any Parliament laws.

2. (D) 3. (C) 4. (D)
5. (C) If the Centre wants to hold simultaneous polls, five amendments need to be made in the Constitution. Article 83, which deals with the duration of Houses of Parliament, will have to be tweaked, along with Article 85 (dissolution of Lok Sabha by the President), Article 172 (duration of state legislatures), Article 174 (dissolution of state assemblies) and Article 356 (President's Rule).
6. (B) The GST Council is a constitutional body responsible for making recommendations on issues related to the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India. As per Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution, the GST Council was constituted by the President.
7. (B) First Lok Sabha met in 1952 Under GV Mavalankar. The Indian Independence Act 1947 merely converted India into a British dominion. It ceased to be dominion only after January 26, 1950. Till 1952, the Constituent Assembly itself functioned as the law-making body. The Lok Sabha was duly constituted for the first time on April 17, 1952 after the first General Elections.
8. (A) The Vice-President is elected by an electoral college consisting of members of both Houses of Parliament, in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote and the voting in such election is by secret ballot. The Electoral College to elect a person to the office of the Vice-President consists of all members of both Houses of Parliament.
9. (D) National Green Tribunal is a statutory body which was established on October 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010 for effective and expedi-

tious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources. The Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, but shall be guided by principles of natural justice.

10. (A)
11. (A) The Tenth Schedule was inserted in the Constitution in 1985 by the 52nd Amendment Act. It lays down the process by which legislators may be disqualified on grounds of defection by the Presiding Officer of a legislature based on a petition by any other member of the House. The decision on the question as to disqualification on the ground of defection is referred to the Chairman or the Speaker of such House, and his decision is final. The law applies to both Parliament and state assemblies.
12. (A) 13. (C) 14. (C) 15. (D)
16. (B) The Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India was created by the Constitution. He is the head of the Indian Audit & account department and the chief Guardian of Public purse. It is the institution through which the accountability of the government and other public authorities (all those who spend public funds) to Parliament and State Legislatures and through them to the people is ensured.
17. (A)
18. (B) Article 131 of the Constitution provides for state to move directly to the Supreme Court in matters of dispute with the Centre.
19. (B)
20. (A) Article 356 empowers the President to issue a proclamation, if he is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the government of a state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Notably, the president can act either on a report of the governor of the state or otherwise too (ie, even without the governor's report).

A proclamation imposing President's Rule must be approved by both the Houses of Parliament within two months from the date of its issue. If approved by both the Houses of Parliament, the President's Rule continues for six months.

21. (D)
22. (A) It is the convergence of three lunar occurrences—a full moon, a Super moon and Blue moon. Blue moon refers to the second full moon within a single month a rare event since full moons typically occur once a month. Super moon happens when the moon is passing through or is close to perigee and is also full moon.
23. (A) An aurora, sometimes referred to as polar lights, northern lights (aurora borealis) or southern lights (aurora australis), is a natural light display in the Earth's sky, predominantly seen in the high latitude regions (around the Arctic and Antarctic). Auroras are produced when the magnetosphere is sufficiently disturbed by the solar wind. It usually occurs in upper atmosphere (thermosphere/exosphere) due to Earth's magnetic field.
24. (C) The monsoon rainfall has a declining trend with increasing distance from the sea. The average annual rainfall in India is about 125 cm, but it has great spatial variations. The highest rainfall occurs along the west coast, on the Western Ghats, as well as in the sub-Himalayan areas in the northeast and the hills of Meghalaya. Here the rainfall exceeds 200 cm.
25. (D) Due to geological changes, molten rocks formed in the deeper hot regions of earth's crust are pushed upward and trapped in certain regions called 'hot spots'. When underground water comes in contact with the hot spot, steam is generated. Sometimes hot water from that region finds outlets at the surface. Such outlets are known as hot springs.
26. (C) India is the world leader in the production of millets with share of around 41% of total

world production in 2020. India produces around 12 million MT of millets annually. Currently, India is the fifth largest exporter of millets in the world.

In 2021, India had proposed to United Nations for declaring 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYOM). The proposal of India got support from 72 countries and United Nation's General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2023 as International Year of Millets.

27. (D)
28. (C) Mediterranean Region is located on the western margins of continents between 30° to 45° North and south latitudes. This includes places from Europe, South America, North America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. The Mediterranean region is characterized by warm dry summers and cool wet winters. There is moderate rainfall during the winter months. The main crops are wheat, olives, vine, citrus fruits, barley, etc.
29. (C) Fold Mountains are created where two or more of Earth's tectonic plates are pushed together. At these colliding, compressing boundaries, rocks and debris are warped and folded into rocky outcrops, hills, mountains, and entire mountain ranges. The Himalayan Mountains and the Alps are young fold mountains with rugged relief and high conical peaks. The Appalachians in North America and the Ural Mountains in Russia have rounded features and low elevation. They are very old fold mountains.
30. (C) A 'Cyclonic Storm' or a 'Cyclone' is an intense vortex or a whirl in the atmosphere with very strong winds circulating around it in an anti-clockwise direction in the Northern Hemisphere and in a clockwise direction in the Southern Hemisphere. The centre of a cyclone is a calm area. It is called the eye of the storm. The diameter of the eye varies between 30 and 50 km and is a region free of clouds and has light winds.

31. (A) The speed of tsunami depends on Ocean depth rather than the distance from the source of the wave. Tsunami waves may travel as fast as jet planes over deep waters, only slowing down when reaching shallow waters.
32. (D)
33. (B) The wind is broadly divided into three types :
- **Permanent Winds** : The trade winds, westerlies and easterlies, constantly blow throughout the year in a particular direction.
 - **Seasonal Winds** : Winds change their direction according to the seasons. For example, monsoons in India.
 - **Local Winds** : Winds blow only during a particular period of the day or year in a small area. For example, land and sea breeze, and loo.
34. (A) Amazon rainforest covers approximately eight million square kilometres—an area larger than Australia. Comprising about 40% of Brazil's total area, it is bounded by the Guiana Highlands to the north, the Andes Mountains to the west, the Brazilian central plateau to the south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the east.
35. (C) Solar zenith Angles is closely related to the solar altitude angle, which is the angle between the sun's rays and a horizontal plane. At solar noon, the zenith angle is at a minimum and is equal to latitude minus solar declination angle. This is the basis by which ancient mariners navigated the oceans.
36. (C) Red soil develops on crystalline igneous rocks in areas of low rainfall in the eastern and southern part of the Deccan Plateau. Along the piedmont zone of the Western Ghats, long stretch of area is occupied by red loamy soil. Yellow and red soils are also found in parts of Odisha and Chhattisgarh and in the southern parts of the middle Ganga plain. The soil develops a reddish colour due to a wide diffusion of iron in crystalline and metamorphic rocks. It looks yellow when it occurs in a

hydrated form. The fine-grained red and yellow soils are normally fertile, whereas coarse-grained soils found in dry upland areas are poor in fertility. They are generally poor in nitrogen, phosphorous and humus.

37. (C) The Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) had developed a framework and action plan for the effective prevention and control of stubble burning. The framework/action plan includes in-situ management, *i.e.*, incorporation of paddy straw and stubble in the soil using heavily subsidised machinery (supported by crop residue management (CRM) Scheme of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare). Ex-situ CRM efforts include the use of paddy straw for biomass power projects and co-firing in thermal power plants, and as feedstock for 2G ethanol plants, feed stock in CBG plants, fuel in industrial boilers, waste-to-energy (WTE) plants, and in packaging materials etc.
38. (A) Aphelion is the point of the Earth's orbit that is farthest away from the Sun. Aphelion always happens in 4th July, which is about two weeks after the June solstice, Earth is farthest from the Sun. Perihelion is the point of the Earth's orbit that is nearest to the Sun. Perihelion always happens on 4th January which is about two weeks after the December Solstice, Earth is closest to the Sun.
39. (D) Dzūko Valley hill station is located in the border of the state of Nagaland and Manipur at an altitude of 2,452 meters.
40. (B)
41. (C) Diversity for Restoration (D4R) is a tool that enables appropriate agroforestry and aids systematic ecosystem restoration. Diversity for Restoration (D4R) tool was devised by Biodiversity International. It was later modified by Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) to adapt it to the Indian context. The tool

will help improve the effectiveness of restoration programmes by providing manifold benefits to interested stakeholders while promoting sustainable development.

42. (B) Rhododendron is a genus of woody plants in the heath family (Ericaceae). They can be either evergreen or deciduous. Most species are native to eastern Asia and the Himalayan region, but smaller numbers occur elsewhere in Asia, and in North America, Europe and Australia. It is the state flower of Nagaland and Himachal Pradesh and the state tree of Sikkim and Uttarakhand. Most species have brightly coloured flowers which bloom from late winter through to early summer.

43. (B) The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is an independent inter-governmental body established by States to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development.

It was established in Panama City, on 21 April, 2012 by 94 Governments. It is not a United Nations body. However, at the request of the IPBES Plenary and with the authorization of the UNEP Governing Council in 2013, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provides secretariat services to IPBES. It is intended to serve a similar role to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

44. (B) The National Tiger Conservation Authority is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. The National Tiger Conservation Authority has been fulfilling its mandate within the ambit of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Set up under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Environment and Forests.

The NTCA had more power to check poaching and preserve the

tiger population. Its mandate included setting up the Tiger Protection Force and funding the relocation of villages from the protected areas.

45. (A)
46. (D) The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the statutory organization, was constituted in September 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. Further, CPCB was entrusted with the powers and functions under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

It aims to promote cleanliness of streams and wells in different areas of the States by prevention, control and abatement of water pollution and improve the quality of air and to prevent, control or abate air pollution in the country.

47. (D) The concept of Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS), conceived under Section 37 of India's Biological Diversity Act, 2002, was one of the most imaginative steps taken to protect these vanishing biodiversity-rich regions.

48. (C) 49. (D)
50. (B) The national Ganga river basin authority was replaced by the National Ganga Council under River Ganga (Rejuvenation, Protection, and Management) Authorities Order, 2016. The National Ganga Council is chaired by the Prime Minister and the Union Minister for Jal Shakti is its vice-chairperson. It is responsible for the implementation of the national mission for Clean Ganga.

51. (B) The palace of Chandragupta Maurya was inspired by the Achaemenid palaces at Persepolis in Iran. Wood was the principal building material. During the time of Ashoka, the inscription of pillars as a symbol of the state or to commemorate battle victories assumed a great significance. He also used pillars to propagate imperial sermons as well. Example : Lauria Nandangarh pillar in Champaran, Sarnath pillar near Varanasi, etc.

52. (D) All the given statements describe Hoysala temple archi-

itecture. The Hoysaleswara temple (Lord of the Hoysalas) at Halebid in Karnataka was built in dark schist stone by the Hoysala King in 1150. They are sometimes called hybrid or vesara as their unique style seems neither completely dravida nor nagara.

53. (A) The chief male deity was Pashupati, (proto-Siva) represented in seals as sitting in a yogic posture with three faces and two horns. In latter times, Linga worship was prevalent. The chief female deity was the Mother Goddess, which shows that the religion was not strictly masculine in nature. She was represented in terracotta figurines.

54. (C) The revolt was under the leadership of Digambar Biswas and Bishnu Biswas, ex-employees of a planter, they gave up indigo cultivation.

55. (D) Ashokan inscription is found in 2 places in Afghanistan – Kandahar and Lampaka. Kandahar inscription is bilingual – written in Greek and Aramaic. In Lampaka, written in Aramaic language, Ashoka is addressed as 'Devanampiya'.

James Prinsep, an officer in the mint of the East India Company, deciphered Brahmi and Kharosthi, two scripts used in the earliest inscriptions and coins. He found that most of these mentioned a king referred to as Piyadasi – meaning 'pleasant to behold'.

56. (D)
57. (B) Guru Ramdas - 4th Guru - founded the city of Amritsar and designed the gurdwara Harmandir Sahib

Guru Arjan - 5th Guru - completed the construction of Amritsar, Compiled and installed the Adi Granth. He built the Harmandir Sahib.

Guru Gobind Singh - the 10th and last guru - contributions to the Five Ks, initiating the Sikh Khalsa in 1699.

58. (C) The art of painting in Central India, Rajasthani and the Pahari region etc. is deeply rooted in the Indian traditions, taking inspiration from Indian epics,

religious texts like the Puranas, love poems in Sanskrit and other Indian languages, Indian folklore and works on musical themes. The cults of Vaishnavism, Saivism and Sakti exercised tremendous influence on the pictorial art of these places. Among these the cult of Krishna was the most popular one which inspired the patrons and artists.

59. (B) Richard Strachey commission of 1880 was created to develop a general strategy and principles to deal with famines. It was the first Famine Commission and was constituted during the period of Lord Lytton.

60. (C) The Treaty of Allahabad was signed on 12 August, 1765, between the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II, son of the late Emperor Alamgir II, and Robert Clive, of the East India Company, as a result of the Battle of Buxar of 22 October, 1764.

The Treaty of Seringapatam was signed on 18 March, 1792 at the end of the Third Anglo-Mysore War.

The Treaty of Bassein was a pact signed on 31 December, 1802 between the British East India Company and Baji Rao II, the Maratha Peshwa of Pune in India after the Battle of Poona.

61. (D) Wood's Despatch recommended English as the medium of instruction for higher studies only.

62. (B) Musical instruments like seven-holed flute and Ravana-hatha, have been recovered from the sites of Indus Valley Civilization. The Jaimini Brahmana speaks collectively of dance and music. Dhrupad is pure music without distraction of words.

63. (C) Ekamravan Kshetra or Lingaraj Temple was built in 11th century AD, is dedicated to Lord Shiva, it is the largest temple of Bhubaneswar. It is believed to have been built by the Somvanshi King Yayati I. It is built in red stone and is a classic example of Kalinga style of architecture.

64. (D) Dadabhai Naoroji in his famous book Poverty and Un-

British Rule in India wrote his Drain Theory. He showed how India's wealth was going away to England in the form of : (a) salaries, (b) savings, (c) pensions, (d) payments to British troops in India and (e) profits of the British companies.

The British Government was forced to appoint the Welby Commission, with Dadabhai as the first Indian as its member, to enquire into the Matter. The Welby Commission's report, published in 1900, showed a number of cases where excessive or unjust payments had been made by the Indian government.

65. (A) The Asiatic Society was founded by Sir William Jones on 15 January, 1784 at the Fort William in Calcutta.

66. (C) According to the doctrine, the adopted son could be the heir to his foster father's private property, but not the state. It was for the paramount power (the British) to decide whether to bestow the state on the adopted son or to annex it. Those states which, directly or indirectly, were created by the English would not be allowed to adopt heirs to their throne. Independent states which were not under the control of the British were free to adopt their heirs.

67. (A) The Dhyana Mudra is the Gesture of Meditation and of the concentration of the Good Law. In this Mudra, two hands are placed on the lap, right hand on left hand with fingers fully stretched and palms facing upwards. It is also called Samadhi. The Abhaya Mudra (mudra of no-fear) represents protection, peace, benevolence, and dispelling of fear. Dharmachakra Mudra was exhibited by Lord Buddha while preaching the first sermon.

68. (B) Kuchipudi has its roots in the ancient Hindu Sanskrit text of Natya Shastra. Like all major classical dances of India, it was also developed as a religious art linked to traveling bards, temples and spiritual beliefs. The Kuchipudi style was conceived by Siddhendra Yogi, a talented

Vaishnava poet of 17th century. It is one of the major Indian classical dances.

It begins with an invocation to Lord Ganesha followed by Nritya (non-narrative and abstract dancing); Shabdham (narrative dancing) and Natya. The dance is accompanied by song which is typically Carnatic music. The singer is accompanied by musical instruments like Mridangam, Violin, Flute and Tambura.

69. (D) The first major difference between the two is the aesthetics of the buildings, starting from the stone used in construction. Delhi sultanate used the local stones, mostly from nearby Aravalis, the Mughals were partial to Red Sandstone and marbles, hence the Mughal forts, and buildings look more beautiful (Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort both in Delhi and Agra) Charbagh is a Persian-style garden layout, in which the main building is put at the centre of a quadrilateral garden, divided by walkways or flowing.

70. (C) In 1838, to protect the interests of the landlords, the Zamindari Association (popularly known as the Landholders' Society) was established by Dwarkanath Tagore in Bengal.

British Indian Association, was founded on October 29, 1851 at Calcutta with Raja Radhakanta dev and Debendranath Tagore as its President and Secretary respectively.

The Indian League was started in 1875 by Sisir Kumar Ghosh with the object of "stimulating the sense of nationalism amongst the people" and of encouraging political education.

The Madras Mahajan Sabha was founded in 1884 by M. Viraraghavachari, B. Subramaniya Aiyer and P. Anandacharlu.

71. (D) Balshastri Jambhekar known as the 'Father of Marathi Journalism'. He is renowned for his contributions in the field of print media and social awareness. He was one of those social activists who made continuous effort in generating useful and healthy consciousness amongst the com-

- mon masses and attempted to educate the uneducated.
72. (B) John Shore has served as Governor-General of Bengal from 1793 to 1797. He played an important role in the introduction of the permanent settlement of 1793. He was famous for his policy of non-interference.
73. (C) In March 1918, Gandhi intervened in a dispute between cotton mill owners of Ahmedabad and the workers over the issue of discontinuation of the plague bonus. Gandhi asked the workers to go on a strike and demand a 35 per cent increase in wages. Gandhi advised the workers to remain non-violent while on strike. He himself undertook a fast unto death (his first) to strengthen the workers' resolve. The result was that the strike was successful and the workers got a 35% wage increase.
74. (C) Mansabdari system was introduced by Akbar. Mansabdars are individuals who hold office in the Mughal system. They were given Zat rank (Salary and Prestige) and Sawar rank (Military status based on Horse numbers) This system was extended by Jahangir. He added Duaspa (2 horses) and Sihaspa (3 horses) under Sawar rank. He made it not hereditary and not transferrable.
75. (B) Of the four linguistic regions in India, only Karnatak remained largely unaffected by the Non-Cooperation movement as its political awakening would come in the 1930s.
76. (B) Financial inclusion refers to the effort to provide access to essential financial services (e.g., banking, credit, insurance,) and products to individuals and communities, especially those traditionally underserved or excluded from the formal banking system. The RBI's financial inclusion (FI) index shows financial inclusion is improving in India.
77. (B)
78. (A) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had advised all public-sector and select private and foreign banks to appoint Internal Ombudsman (IO) as an independent authority to review complaints that were partially or wholly rejected by the respective banks. The Scheme has been envisaged using powers under Section 35 A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. So it does have statutory powers. As per the scheme, all Scheduled Commercial Banks in India having more than ten banking outlets (excluding Regional Rural Banks), are required to appoint IO in their banks.
79. (B) In 1934, Sir M. Visvesvaraya had published a book titled "Planned Economy in India", in which he presented a constructive draft of the development of India in next ten years. His core idea was to lay out a plan to shift labour from agriculture to industries and double up National income in ten years. In the light of the basic principles of Gandhian economics, S.N. Agarwal authored 'The Gandhian Plan' in 1944 in which he put emphasis on the expansion of small unit production and agriculture. Its fundamental feature was decentralisation of economic structure with self-contained villages and cottage industries. The Bombay Plan emphasizes the importance of basic industries, but also calls for the development of consumption goods industries in the early years of the plan.
80. (D) In a gig economy, temporary, flexible jobs are commonplace and companies tend toward hiring independent contractors and freelancers instead of full-time employees. Due to the large numbers of people willing to work part-time or temporary positions, the result of a gig economy is cheaper, more efficient services, such as Uber or Airbnb, for those willing to use them.
81. (B) Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) imposes antidumping duties. These duties are imposed following recommendations of the Commerce Ministry's investigation arm, the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR). The DGTR, conclude that these products have been exported at a price below normal value in Indian markets, which has resulted in dumping.
82. (D) Carbon Nanotubes (CNT) are cylindrical molecules consisting of rolled-up sheets of single-layer carbon atoms, namely, graphene. Carbon Nanotubes are used in applications that require high strength, electrical conductivity, durability, lightweight properties, and thermal conductivity as compared to the other conventional materials. Rapid demand for CNT in integrated circuits, lithium batteries, fuel cells, drug delivery, solar PV cells, hydrogen storage, and field emission displays is contributing to market growth.
83. (C) Sucrose, commonly known as 'table sugar' or 'cane sugar', is a carbohydrate formed from the combination of glucose and fructose. It is a natural sugar.
84. (B) Botnet is a combination of the words robot and network. Botnets have been identified as growing security threat. A network of private computers infected with malicious software and controlled as a group without the owners' knowledge, e.g., to send spam.
85. (D) Quantum Science is a wide area of research and therefore its applications are also diverse in nature and hence all the given statements are applicable.
86. (D) This technology converts organic fraction of MSW into hydrochar by using a batch reactor. It has the lowest greenhouse gas emissions of any organic waste to biofuel conversion process.
87. (D)
88. (B) The Artemis program is a robotic and human Moon exploration program led by the United States' National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) along with three partner agencies—the European Space Agency (ESA), the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and the Canadian Space Agency (CSA). The Artemis program is intended to re-establish a human presence on the Moon for the first time

since the Apollo 17 mission in 1972. The main parts of the program are the Space Launch System (SLS), the Orion spacecraft, the Lunar Gateway space station, and the commercial Human Landing Systems. The program's long-term goal is to establish a permanent base on the Moon, to facilitate human missions to Mars became feasible.

89. (C)

90. (C) Biomagnification, also known as bioamplification or biological magnification, is the increasing concentration of a substance, such as a toxic chemical, in the tissues of tolerant organisms at successively higher levels in a food chain.

91. (B) Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is a statutory body of the Ministry of Women & Child Development. It was established under Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, but was founded in 1990. It is a nodal body for the adoption of Indian children. CARA is India's adoption regulation body, overseeing the adoption of orphaned, surrendered, and abandoned children.

CARA monitors and regulates various adoption-related bodies, facilitating a seamless adoption process involving registration, home study reports, referrals, court petitions, and post-adoption follow-ups.

92. (D) The 2nd edition of the World Local Production Forum is scheduled to be held at Netherlands. The World Local Production Platform is a platform created at the initiative of World Health Organisation with the aim of increasing access to medicines and other health technologies.

This forum provides Member States and the global community with a regular platform to shape strategies, galvanize collective action, and foster partnerships on sustainable local production. It aids to improve timely and equitable access to quality assured health products.

93. (B) Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) is the infrastructure plan was first announced during the G7 summit in the UK and officially launched in 2022. G7 countries are UK, USA, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the European Union (EU). It aims to mobilize up to USD 600 billion by 2027. It will narrow the infrastructure gap in developing countries and accelerate progress on SDGs globally.

94. (A) Nest Initiative is a new rating and certification initiative for green buildings launched by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC). its aim to encourage individual house owners and the residential sector to adopt green building features. It emphasizes on reducing electricity consumption, water usage, and creating healthy living spaces. IGBC, a part of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was formed in the year 2001.

95. (A) Intellectual Property Rights Policy which is in compliance with WTO's (World Trade Organisation) agreement on TRIPS (Trade Related aspects of IPRs), aims to sustain entrepreneurship.

As per the WTO norms, a CL can be invoked by a government allowing a company to produce a patented product without the consent of the patent owner in public interest. Under the Indian Patents Act, a CL can be issued for a drug if the medicine is deemed unaffordable, among other conditions, and the government grants permission to qualified generic drug makers to manufacture it.

96. (B) The flagship Shakti scheme of Karnataka's state government allows women to travel free on non-luxury public transport buses.

97. (B) The Gaza Strip is a self-governing Palestinian territory on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It borders Egypt on the southwest and Israel on the east and north.

98. (A) The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), or

the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, is the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons, with the goal of leading towards their total elimination. It was adopted on 7 July 2017, opened for signature on 20 September, 2017, and entered into force on 22 January, 2021.

For those nations that are party to it, the treaty prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, stationing, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as assistance and encouragement to the prohibited activities. For nuclear armed states joining the treaty, it provides for a time-bound framework for negotiations leading to the verified and irreversible elimination of its nuclear weapons programme.

99. (A) World Bank releases Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI). The SPI framework focuses on five key pillars of a country's statistical performance: (i) data use, (ii) data services, (iii) data products, (iv) data sources, and (v) data infrastructure. The SPI will replace the Statistical Capacity Indicator (SCI) that the World Bank has regularly published since 2004.

100. (C) The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) (established in 1966) is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly of the United Nations with the general mandate to further the progressive harmonization and unification of the law of international trade.

UNCITRAL is a legal body with universal membership that specializes in commercial law reform worldwide. It has been working for over 50 years to modernize and harmonize rules on international business. UNCITRAL's primary goal is to facilitate international trade by creating legal frameworks and instruments that promote fairness, transparency, and efficiency in cross-border commercial transactions.





Time is More Precious Than Money

—Digvijay Kumar

Time and money, these are two very important things in a person's life. Both are important, and utilizing time in doing productive things earns us money. But, is the vice-versa true?

Can utilizing money in any way earn us the time that has been spent? No that's why time becomes more precious than money in human life. Four thousand weeks is the average lifespan



Digvijay Kumar

of a person living in the modern world. With exercise and healthy living, we may push this number out a couple of months. Then again a disease or accident may just as easily cut it short. Give or take, 4000 weeks is all the time we have to build the life we want. So time has got a quantity and limitation in our life. What about money? Can anyone accurately predict what amount of money we will earn approximately in our whole life? There is no approximation of it. It is limitless, uncountable and varies a lot as per situations of life. But time doesn't. Time in our life is fixed. Once we have spent, for example, ₹100, then there are chances we will earn back more than that. But once 24 hours of our life has been spent away, there is no way to earn it back, not even a single second. It just keeps deducting in our life. Something which is limited in life always becomes important. It's something we all understand on a gut level that our time is limited, and that makes it the most precious resource we have, even more precious than money.

Ofcourse, money is necessary. We need it to buy food, pay bills, prepare for retirement and perform other daily things in our life. To build happier, more meaningful lives, we should not disburse our time in the pursuit of money, but we should use our money to better facilitate our time. Money is the best possible out-

put of our time. Any time not spent earning money is time spent wasting it. The entire field of Finance is based on the 'time value of money'. But time and money are not equivalent resources. If we measure a resource's value based on its scarcity, then time should be for more cherished because we can always increase our supply of money, but there is no miracle in this world to increase the amount of time that we get in our life. Thus, time becomes much precious than money.

We earn more money by negotiating raises, earning promotions, or changing professions. We can sell products for more than their costs, save money to spend when it is more advantageous, or invest our money to create capital to draw from later. One can even steal money. But the same cannot be said for time. The time we spend in one pursuit can never be recovered and exchanged for something else. We cannot save our time for a more favourable season nor invest it to create more later. And while we can gain a lot from our time spent—education, health, and yes, money—those things cannot be converted back into time. Research shows that people who value time over money enjoy greater subjective well-being. They also have better social connections, healthier family relationships and greater job satisfaction. And this isn't because time-affluent people simply work less. According to one survey, they work about as much as their money-centric peers. The difference is that time-valuing participants favoured 'intrinsically rewarding activities', meaning the time spent at work was more valuable to them than just a paycheck. Even if we observe successful people, one thing common in all of them is that they respect time. They are punctual, have a good routine, and are good at managing their time. They know to wait calmly for the perfect time so they develop patience. They humbly give their time to other, earning each other's respect. And

money they surely earn. But for them, time is more important than money.

If we consider the education system in India, then be it a child of a rich parent or a poor parent. Both of these children have to undergo 12 years of basic school education to become educated and eligible for higher education. It is not that if a child is rich so he can cut short 12 years of school education to a lesser time. Money has got nothing to do with the time necessary for education. Time here is more precious than money. It is said that health is real wealth. And a good health comes when we follow a proper nutritious diet, give time to exercises and fitness in life, give time to proper sleep. If time is given to healthy habits, life becomes healthier and we become wealthy in life. Again, the concept of time comes here. The way we spend our time in life gives us good health, the real wealth. Thus, time becomes more important than the money. In daily life, how do military operations become successful? The soldiers and the weapon are important, but more important is following the times fixed in the mission. However expensive weapon may be used, but it is of no use if mission is not executed in pre-decided time. Following time already decided leads to perfect execution of plan and success of mission. A little delay in time, and the element of surprise goes away, leading to failure of mission. Thus even here time is more precious than everything else.

We can also learn the importance of time from Mother Nature. The arrival of different seasons, day and night changes, sunrise and sunset, and earth rotation demonstrate the correct use of time. All they offer is nothing, but effective use of time to prevent chaos. It does not happen that pleasant monsoon will stay a little longer in a rich country and it won't come in a poor country.

Continued on Page 179

Test Your Knowledge

Answers with Hints

- (B) Snow crabs, normally live in cold water with average temperature 2 C. However, they can survive upto 12 C. Basically, it was not the heat that killed crabs, but the warming marine waters triggered off a chain of ecological events that resulted in not enough food for the crabs, causing them to starve to death.
- (C)
- (A) The traditional Tamil Lambadi embroidery design are all geometrical patterns with squares, rectangles and circles. They have also been influenced by the local forests, birds, fruits and flowers.
- (D)
- (B) Preventive detention of a person is possible only in NSA and CoFEPoSA.
- (D) Foundation day of Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh was 1 November, 1956, while Haryana was formed on 1 November, 1966. Chhattisgarh was formed on 1 November, 2000.
- (A) Followers of 'Sarna' are the worshippers of Nature (Jal, Jangal and Jameen). They are largely concentrated in the tribal belt of states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Assam.
- (C) Sri Lanka became the first nation in the world in 1994, when Sirimavo Bandarnaike was the PM and her daughter Chandrika Kumaratunga was the President.
- (B) Shabnam 'Mausi' Bano was elected as a MLA in 1998 to Madhya Pradesh Assembly. She is a transgender.
- (A)
- (B) Non-cooperation movement was launched by the Mahatma Gandhi on 4 September, 1920, while Khilafat Movement was launched by the Muslims over British policy against Turkey.
- (A) 13. (D)
- (A) Seven Committees were constituted in the Constitution Assembly : (i) Drafting Committee – Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, (ii) Flag Committee – J.B. Kriplani, (iii) Union Constitution Committee – Jawahar Lal Nehru (iv) Provincial Constitution Committee – Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (v) Union Powers Committee – Jawahar Lal Nehru (vi) Committee on Fundamental Rights – Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- (C) East India Company's rule over India was replaced by British Crown through Government of India Act, 1858. Secretary of State for India was appointed to exercise the power of crown. Governor General became the agent of the crown, which was later redesignated as the Viceroy.
- (B)
- (B) Article 40 of the Constitution which enshrines one of the Directive Principles of State Policy lays down that the state shall take steps to organise Village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.
- (C) Urban local bodies were given Constitutional status only through 74th Constitutional Amendment 1992
- (C) Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer, Justice P.N. Bhagwati, Justice O. Chinnappa Reddy and Justice D. A. Desai played key role to popularise judicial activism in India.
- (C) For the first time in its history Orissa High Court pronounced a verdict in the Odia language on 28th July, 2023 the day it celebrated 75 years of its establishment.
- (B) Sangay Volcanoe (5230 metres) is located in Andes mountains in Equador.
- (A)
- (C) Narmada, Sharavati, Periyar and Tapti are the only long rivers which flows west and make estuaries.
- (A) 25. (D)
- (C) Marasmus is caused by protein deficiency.
- (A) Poliomyelitis is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the poliovirus.
- (C) NIN is in Hyderabad; NIRTH is in Jabalpur and NIE is in Chennai.
- (C) Intensified Mission Indradhanush 5-0 was launched on August 7, 2023 and concluded on October 14, 2023.
- (D) Bacillus anthracis causes Anthrax; Clostridium Botulism toxin causes Botulism; Yersinia pestis causes plague and variola virus major causes small pox. All these are potentially dangerous causative organism to spread disease.
- (A) Cestodes is tapeworm helminths.
- (D) Jamnapari is a breed of goat.
- (D) All the statements describe the process of osmosis.
- (A) 35. (C) 36. (A)
- (A) Sublimation of naphthalene is a physical change, others are chemical change.
- (B) All the mixtures containing two or more liquids can be separated by the process of fractional distillation and using a separating funnel.
- (A) According to Law of conservation (1774), matter is neither created nor destroyed in a chemical reaction—Antoine Lavoisier.
- (D)

Fileman

Continued from Page 83

and the head can prove costly. You must develop a word sense, carefully watching the use of words with double meanings.

Writing is a troublesome and toilsome exercise. Do not mislead yourself with "my mind is flooded with ideas." Ideas are elusive. Learn to capture and make them your slave you. They can be tyrants, if allowed to master your moods.

Boredom is a consumer of energy; it is a tiring thing especially for a writer hunting ideas or researching matter for a fresh angle. Banal ideas are the crutches of the lazy writer!

Fileman

Heavy Rains and Massive Floods in Hilly States are the Result of Climate Change

In Favour

—Digvijay Kumar

Today, climate change is the biggest threat the world is facing. Global warming, increased greenhouse gas emissions and a rapid and unpredictable change in the climate is a big concern for everyone today, because this climate change is giving rise to extreme climatic incidents on the Earth, sometimes of such large level that it causes great damage. Somewhere there are heavy rains, some-where there is no rainfall at all. Somewhere there is forest wildlife taking place, some-where extreme cold temperatures set new records. All these events happen due to climate change and are very unpredictable, they are not normal pattern of mother nature. Heavy rains and massive floods in hilly states are also the result of climate change as well.



Digvijay Kumar

A warming world is transforming some major snowfalls into extreme rain over mountains instead, somehow worsening both dangerous flooding as well as long-term water shortages. Using rain and snow measurements since 1950 and computer simulations for future climate, scientists calculated that for every degree Fahrenheit the world warms, extreme rainfall at higher elevation increases by 8-3% (15% for every degree Celsius). Heavy rain in mountains causes a lot more problems than big snow, including flooding, landslides and erosion, scientists say. And the rain isn't conveniently stored away like snow-pack that can recharge reservoirs in spring and summer. It is not just a far-off problem that is projected to occur in the future, but the data is actually telling us that it's already happening due to climate change. As the world has warmed to the brink of 1.5 degree

Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) internationally agreed threshold to stem the worst effects of climate change, this study shows that every degree (Celsius) matters because it comes with an additional 15% increase in extreme rain over mountains. That per-degree rainfall boost in the mountains is more than twice the increase the rest of the world gets from warming air holding more water. Thus, climate change triggers the extreme climatic events happening in the hilly areas, particularly heavy rainfall and massive floods.

According to a study, looked at only the heaviest rains each year over six decades in the Northern Hemisphere, finding that as altitude rose, so did the turbocharging of rain. The biggest increase in rains were noticed at about 10,000 feet (3,000) metres. About one in four people on Earth live in an area close enough to the mountains or downhill that extreme rain and flooding would hit them. Scientists expect more precipitation with warmer temperatures, but heavy snow's flooding impact is lessened because it takes time to melt and it's easier to monitor snowpack to see what's happening. An effect of climate change is that a warmer atmosphere creates more intense precipitation events. This occurs because warmer air can hold more moisture. The amount of water vapour that the atmosphere can contain increases by about 7% for every 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit (1 degree Celsius) of increase in atmospheric temperature. Research has documented that this increase in extreme precipitation is already occurring in hilly states in many of the countries. The fact that the world has experienced multiple record flooding events in recent years—including catastrophic flooding in Australia, Western Europe, India and China is not a coincidence. Climate change is making record breaking extreme precipitation more likely. Hilly areas act as more favourable places for climate change to show its

consequences, since environment conditions here are more conducive for heavy rainfall, thus causing massive floods.

In hilly states and regions, many of the largest historical floods have been caused by snowmelt. However, with warmer winters due to climate change, less winter precipitation is falling as snow, and more is falling as rain instead. This shift from snow to rain has dramatic implications for flooding. While snow typically melts slowly in the late spring or summer, rain creates runoff that flows to rivers more quickly. As a result, research has shown that rain-caused floods are much larger than snowmelt-only floods, and that the shift from snow to rain increases overall flood risk. Scientists have also found that rain-caused floods due to climate change are becoming more common. In some hilly locations, the changes in flood risk due to the shift from snow to rain is larger than the effect from increased precipitation intensity. In some cases, rain-on-snow events occur while the ground is still partially frozen. Soil that is frozen or already saturated can't absorb additional water, so even more of the rain and snowmelt run off, contributing directly to flooding. This combination of rain, snowmelt and frozen soils due to climate change cause flooding and heavy rainfall in hilly states.

While rain-on-snow events are not a new phenomenon, climate change can shift when and where they occur. Under warmer conditions, rain-on-snow events become more common at high elevations, where they were previously rare. Because of the increases in rainfall intensity and warmer conditions that lead to rapid snowmelt, there is also the possibility of larger rain-on-snow events than these hilly areas have experienced in the past. In lower-elevation regions, rain-on-snow events may actually become less likely than they have been in the past because of the decrease in snow cover.

These areas could still see worsening flood risk because of the increase in heavy downpours. Global warming and climate change are creating complex changes in our environment, as well as in hilly states, and there is a clear picture that it increases flood risk. Experts say erratic rainfall patterns and dry periods have replaced regular snowfall in the mountains, leading to glacial melt, further exacerbating such events. Glacial lakes in the upper reaches of mountains, burst their banks following cloudburst activities in the area. While water initially breaches the dams built in that hilly area, it results in flash floods in multiple areas of that tiny hilly area. Meteorologists say that while the weather conditions are conducive for heavy to very heavy precipitation over the hilly regions on account of a low-pressure area in the nearby regions, the heavy rains and massive floods get extreme due to disturbance in nature's balance by climate change and activities leading to climate change. Thus, climate change plays a significant role in making this weather event more extreme, and heavy rains and floods are some of the forms of extreme climate events due to climate change.

We all know that in the warming world, the potential of cloudbursts, extreme rains has gone up. Ocean warming has already increased moisture levels over the region. In a changing climate, we see that hilly areas and surroundings - whether it's the Himalayan foothills or the Western Ghats are particularly susceptible to heavy rains and landslides. Due to global warming, there's extra moisture, and the hills stop this moisture flow and lift it, which comes down as heavy rains. The floods in Kedarnath in 2013, floods in north eastern states like Sikkim, Assam, and the floods in Himachal Pradesh in 2023, the reasons behind such flash floods in these hilly areas are mainly due to climate change. Flash floods due to cloudbursts and extreme rains are difficult to predict. We also do not have high-resolution monitoring systems that could tell us to what extent climate change aggravated the scenario. Thus, a proper monitoring network is the need of the hour to

tackle heavy rains due to climate change. Activities leading to climate change have to be stopped immediately. But it gets concluded that heavy rains and massive floods in hilly states are the result of climate change. The earlier we stop it, the better it will be for our Mother Earth.

Pdparan

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Or days stay longer in a rich country whereas days are shorter in a poor country. Even the Nature does not differentiate based on money. The time fixed by nature is same for everyone and it never changes. Thus time earns more importance in everyone's life. A patient fleeing to the hospital to get medical attention may know that time is much more valuable than money. He will probably pay any amount to arrive at the hospital on time. He knows that he can earn money once he saves his life. Consider an entrepreneur who wants to be on time for his first big business deal. He will probably take the fastest travel mode and not keep the expenses in mind. This is because he knows that time is more important than money in this situation. At this moment, his first deal's success, reputation, and future depend entirely on time, but not on money. One can become wealthy and flourish in life with efficient time utilisation. On the other hand, a waste of time means a

waste of energy, waste of opportunity. Thus, time is more precious than money.

Time brings with it memories, the way we have spent it. Some of these memories may be good, some of these may be bad. Good memories always bring happiness and smile on the face, while bad memories may sometimes make us sad. Thus a set of emotions are connected with the time which we spend, and these are natural emotions which come automatically from heart and mind. A time well spent with friends brings natural and inner Joy & happiness, which cannot be faked or enjoyed anytime with the help of money. Someone may offer lot of money to fake those emotions, but it on never be those same ones which we enjoyed in a particular given time. Thus, money cannot bring everything for us, while only time spent can bring those emotions. An expensive flight or train ticket is of no use if one misses to board that flight or train because of getting late. So, time becomes more precious than the money. Those who respect time, time respects them and give them success in life, and money surely comes with this success. However, if time is not valued, even the money is lost and it is hard to earn back. Thus, time controls everything and it is the most precious thing on earth.

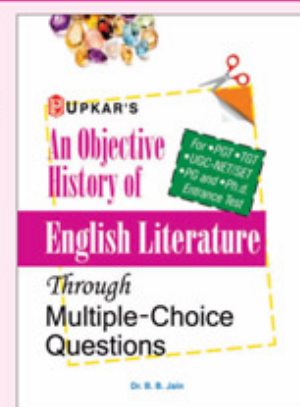
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- The android mobile operating system was unveiled by Google in :
(A) 2000 (B) 2003
(C) 2007 (D) 2011
- Which of the following country is not member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ?
(A) The United Arab Emirates
(B) Iraq
(C) Bangladesh
(D) Indonesia
- The visual image is represents organizations :



- (A) International Civil Aviation Organization
(B) International Atomic Energy Agency
(C) European Organization for Nuclear Research
(D) International Solar Alliance
- Who is the chairmen of state administration council, rule in Myanmar ?
(A) Martin Scorsese
(B) Min Aung Hlaing
(C) Aung San Suu Kyi
(D) Abhiyaza
- Which of the countries recently in 2022 joined as commonwealth member ?
(A) Gabon and Togo
(B) Ghana and Togo
(C) Gabon and Ghana
(D) Burkina Faso and Ghana
- Which of the following are incorrect statements about the Strait of Malacca remarks over US-China conflict ?
(A) The Malacca strait is more than 1000 miles (more than 1600 kilo meters)
(B) According to the CSIS, about 20% of global maritime trade and 60% of China's trade flows are moved through the Malacca Strait
(C) The Strait of Malacca is the shortest sea route between the Middle East and East Asia
(D) A waterway connecting the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) and the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean)

- Which of the organizations celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2019 ?
(A) United Nations Human Rights Council
(B) International Labour Organization
(C) United Nations Population Fund
(D) None of the above
- Which of the following organization represented by the visual image ?



- (A) United Nations General Assembly
(B) United Nations Development program
(C) United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
(D) United Nations Human Rights Council
- Who is the leader of Hamas, officially the chairmen of its political beauro ?
(A) Martin Scorsese
(B) Ismail Haniyeh
(C) Fathi Arafat
(D) None of the above
- On 3 November, 2023, Reciprocal Access Agreement signed between :
(A) Japan and UAE
(B) India and UAE
(C) Japan and the Philippines
(D) The Philippines and India
- Which of the following launched by IZU2 members countries ?
(A) International forum for security cooperation
(B) International forum for economic cooperation
(C) Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII)
(D) None of the above
- The UNFCCC entered into force :
(A) 1946 (B) 1930
(C) 1994 (D) 1990
- Which of the correct statement about the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) ?
(A) AAGC was envisioned during the 52nd Annual Meeting of the African Development Bank (AfDB)
(B) The chief aim is to develop cooperation in Africa between both nations.
(C) It is planned in the year of May 2017
(D) All of the above
- Which organizations aim to mobilize USD 1,000 billion of investments in solar energy solutions by 2030 ?
(A) The World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
(B) The International Solar Alliance
(C) United Nations Population Fund
(D) European Organization for Nuclear Research
- Which of the following is 1st Asian country to Join NATO Cyber Defense Group ?
(A) Japan
(B) China
(C) South Korea
(D) Bhutan
- 6th Assembly of International Solar Alliance was held in :
(A) France
(B) Republic of Peru
(C) Republic of Fiji
(D) Republic of India
- Shanghai Cooperation Organization is founded in :
(A) 2005 (B) 1990
(C) 2001 (D) 1999
- What was the theme of World Meteorological Day 2023 ?
(A) 'The Future of Weather, Climate and Water across Generations'
(B) 'One planet one drop'
(C) 'Development vis-à-vis Land, Water and Rivers'
(D) 'Building trust in science'
- The first World Food Survey conducted by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in :
(A) 1945 (B) 1960
(C) 1982 (D) 1946
- The 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (COP27) held in :
(A) Egypt
(B) The United Arab Emirates (UAE)
(C) Japan
(D) India

Concentric Quiz

ENTRY FORM

Special on Global Organisations

**PRATIYOGITA
DARPAN**

I have read and understood the rules of Concentric Quiz of Pratiyogita Darpan and agree to abide by them.

.....
(Signature)

Last Date for Sending January 15, 2024

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• How would you rate our magazine on a scale of 1 to 5?

• Topics/Features you would like to see in
forthcoming issues

• No. of Questions Solved

ANSWERS FORM

Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D	Q. No.	A	B	C	D
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2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Rules and Regulations

- All students or those appearing in competitive examinations can take part in this contest.
- Candidates taking part in quiz contest will necessarily have to send their entries by the fixed date. Entries are to be sent by ordinary post. Please mark your envelope 'Quiz-Pratiyogita Darpan' on the top left hand side.
- Answers given only on the Entry Form of the magazine will be admissible.
- In the form there are four squares against each question number. Contestants should put a Tick (✓) in the square for the answer they think is correct. Giving more than one answer to a question will disqualify it.
- Contestants should essentially write the number of questions they have solved.
- Marks will be deducted for wrong answers.
- The candidate sending the maximum number of correct answers will be given ₹ 1000 as first prize. Next two candidates after that will get ₹ 800 and ₹ 600 as second and third prize respectively. If there are more than one candidate eligible for a prize, the amount will be equally distributed among them.
- Write your name in English in Capital Letters. The name must be the one which appears in your bank account. Also, write the bank account number, IFSC code of the bank and your mobile phone number.
- The decision of the editor will be final and binding in all cases, and will not be a matter for consideration of any court and no correspondence will be entertained in this concern.
- Names of prize winners of Concentric Quiz alongwith the answers will be published in the next issue of Pratiyogita Darpan.
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- As per a study published in 'Science', between 2018 and 2021, some 10 billion snow crabs disappeared. Reason behind the decline in the number of snow crabs is—
 - Excessive marine heat waves
 - Decrease in the quantity of food for snow crabs
 - Oil pollution in seas
 - Rising toxicity in marine water
- Which of the following statements is correct about 'Superparamagnetic' property of some material?
 - Super paramagnetic implies that the material behaves like a magnet when a magnet is brought around, but when the magnet is removed, it stops being magnetic on its own.
 - Super paramagnetic property can be useful in data storage devices.

Correct code is—

 - Only I
 - Only II
 - Both I and II
 - Neither I nor II
- Lambadi Embroidery belongs to which state?
 - Tamil Nadu
 - Telangana
 - Maharashtra
 - Odisha
- Consider the following facts about the Ethics Committee of Parliament—
 - A Presiding Officers' Conference (1996) held in New Delhi mooted the idea of ethics Committee for the legislature.
 - Rajya Sabha Chairman K.R. Narayanan (the then Vice President of India) Constituted the Ethics Committee of the Rajya Sabha for the first time on March 4, 1997.
- Rules applicable to the Committee of Privileges also apply to the Ethics Committee
 - Term of Ethics Committee is one year and its members are appointed by the Speaker/Chairman of the House.

How many statements given above is/are correct?

 - Only 1
 - Only 2
 - Only 3
 - All 4
- Preventive detention can be ordered in which of the following Acts?
 - Indian Penal Code
 - National Security Act
 - Conservation of Foreign exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act.
 - Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002

How many statements given above is/are correct?

 - Only 1
 - Only 2
 - Only 3
 - All 4
- Consider the following states—
 - Haryana
 - Madhya Pradesh
 - Chhattisgarh
 - Andhra Pradesh

How many states given above was/were founded on 1 November?

 - Only 1
 - Only 2
 - Only 3
 - All 4
- Followers of 'Sarna' faith are worshippers of—
 - Nature
 - Hinduism
 - Jainism
 - Buddhism
- Which was the first ever nation to simultaneously have a female President and a female Prime Minister?
 - India
 - Bangladesh
 - Sri Lanka
 - Philippines
- Shabnam 'Mausi' Bano was the first transgender in India to be elected as a Member of Legislative Assembly to which state?
 - Uttar Pradesh
 - Madhya Pradesh
 - Bihar
 - Gujarat
- The correct chronological order of the following dynasties in relation to their arrival in India.
 - Indo-Greeks
 - Saka
 - Parthians
 - Kushanas

Correct code is—

 - I, II, III and IV
 - II, III, IV, I
 - I, II, IV, III
 - III, II, I, IV
- Consider the following movements started during the British rule in India—
 - Non-Cooperation Movement
 - Aligarh Movement
 - Khilafat Movement
 - Kheda Movement

How many of the above movements were launched in the year 1920?

 - Only 1
 - Only 2
 - Only 3
 - All 4
- For the judicial purposes, the province of Goa under Portuguese control, also included—
 - Maccau in China
 - Timor in Malay Archipelago
 - Puducherry in India

Correct code is—

 - Only I and II
 - Only I
 - Only I and III
 - None of the above
- Consider the following pairs in relation to Governor Generals / Viceroys and their initiatives
 - Lord Cornwallis — Establishment of lower grade courts
 - Lord William Bentick — Suppression of Thuggee
 - Lord Dalhousie — Widow Remarriage Act
 - Lord Mayo — First Census in India

- How many pairs given above is/are correctly matched ?
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4
14. Consider the following pairs in relation to various Committees of Constitution Assembly and their Chairman.
- I. Flag Committee
—Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
 - II. Union Powers Committee
—Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
 - III. Committee on Fundamental Rights
—Jawahar Lal Nehru
 - IV. Drafting Committee
—Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
- How many pairs given above is/are matched correctly ?
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) Only 4
15. East India Company's rule over India was replaced by the British Crown through—
 (A) Charter Act, 1833
 (B) Charter Act, 1853
 (C) Government of India Act, 1858
 (D) Indian Councils Act, 1861
16. Which of the following characteristic of the Indian Constitution does not designate India as a perfect federal state ?
 (A) Dual Polity
 (B) Single citizenship
 (C) Division of power between the Union and the States
 (D) Supremacy of the Constitution
17. Initially the Constitution of India had a provision for the organisation of Panchayats in which Article ?
 (A) Article 32 (B) Article 40
 (C) Article 41 (D) Article 45
18. Consider the following statements—
- I. Constitution of India did not make the local-self government in urban areas a clear-cut Constitutional Obligation.
 - II. Article 40 under the Directive Principles of State Policy refers to Village Panchayats
 - III. Entry 5 of the State List under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution places the subject of local self governments.
- How many statements given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) All 3
 (D) None of the above
19. Who among the following laid the foundation of judicial activism in India ?
 I. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar
 II. Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer
 III. Justice P.N. Bhagwati
 IV. Justice O. Chinnappa Reddy
 V. Justice D.A. Desai
- How many options given above is/are correct ?
 (A) Only 2 (B) Only 3
 (C) Only 4 (D) All 5
20. Which of the following High Court pronounced a verdicts in Vernacular language for the first time in its history, on the day it celebrated 75 years of its establishment ?
 (A) Bombay High Court
 (B) Madras High Court
 (C) Orissa High Court
 (D) Calcutta High Court
21. Which of the following pairs is not matched correctly in relation to world's active volcanoes and their location (country) ?
 (A) Colopax—Equador
 (B) Sangay—Chile
 (C) Wrangell—Alaska
 (D) Semeru—Indonesia
22. Guyots are found in—
 (A) New England Seamount
 (B) South China Sea
 (C) Palk Strait
 (D) Arabian Sea
23. Which of the following river does not form an estuary ?
 (A) Narmada (B) Sharavati
 (C) Yamuna (D) Tapti
24. Which of the following is the world's largest delta ?
 (A) Ganga-Brahmaputra delta (India-Bangladesh)
 (B) Mekong Delta (Southeastern Asia)
 (C) Lena Delta (Russia)
 (D) Mississippi Delta (USA)
25. Consider the following pairs in relation to rift valleys and their locations—
- I. Baikal Rift Valley
—Siberia (Russia)
 - II. Rio Grande Rift Valley
—USA and Mexico
 - III. Great Rift Valley
—Middle East of Mozambique
 - IV. Gregory Rift Valley
—Between Red Sea and Mount Kilimanjaro
- How many pairs given above is/are matched correctly ?
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4
26. Which of the following pairs is not matched correctly in relation to disease and its cause ?
 (A) AIDS—Virus
 (B) Tuberculosis—Bacteria
 (C) Marasmus—Protozoa
 (D) Malaria—Parasite
27. Which of the following is not a zoonotic disease ?
 (A) Poliomyelitis
 (B) Rabies
 (C) Avian flue
 (D) Q Fever
28. Which of the following pairs is matched correctly in relation to research institutes in the field of health and medical and their locations ?
 (A) National Institute of Nutrition (NIN)—New Delhi
 (B) National Institute of Research in Tribal Health (NIRTH)—Ranchi
 (C) National AIDS Research Institute (NARI)—Pune
 (D) National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE)—Hyderabad
29. How many streams (Campaign) Indradhanush have so far been launched and completed ?
 (A) 3 (B) 4
 (C) 5 (D) 6
30. Consider the following organisms—
- I. Bacillus Anthracis
 - II. Clostridium botulinum toxin
 - III. Yersinia pestis
 - IV. Variola virus major
- How many organisms may be used as biological warfare ?
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4

31. Which of the following organisms is not used in vermicomposting?
 (A) Cestodes
 (B) Dichogaster Bolani
 (C) Drawida Wills
 (D) Perionyx Excavatus
32. Which of the following pairs is not matched correctly in relation to breeds of pet animals?
 (A) Cow – Sahiwal
 (B) Buffalo – Surti
 (C) Goat – Pashmina
 (D) Sheep – Jamnapari
33. Consider the following statements—
 I. It occurs only in liquid medium.
 II. It involves movement of solvent molecules only.
 III. Semipermeable membrane is required.
 How many statements given above describes the process of diffusion?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) All 3
 (D) None of the above
34. Which of the following is a cardiac muscle?
 (A) Cylindrical
 (B) Spindle-shaped
 (C) Not branched
 (D) No discs
35. Series electric circuit is not used in houses because of which reason?
 I. Stoppage of working of one appliances will stop the working of all appliances of series.
 II. Appliances connected in series do not get the same voltage.
 III. Current from power supply is low.
 How many statements given above is/are correct?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) All 3
 (D) None of the above
36. Which gas is released in largest quantity in the burning of fossil fuels?
 (A) Carbon dioxide
 (B) Carbon Monoxide
 (C) Nitrogen
 (D) Sulphur dioxide
37. Consider the following changes—
 I. Formation of curd
 II. Ripening of Fruits
 III. Sublimation of naphthalene
 IV. Corrosion of photo film
 How many of the above is/are not a chemical change?
 (A) Only 1 (B) Only 2
 (C) Only 3 (D) All 4
38. All the mixtures containing two (or more) liquids can be separated by which method—
 I. Fractional distillation
 II. Using a separating funnel
 III. Centrifugation
 How many is/are correct?
 (A) Only 1
 (B) Only 2
 (C) All 3
 (D) None of the above
39. Law of conservation of mass in chemical reaction was propounded by—
 (A) Antoine Lavoisier
 (B) Joseph Proust
 (C) John Dalton
 (D) Jons Jakob Bergelius
40. Which of the following is not an ionic compound?
 (A) Aluminium Hydroxide
 (B) Magnesium Hydroxide
 (C) Sodium Chloride
 (D) Ammonia
- [For Answer See Page 177]**
-
- Continued from Page 135*
34. (D)
35. (A) Higher reverse repo rate encourages banks to park more funds with the RBI leaving little room to advances, likewise increase in CRR reduces the liquidity with the banks and left with little resources to lend.
36. (C) RBI on November 16, 2023 has decided to increase the risk weights in respect of consumer credit exposure of commercial banks (outstanding as well as new), including personal loans, but excluding housing loans, education loans, vehicle loans and loans secured by gold and gold jewellery, and those on the credit card by 25 percentage points to 125 per cent.
37. (D) The Global South refers to nations regarded as having a relatively low level of economic and industrial development, and are typically located to the south of more industrialised nations. India hosted the second edition of the Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS) in a virtual mode on November 17, 2023 during which challenges posed by global developments were discussed. India hosted the inaugural VOGSS on January 12-13, 2023, also in a virtual format.
38. (A)
39. (C) The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) was constituted on 12th August, 1994 as a statutory body by an Act of Parliament *viz.*, 'National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993', for a period of three years *i.e.*, up to 31st March, 1997. As per sub-section (4) of Section 1 of the Act, it was to cease to exist after 31.3.1997. However, validity of the Act was extended up to March 2002, and then up to February 2004 vide Amendment Acts passed in 1997 and 2001 respectively. I, II, III are constitutional bodies.
40. (C) Receipts from provident funds, small savings etc. are deposited in Public Account. These funds do not belong to the government. They have to be paid back at some time to their rightful owners. Because of this nature of the fund, expenditures from it are not required to be approved by the Parliament.
41. (A) Off-budget borrowing refers to a government's practice of raising funds for various purposes without reflecting these expenditures in the official budget. When the government borrows through the central bank or issues bonds, the loan goes into the books. This is reflected in the fiscal deficit. In off-budget borrowing, the loan does not add to the fiscal deficit.

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Third Prize Winner



Raj Verma
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Answers

1. (C) 2. (D) 3. (A) 4. (B) 5. (C)
6. (C) 7. (C) 8. (A) 9. (C) 10. (C)
11. (C) 12. (C) 13. (B) 14. (A) 15. (B)
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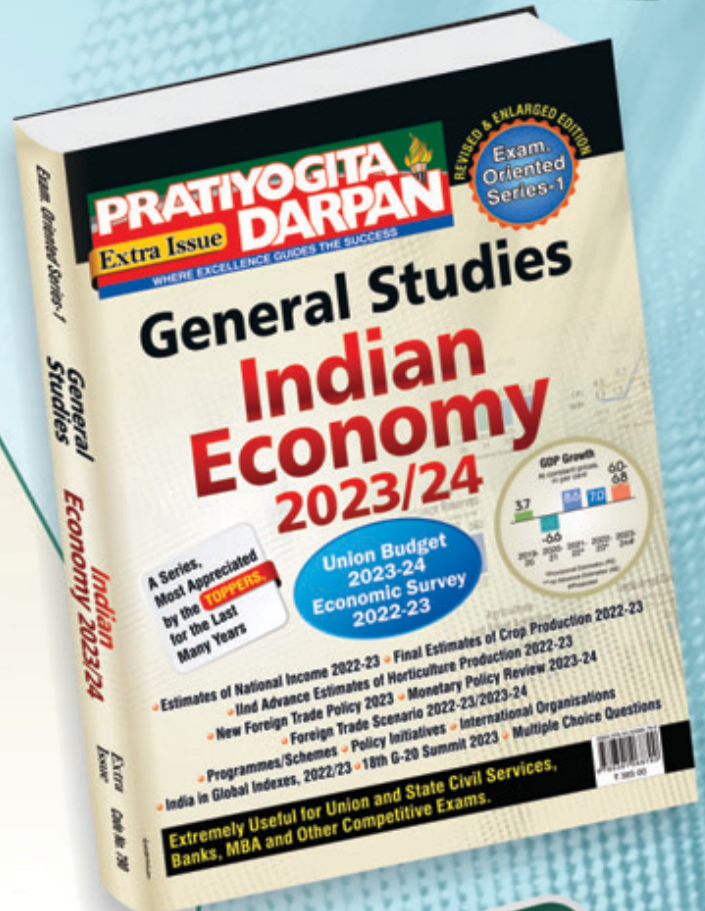
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