UPSC CIVIL SERVICES (PRELIMINARY) EXAMINATION 2018

Question 1 | Polity / Parliament – Opposition

Consider the following statements:

1. In the first Lok Sabha, the single largest party in the opposition was the Swatantra Party.
2. In the Lok Sabha, a 'Leader of the Opposition' was recognised for the first time in 1969.
3. In the Lok Sabha, if a party does not have a minimum of 75 members, its leader cannot be recognised as the Leader of the Opposition.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. In the first Lok Sabha (1952) the Communist Party of India was the largest opposition party; the Swatantra Party was formed only in 1959.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. The first Leader of the Opposition (Ram Subhag Singh, Congress-O) was recognised in 1969; the post got statutory status in 1977.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. By convention a party needs at least 10% of the House (55 of 543 seats), not 75 members.

➤ **Only statement 2** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Leader of the Opposition – Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition Act 1977; Mavalankar's 10% rule. Current affairs: No Leader of the Opposition in the 16th and 17th Lok Sabha; appointments to bodies like CVC and Lokpal where the LoP sits on the selection committee.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Parliament)
2. Lok Sabha Secretariat – loksabha.nic.in
3. PRS Legislative Research – prsindia.org

Question 2 | Environment / Plant Adaptations

Which of the following leaf modifications occur(s) in the desert areas to inhibit water loss?

1. Hard and waxy leaves
2. Tiny leaves
3. Thorns instead of leaves

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 1, 2 and 3

DETAILED EXPLANATION

1 – Thick, hard, waxy cuticles reduce evaporation.
2 – Tiny (reduced) leaves reduce the surface area of transpiration.
3 – Leaves modified into spines/thorns (as in cacti) minimise water loss.

➤ **All three** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Xerophytic adaptations; desert ecosystems. Current affairs: Thar desert greening; UNCCD's desertification and land-degradation discussions; India's land degradation neutrality targets.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 Biology – Morphology of Flowering Plants
2. Shankar IAS – Environment
3. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in

Question 3 | Economy / Agriculture – Surveys

As per the NSSO 70th Round 'Situation Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households', consider the following statements:

1. Rajasthan has the highest percentage share of agricultural households among its rural households.
2. Out of the total agricultural households in the country, a little over 60 per cent belong to OBCs.
3. In Kerala, a little over 60 per cent of the agricultural households reported to have received maximum income from sources other than agricultural activities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 1 and 3 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct per the survey: Rajasthan had the highest share of agricultural households among rural households (about 78%).
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. OBCs form about 45% of agricultural households (not over 60%).
- **Statement 3** – Correct. In Kerala a majority of agricultural households got their main income from non-agricultural sources.

➤ **Hence 1 and 3 only** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Agricultural census and NSSO surveys; farmers' income. Current affairs: Doubling farmers' income (Dalwai Committee); NSS 77th round Situation Assessment Survey (2019).

SOURCES

1. NSSO (MoSPI) – mospi.gov.in
2. Economic Survey – Agriculture
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 4 | Environment / Institutions

How is the National Green Tribunal (NGT) different from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)?

1. The NGT has been established by an Act whereas the CPCB has been created by an executive order of the Government.
2. The NGT provides environmental justice and helps reduce the burden of litigation in the higher courts whereas the CPCB promotes cleanliness of streams and wells, and aims to improve the quality of air in the country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. The CPCB is also statutory: it was established in 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974 (and given powers under the Air Act 1981). The NGT was set up under the NGT Act 2010.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. The NGT gives speedy environmental justice, reducing the burden on higher courts, whereas the CPCB works to promote clean water bodies and improve air quality.

➤ **Only statement 2** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: NGT Act 2010; Water Act 1974; Air Act 1981; Article 21 and the right to a clean environment. Current affairs: NGT orders on Yamuna, Ganga, Delhi air pollution and sand mining; NCAP.

SOURCES

1. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
2. CPCB – cpcb.nic.in
3. NGT – greentribunal.gov.in

Question 5 | Polity / Constitution – Ninth Schedule

Consider the following statements:

1. The Parliament of India can place a particular law in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution of India.
2. The validity of a law placed in the Ninth Schedule cannot be examined by any court and no judgement can be made on it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. Parliament adds laws to the Ninth Schedule by a constitutional amendment (First Amendment 1951 introduced it).
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. In I.R. Coelho v. State of Tamil Nadu (2007) the Supreme Court held that laws placed in the Ninth Schedule after 24 April 1973 are open to judicial review if they violate the basic structure or fundamental rights.

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Article 31B; Kesavananda Bharati; basic structure. Current affairs: Tamil Nadu's 69% reservation law in the Ninth Schedule; demands to place the Maratha quota law there.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. D.D. Basu – Introduction to the Constitution of India
3. Supreme Court – sci.gov.in

Question 6 | Economy / Digital Payments

Which one of the following best describes the term 'Merchant Discount Rate' sometimes seen in news?

(a) The incentive given by a bank to a merchant for accepting payments through debit cards pertaining to that bank.
(b) The amount paid back by banks to their customers when they use debit cards for financial transactions for purchasing goods or services.
(c) **The charge to a merchant by a bank for accepting payments from his customers through the bank's debit cards.**
(d) The incentive given by the Government to merchants for promoting digital payments by their customers through Point of Sale (PoS) machines and debit cards.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) The charge to a merchant by a bank for accepting payments from his customers through the bank's debit cards.

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – MDR is the fee a merchant pays the bank for each card/digital transaction it accepts.
- **Options (a), (b), (d)** – These describe incentives or cashbacks, not a charge to the merchant.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Payment system – card network, acquiring bank, issuing bank. Current affairs: Zero MDR on UPI and RuPay (2020); debates on MDR for UPI.

SOURCES

1. RBI – rbi.org.in
2. Ministry of Finance – finmin.nic.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 7 | IR / Nuclear Regimes

What is/are the consequence/consequences of a country becoming the member of the 'Nuclear Suppliers Group'?

1. It will have access to the latest and most efficient nuclear technologies.
2. It automatically becomes a member of 'The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)'.

Select the correct answer.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. NSG membership gives access to advanced nuclear technology and trade in nuclear material.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. NSG membership does not make a state an NPT member (India is in neither; the 2008 waiver was granted without NPT).

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: NSG, NPT, CTBT, MTCR, Wassenaar, Australia Group. Current affairs: India's NSG bid blocked by China; India joined MTCR (2016), Wassenaar (2017), Australia Group (2018).
SOURCES
1. MEA – mea.gov.in
2. NSG – nuclearsuppliersgroup.org
3. Pushpesh Pant / Rajiv Sikri – International Relations

Question 8 | Economy / Taxation

With reference to India's decision to levy an equalization tax of 6% on online advertisement services offered by non-resident entities, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is introduced as a part of the Income Tax Act.
2. Non-resident entities that offer advertisement services in India can claim a tax credit in their home country under the 'Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements'.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Neither 1 nor 2
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. The 6% equalisation levy was introduced through the Finance Act 2016, as a separate levy, not under the Income Tax Act.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. As a levy outside the Income Tax Act it falls outside DTAA, so credit in the home country is generally not available.

➤ **Neither** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Equalisation levy; BEPS; DTAA. Current affairs: 2% levy on e-commerce supplies (2020); OECD Pillar One/Two global minimum tax; withdrawal of the levy (2024).
SOURCES
1. Income Tax Department – incometaxindia.gov.in

2. OECD – oecd.org
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 9 | Economy / Fiscal Policy

Consider the following statements:

1. The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Review Committee Report has recommended a debt to GDP ratio of 60% for the general (combined) government by 2023, comprising 40% for the Central Government and 20% for the State Governments.
2. The Central Government has domestic liabilities of 21% of GDP as compared to that of 49% of GDP of the State Governments.
3. As per the Constitution of India, it is mandatory for a State to take the Central Government's consent for raising any loan if the former owes any outstanding liabilities to the latter.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 1 and 3 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. The N.K. Singh Committee (2017) recommended 60% combined debt (40% Centre, 20% States) by 2023.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. The figures are reversed: the Centre's liabilities are much higher (around 49%) than the States' (around 21%).
- **Statement 3** – Correct. Under Article 293(3), a State with outstanding loans from the Centre cannot raise a loan without the Centre's consent.

➤ **Hence 1 and 3 only** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: FRBM Act 2003; Article 292–293. Current affairs: Escape clause and revised glide path; FRBM review by the Fifteenth Finance Commission; States' borrowing limits (3–4% of GSDP).
SOURCES
1. FRBM Review Committee Report 2017 – dea.gov.in
2. Economic Survey
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 10 | Economy / Agriculture – Edible Oils

Consider the following statements:

1. The quantity of imported edible oils is more than the domestic production of edible oils in the last five years.
2. The Government does not impose any customs duty on all the imported edible oils as a special case.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. India imports roughly 55–60% of its edible-oil needs, so imports exceed domestic production.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. Customs duties are levied on imported edible oils and are adjusted from time to time.

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Oilseeds, Yellow Revolution, import dependence. Current affairs: National Mission on Edible Oils – Oil Palm (2021); frequent duty changes on palm oil and soybean oil.

SOURCES

1. Economic Survey – Agriculture
2. Ministry of Agriculture – agricoop.nic.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 11 | History / Modern India – Personalities

He wrote biographies of Mazzini, Garibaldi, Shivaji and Shrikrishna; stayed in America for some time; and was also elected to the Central Assembly. He was

(a) Aurobindo Ghosh
(b) Bipin Chandra Pal
(c) Lala Lajpat Rai
(d) Motilal Nehru

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Lala Lajpat Rai

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – Lala Lajpat Rai wrote on Mazzini, Garibaldi, Shivaji and Krishna, lived in the USA (1914–19) where he founded the Indian Home Rule League, and was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly.
- **Others** – Aurobindo, Bipin Chandra Pal and Motilal Nehru do not fit this profile.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Lal-Bal-Pal; Punjab Kesari; Simon Commission protest (1928). Current affairs: Lajpat Rai's birth anniversary (28 January); Punjab National Bank and Servants of the People Society legacy.

SOURCES

1. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 12 | Polity / Aadhaar

Consider the following statements:

1. Aadhaar card can be used as a proof of citizenship or domicile.
2. Once issued, Aadhaar number cannot be deactivated or omitted by the Issuing Authority.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Neither 1 nor 2

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Aadhaar is an identity proof; it is not proof of citizenship or domicile.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. UIDAI can deactivate or omit an Aadhaar number under the Aadhaar Act 2016 (for example if it was obtained fraudulently).

➤ **Neither** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Aadhaar Act 2016; Right to privacy. Current affairs: K.S. Puttaswamy (Aadhaar) judgment 2018; Aadhaar–PAN linking; UIDAI regulations.

SOURCES

1. UIDAI – uidai.gov.in
2. Supreme Court – sci.gov.in
3. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity

Question 13 | Environment / Geography

Which of the following has/have shrunk immensely/dried up in the recent past due to human activities?
1. Aral Sea
2. Black Sea
3. Lake Baikal

Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3
(c) 2 only
(d) 1 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – The Aral Sea (Kazakhstan–Uzbekistan) has largely dried up because rivers feeding it (Amu Darya and Syr Darya) were diverted for irrigation.
2 – The Black Sea has not shrunk.
3 – Lake Baikal, the deepest lake, has not dried up.
➤ **Only 1** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: World lakes and seas. Current affairs: Aral Sea Multi-Partner Trust Fund; Lake Urmia and Chad shrinkage; UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography
2. UNEP – unep.org
3. Oxford School Atlas

Question 14 | IR / International Indices

'Rule of Law Index' is released by which of the following?
(a) Amnesty International
(b) International Court of Justice
(c) The Office of UN Commissioner for Human Rights
(d) World Justice Project

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) World Justice Project
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (d)** – The Rule of Law Index is published annually by the World Justice Project (WJP).
- **Others** – They do not publish this index.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Indices and issuing bodies. Current affairs: India ranked 79th in WJP Rule of Law Index 2023 (140 countries).
SOURCES
1. World Justice Project – worldjusticeproject.org
2. NITI Aayog – niti.gov.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 15 | Economy / Banking Infrastructure

Which one of the following links all the ATMs in India?
(a) Indian Banks' Association
(b) National Securities Depository Limited
(c) National Payments Corporation of India
(d) Reserve Bank of India

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) National Payments Corporation of India
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – NPCI operates the National Financial Switch (NFS), which interconnects ATMs of all banks in India.
- **Others** – IBA is an industry body; NSDL is a depository; RBI regulates but does not run the ATM network.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Payment systems – NPCI, RuPay, IMPS, UPI, BHIM. Current affairs: UPI crossing record monthly transactions; UPI linkages abroad.

SOURCES

1. NPCI – npci.org.in
2. RBI – rbi.org.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 16 | Economy / Banking Regulation

Consider the following statements:

1. Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) is the amount that banks have to maintain in the form of their own funds to offset any loss that banks incur if the account-holders fail to repay dues.
2. CAR is decided by each individual bank.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. CAR (CRAR) is the capital a bank must hold against risk-weighted assets to absorb losses such as loan defaults.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. CAR is prescribed by the RBI (in line with Basel norms), not decided by individual banks.

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Basel I, II, III; Tier I and II capital. Current affairs: Bank recapitalisation; RBI's Prompt Corrective Action framework; Basel III norms for Indian banks.

SOURCES

1. RBI – rbi.org.in
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy
3. Economic Survey – Banking

Question 17 | Science & Tech / Aadhaar APIs

The identity platform 'Aadhaar' provides open 'Application Programming Interfaces (APIs)'. What does it imply?

1. It can be integrated into any electronic device.
2. Online authentication using iris is possible.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Both 1 and 2

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. Open APIs allow Aadhaar authentication to be integrated into any electronic device or application.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Aadhaar authentication supports fingerprint, iris and OTP.

➤ **Both correct** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Aadhaar authentication modes; India Stack. Current affairs: Aadhaar face authentication; India Stack and Digital Public Infrastructure at the G20.

SOURCES

1. UIDAI – uidai.gov.in
2. MeitY – meity.gov.in
3. India Stack – indiastack.org

Question 18 | IR / Humanitarian Crises

Very recently, in which of the following countries have lakhs of people either suffered from severe famine/acute malnutrition or died due to starvation caused by war/ethnic conflicts?

(a) Angola and Zambia
(b) Morocco and Tunisia
(c) Venezuela and Colombia
(d) Yemen and South Sudan

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Yemen and South Sudan

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (d)** – Yemen (civil war) and South Sudan (civil conflict) faced severe famine and acute malnutrition in 2017–18.
- **Others** – Not countries affected by war-induced famine at that time.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Humanitarian crises; UN World Food Programme. Current affairs: Sudan and Gaza famine alerts; Global Hunger Index; World Food Programme's Nobel Peace Prize (2020).

SOURCES

1. UN WFP – wfp.org
2. FAO – fao.org
3. The Hindu / Indian Express archives

Question 19 | History / Modern India – Education

Regarding Wood's Dispatch, which of the following statements are true?

1. Grants-in-Aid system was introduced.
2. Establishment of universities was recommended.
3. English as a medium of instruction at all levels of education was recommended.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 and 2 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. The Dispatch (1854) introduced the grants-in-aid system for private schools.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. It recommended universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras (founded 1857).
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. It recommended English for higher education but vernacular languages for primary and middle schools.

➤ **Hence 1 and 2 only** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Macaulay's Minute 1835; Hunter Commission 1882; Sadler Commission. Current affairs: National Education Policy 2020 and mother-tongue instruction.

SOURCES

1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India

2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 20 | Polity / Parliamentary Committees

With reference to the Parliament of India, which of the following Parliamentary Committees scrutinizes and reports to the House whether the powers to make regulations, rules, sub-rules, by-laws, etc. conferred by the Constitution or delegated by the Parliament are being properly exercised by the Executive within the scope of such delegation?

(a) Committee on Government Assurances
(b) Committee on Subordinate Legislation
(c) Rules Committee
(d) Business Advisory Committee

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) Committee on Subordinate Legislation
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – The Committee on Subordinate Legislation scrutinises whether delegated legislation is within the scope of the powers delegated.
- **Others** – Government Assurances tracks ministers' promises; Rules Committee considers procedure; Business Advisory Committee allocates time.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Parliamentary committees; delegated legislation. Current affairs: Scrutiny of rules framed under new criminal laws and Digital Personal Data Protection Act.
SOURCES
1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. Lok Sabha Secretariat – loksabha.nic.in
3. PRS Legislative Research – prsindia.org

Question 21 | Polity & Governance / Education

Consider the following statements:
1. As per the Right to Education (RTE) Act, to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in a State, a person would be required to possess the minimum qualification laid down by the concerned State Council of Teacher Education.
2. As per the RTE Act, for teaching primary classes, a candidate is required to pass a Teacher Eligibility Test conducted in accordance with the National Council of Teacher Education guidelines.
3. In India, more than 90% of teacher education institutions are directly under the State Governments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Section 23 of the RTE Act requires the minimum qualification laid down by an academic authority authorised by the Central Government (the NCTE), not a State council.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Passing the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) conducted per NCTE guidelines is mandatory for classes I–VIII.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. Most teacher education institutions are private (self-financed); State-run institutions are a small share.

➤ **Only statement 2** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Article 21A; RTE Act 2009; NCTE Act 1993. Current affairs: NEP 2020 – four-year integrated B.Ed.; CTET and TET requirements; NCTE regulations.
SOURCES

1. RTE Act 2009 – education.gov.in
2. NCTE – ncte.gov.in
3. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity

Question 22 | Art & Culture / Traditions

Consider the following pairs:

Tradition	State
1. Chapchar Kut festival	Mizoram
2. Khongjom Parba ballad	Manipur
3. Thang-Ta dance	Sikkim

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 1 and 2

DETAILED EXPLANATION

Pair 1 – Chapchar Kut is a spring festival of Mizoram.
Pair 2 – Khongjom Parba is a ballad of Manipur narrating the Battle of Khongjom (1891).
Pair 3 – Thang-Ta is a martial art of Manipur, not Sikkim.

➤ **Hence 1 and 2** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Festivals and folk arts of the North-East. Current affairs: Manipur's Lai Haraoba and Thang-Ta in cultural events; Mizo cultural festivals.

SOURCES

1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
2. Ministry of Culture – indiaculture.gov.in
3. Sangeet Natak Akademi – sangeetnatak.gov.in

Question 23 | Governance / Food Safety

Consider the following statements:

1. The Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 replaced the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954.
2. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is under the charge of Director General of Health Services in the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. The FSS Act 2006 consolidated food laws and replaced the PFA Act 1954.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. FSSAI is headed by a Chairperson and a CEO and functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, not under the Director General of Health Services.

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: FSS Act 2006; Codex. Current affairs: Eat Right India; FSSAI labelling and front-of-pack rules; adulteration drives.

SOURCES

1. FSSAI – fssai.gov.in

2. MoHFW – mohfw.gov.in
3. PRS Legislative Research – prsindia.org

Question 24 | IR / West Asia

The term 'two-state solution' is sometimes mentioned in the news in the context of the affairs of

(a) China
(b) Israel
(c) Iraq
(d) Yemen

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) Israel

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – The two-state solution envisages independent Israeli and Palestinian States living side by side.
- **Others** – China, Iraq and Yemen are not subjects of a two-state solution.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Israel–Palestine conflict; Oslo Accords; UN resolutions. Current affairs: India's position on a two-state solution; Gaza war since October 2023; recognition of Palestine by several countries (2024).

SOURCES

1. MEA – mea.gov.in
2. UN – un.org
3. Pushpesh Pant – International Relations

Question 25 | Governance / Food Security

With reference to the provisions made under the National Food Security Act, 2013, consider the following statements:

1. The families coming under the category of 'below poverty line (BPL)' only are eligible to receive subsidised food grains.
2. The eldest woman in a household, of age 18 years or above, shall be the head of the household for the purpose of issuance of a ration card.
3. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are entitled to a 'take-home ration' of 1600 calories per day during pregnancy and for six months thereafter.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Coverage is for 'priority households' and Antyodaya Anna Yojana households, not BPL only.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. The eldest woman aged 18 or above is the head of the household for ration cards.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. The entitlement is a meal with 600 kcal (not 1600) during pregnancy and six months after childbirth.

➤ **Only statement 2** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: NFSA 2013 – 5 kg per person per month at ₹1–3; Antyodaya; ICDS. Current affairs: PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (free grains); One Nation One Ration Card; ration card digitisation.

SOURCES

1. Department of Food & Public Distribution – dfpd.gov.in
2. PRS Legislative Research – prsindia.org
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 26 | Economy / IPR & WTO

India enacted The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 in order to comply with the obligations to

(a) ILO
(b) IMF
(c) UNCTAD
(d) WTO

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) WTO
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (d)** – The GI Act 1999 was enacted to fulfil India's obligations under the WTO's TRIPS Agreement.
- **Others** – ILO, IMF and UNCTAD are not linked with TRIPS.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: TRIPS; GI tags; Darjeeling tea first GI product. Current affairs: GI tag for Banaras Thandai, Kangra tea, Odisha Rasagola and others; GI registry in Chennai.
SOURCES
1. Controller General of Patents – ipindia.gov.in
2. DPIIT – dpiit.gov.in
3. WTO – wto.org

Question 27 | Economy / Mining

Consider the following statements:
1. In India, State Governments do not have the power to auction non-coal mines.
2. Andhra Pradesh and Jharkhand do not have gold mines.
3. Rajasthan has iron ore mines.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2
(b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3
(d) 3 only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 3 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Under the MMDR Amendment Act 2015, State Governments auction non-coal mineral blocks.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. Andhra Pradesh (Ramagiri) and Jharkhand have gold mines.
- **Statement 3** – Correct. Rajasthan has iron-ore deposits (for example Jaipur and Udaipur districts).

➤ **Only statement 3** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Mineral resources of India; MMDR Act 1957. Current affairs: Auction of critical minerals (2023); National Mineral Policy 2019; District Mineral Foundation.
SOURCES
1. Ministry of Mines – mines.gov.in
2. Indian Bureau of Mines – ibm.gov.in
3. Khullar – India: A Comprehensive Geography

Question 28 | Economy / Digital Payments
With reference to digital payments, consider the following statements:
1. BHIM app allows the user to transfer money to anyone with a UPI-enabled bank account.
2. While a chip-pin debit card has four factors of authentication, BHIM app has only two factors of authentication.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. BHIM is built on UPI and allows transfer to any UPI-enabled bank account.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. A chip-and-PIN card uses two factors (possession of card plus PIN); BHIM uses device binding, UPI PIN and mobile number – not 'four versus two'.

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: UPI, IMPS, BHIM, RuPay. Current affairs: UPI Lite; UPI 123PAY; international UPI linkages (Singapore, UAE).
SOURCES
1. NPCI – npci.org.in
2. RBI – rbi.org.in
3. Economic Survey – Financial Sector

Question 29 | Geography / Latitude & Longitude

Among the following cities, which one lies on a longitude closest to that of Delhi?
(a) Bengaluru
(b) Hyderabad
(c) Nagpur
(d) Pune

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) Bengaluru
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – Delhi lies at about 77.2°E; Bengaluru is at about 77.6°E, the closest.
- **Others** – Hyderabad about 78.5°E; Nagpur about 79.1°E; Pune about 73.9°E.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Longitudes of Indian cities; standard meridian (82°30'E). Current affairs: Proposals for a second time zone for India; Bhopal and Nagpur as geographic centre markers.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – India: Physical Environment
2. Survey of India – surveyofindia.gov.in
3. Oxford School Atlas

Question 30 | IR / ILO Conventions

International Labour Organization's Conventions 138 and 182 are related to
(a) Child labour
(b) Adaptation of agricultural practices to global climate change
(c) Regulation of food prices and food security
(d) Gender parity at the workplace

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) Child labour
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – Convention 138 (minimum age) and 182 (worst forms of child labour) deal with child labour. India ratified both in 2017.
- **Others** – Not subjects of these conventions.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: ILO; Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986, amended 2016. Current affairs: 2021 International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour; ILO's Global Estimates.
SOURCES

1. ILO – ilo.org
2. Ministry of Labour & Employment – labour.gov.in
3. PIB – pib.gov.in

Question 31 | Polity / Money Bill

Regarding Money Bill, which of the following statements is not correct?

(a) A bill shall be deemed to be a Money Bill if it contains only provisions relating to imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax.
(b) A Money Bill has provisions for the custody of the Consolidated Fund of India or the Contingency Fund of India.
(c) A Money Bill is concerned with the appropriation of moneys out of the Contingency Fund of India.
(d) A Money Bill deals with the regulation of borrowing of money or giving of any guarantee by the Government of India.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) A Money Bill is concerned with the appropriation of moneys out of the Contingency Fund of India.

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Options (a), (b), (d)** – These match Article 110(1): taxes; custody of the Consolidated Fund and Contingency Fund; borrowing and guarantees.
- **Option (c) is not correct** – Article 110 speaks of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India, not the Contingency Fund.

➤ Hence option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Article 110; Money Bill vs Financial Bill; Rajya Sabha's limited role. Current affairs: Aadhaar Act 2016 passed as a Money Bill and the 2018/2019 Supreme Court rulings.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. Constitution of India – Article 110
3. PRS Legislative Research – prsindia.org

Question 32 | Polity / Presidential Election

With reference to the election of the President of India, consider the following statements:

1. The value of the vote of each MLA varies from State to State.
2. The value of the vote of MPs of the Lok Sabha is more than the value of the vote of MPs of the Rajya Sabha.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. An MLA's vote value depends on the State's population and the number of MLAs, so it differs by State.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. All elected MPs (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) have the same vote value (about 700).

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Article 54–55; electoral college; single transferable vote. Current affairs: 2022 Presidential election – value of MP's vote 700; election of Droupadi Murmu.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. Election Commission – eci.gov.in
3. Constitution of India – Articles 54, 55

Question 33 | IR / Nuclear Regimes

In the Indian context, what is the implication of ratifying the 'Additional Protocol' with the 'International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'?

(a) The civilian nuclear reactors come under IAEA safeguards.
(b) The military nuclear installations come under the inspection of IAEA.
(c) The country will have the privilege to buy uranium from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).
(d) The country automatically becomes a member of the NSG.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) The civilian nuclear reactors come under IAEA safeguards.

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – Under the Additional Protocol (signed by India in 2009), India's civilian nuclear facilities (those separated under the 2008 civil–military separation plan) come under IAEA safeguards.
- **Option (b)** – Military facilities remain outside IAEA inspection.
- **Options (c), (d)** – Not consequences of the Additional Protocol.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: India–US civil nuclear deal; 123 Agreement; NSG waiver 2008. Current affairs: India's ratification of the Additional Protocol (2022); NSG bid.

SOURCES

1. IAEA – iaea.org
2. MEA – mea.gov.in
3. Department of Atomic Energy – dae.gov.in

Question 34 | IR / Regional Trade

Consider the following countries:

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. China
4. India
5. Japan
6. USA

Which of the above are among the 'free-trade partners' of ASEAN?

(a) 1, 2, 4 and 5
(b) 3, 4, 5 and 6
(c) 1, 3, 4 and 5
(d) 2, 3, 4 and 6

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 1, 3, 4 and 5

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- ASEAN has free-trade agreements with Australia (with New Zealand), China, India, Japan and South Korea.
- Canada and the USA have no FTA with ASEAN as a bloc.

➤ **Hence 1, 3, 4 and 5** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: ASEAN, RCEP. Current affairs: ASEAN–India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) review; India's exit from RCEP (2019); Act East Policy.

SOURCES

1. ASEAN – asean.org
2. MEA – mea.gov.in
3. Ministry of Commerce – commerce.gov.in

Question 35 | Environment / Climate Initiatives

With reference to the 'Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA)', which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. GACSA is an outcome of the Climate Summit held in Paris in 2015.
2. Membership of GACSA does not create any binding obligations.
3. India was instrumental in the creation of GACSA.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. GACSA was launched at the UN Climate Summit in New York (2014), not in Paris in 2015.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Membership is voluntary and creates no binding obligations.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. India was not instrumental in creating GACSA (it is FAO-led).

➤ **Only statement 2** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Climate-smart agriculture; FAO. Current affairs: National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture; COP agriculture and food-systems declarations.

SOURCES

1. FAO – fao.org
2. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 36 | Science & Tech / Governance

Which of the following is/are the aim/aims of 'Digital India' Plan of the Government of India?

1. Formation of India's own Internet companies like China did.
2. Establish a policy framework to encourage overseas multinational corporations that collect Big Data to build their large data centres within our national geographical boundaries.
3. Connect many of our villages to the Internet and bring Wi-Fi to many of our schools, public places and major tourist centres.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 3 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Digital India does not aim to create Internet companies like China's.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. Data-localisation policy is not an aim of the Digital India programme.
- **Statement 3** – Correct. Broadband connectivity to villages (BharatNet) and public Wi-Fi are core aims.

➤ **Only statement 3** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Digital India's nine pillars; BharatNet. Current affairs: Digital India 10 years (2025); DPDP Act 2023; ONDC and UPI.

SOURCES

1. MeitY – digitalindia.gov.in
2. PIB – pib.gov.in
3. Economic Survey

Question 37 | IR / West Asia & Central Asia

Consider the following pairs:

Towns sometimes mentioned in news	Country
1. Aleppo	Syria
2. Kirkuk	Yemen
3. Mosul	Palestine
4. Mazar-i-Sharif	Afghanistan

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?
(a) 1 and 2
(b) 1 and 4
(c) 2 and 3
(d) 3 and 4

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 1 and 4
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Pair 1 – Aleppo is in Syria.
Pair 2 – Kirkuk is in Iraq.
Pair 3 – Mosul is in Iraq.
Pair 4 – Mazar-i-Sharif is in northern Afghanistan.
➤ **Hence 1 and 4** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: West and Central Asia map. Current affairs: Syria after the Assad regime's fall (2024); Taliban in Mazar-i-Sharif; Iraq's Kurdistan region.
SOURCES
1. Oxford School Atlas
2. MEA – mea.gov.in
3. Pushpesh Pant – International Relations

Question 38 | History / Constitutional Development

In the Federation established by The Government of India Act of 1935, residuary powers were given to the
(a) Federal Legislature
(b) Governor General
(c) Provincial Legislature
(d) Provincial Governors

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) Governor General
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (b)** – Under the 1935 Act, residuary powers were vested in the Governor General, who could empower the Federal or Provincial Legislature.
- **Others** – No residuary power rested with them.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Three lists – Federal, Provincial, Concurrent; Constitution's Article 248 vests residuary powers in Parliament. Current affairs: Centre–State relations; Seventh Schedule debates.
SOURCES
1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Historical background)
2. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
3. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India

Question 39 | Polity / State Legislature

Consider the following statements:

1. The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly shall vacate his/her office if he/she ceases to be a member of the Assembly.
2. Whenever the Legislative Assembly is dissolved, the Speaker shall vacate his/her office immediately.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. Under Article 179(a), the Speaker vacates office on ceasing to be a member of the Assembly.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. On dissolution the Speaker continues in office until immediately before the first meeting of the next Assembly.

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Articles 178–181; Speaker's neutrality. Current affairs: Anti-defection decisions by Speakers; Supreme Court on Speaker's delay (Manipur, Telangana).

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. Constitution of India – Article 179
3. PRS Legislative Research – prsindia.org

Question 40 | Polity / Political Theory

Which one of the following reflects the most appropriate relationship between law and liberty?

(a) If there are more laws, there is less liberty.
(b) If there are no laws, there is no liberty.
(c) If there is liberty, laws have to be made by the people.
(d) If laws are changed too often, liberty is in danger.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) If there are no laws, there is no liberty.

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Without laws, society would be anarchic and the strong would dominate; laws secure and protect liberty.
- **Option (a)** – Laws need not reduce liberty; they safeguard it.
- **Options (c), (d)** – Not the most appropriate statement of the relationship.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Liberty, rule of law; Preamble. Current affairs: Personal liberty and Article 21; sedition law debates; Privacy judgment.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Political Theory
2. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
3. Rajeev Bhargava – Political Theory

Question 41 | Polity / Governor

Consider the following statements:

1. No criminal proceedings shall be instituted against the Governor of a State in any court during his term of office.
2. The emoluments and allowances of the Governor of a State shall not be diminished during his term of office.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Both 1 and 2
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. Article 361(2) gives the Governor immunity from criminal proceedings during his term.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Article 158(4): the emoluments and allowances of the Governor shall not be diminished during the term of office.

➤ **Both correct** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Articles 153–161; Governor's discretionary powers. Current affairs: Governor–government disputes; Rameshwar Prasad (2006) and Rameshwar judgments on immunity.
SOURCES
1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. Constitution of India – Articles 158, 361
3. PRS Legislative Research – prsindia.org

Question 42 | Art & Culture / Painting

The well-known painting 'Bani Thani' belongs to the
(a) Bundi school
(b) Jaipur school
(c) Kangra school
(d) Kishangarh school

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Kishangarh school
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (d)** – 'Bani Thani' (c. 1750, by Nihal Chand) belongs to the Kishangarh school of Rajput painting, under Raja Sawant Singh.
- **Others** – Bundi, Jaipur and Kangra schools have different iconic works.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Rajput and Pahari painting schools. Current affairs: Bani Thani on postage stamp; Kishangarh heritage tourism.
SOURCES
1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
2. NCERT Class 11 – An Introduction to Indian Art
3. Ministry of Culture – indiaculture.gov.in

Question 43 | Defence / Missile Defence

What is 'Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD)', sometimes seen in the news?
(a) An Israeli radar system
(b) India's indigenous anti-missile programme
(c) An American anti-missile system
(d) A defence collaboration between Japan and South Korea

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) An American anti-missile system
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – THAAD is a US Army anti-ballistic missile defence system (Lockheed Martin), deployed in South Korea.
- **Others** – Not an Israeli radar (Iron Dome/Arrow), not Indian (BMD), and not a Japan–South Korea collaboration.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Missile defence – S-400, Iron Dome, BMD. Current affairs: S-400 purchase from Russia and CAATSA; THAAD deployments in the Middle East.
SOURCES
1. MoD – mod.gov.in
2. Missile Defense Agency – mda.mil
3. The Hindu – Defence

Question 44 | Art & Culture / Music

With reference to cultural history of India, consider the following statements:
1. Most of the Tyagaraja Kritis are devotional songs in praise of Lord Krishna.
2. Tyagaraja created several new ragas.
3. Annamacharya and Tyagaraja are contemporaries.
4. Annamacharya kirtanas are devotional songs in praise of Lord Venkateshwara.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 3
(d) 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 and 4 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Most Tyagaraja kritis are in praise of Lord Rama.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Tyagaraja created many new ragas.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. Annamacharya (15th century) and Tyagaraja (1767–1847) were centuries apart.
- **Statement 4** – Correct. Annamacharya's sankirtanas praise Lord Venkateshwara of Tirupati.

➤ **Hence 2 and 4 only** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Carnatic trinity – Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar, Shyama Shastri. Current affairs: Tyagaraja Aradhana at Thiruvaiyaru; Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams' Annamacharya project.
SOURCES
1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
2. Sangeet Natak Akademi – sangeetnatak.gov.in
3. NCERT Class 11 – An Introduction to Indian Art

Question 45 | Polity / Rule of Law

Which of the following are regarded as the main features of the 'Rule of Law'?
1. Limitation of powers
2. Equality before law
3. People's responsibility to the Government
4. Liberty and civil rights
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – Limitation of governmental power is central to the rule of law.
2 – Equality before law (Dicey).
3 – It is the Government's responsibility to the people, not the reverse.
4 – Liberty and civil rights are protected under the rule of law.

➤ **Hence 1, 2 and 4 only** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: A.V. Dicey; Article 14; basic structure. Current affairs: WJP Rule of Law Index; Supreme Court on bulldozer demolitions and due process.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. D.D. Basu – Introduction to the Constitution of India
3. Supreme Court – sci.gov.in

Question 46 | Economy / Money

Which one of the following statements correctly describes the meaning of legal tender money?

(a) The money which is tendered in courts of law to defray the fee of legal cases
(b) The money which a creditor is under compulsion to accept in settlement of his claims
(c) The bank money in the form of cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, etc.
(d) The metallic money in circulation in a country

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) The money which a creditor is under compulsion to accept in settlement of his claims

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Legal tender is money that must be accepted by a creditor in settlement of debts.
- **Options (a), (c), (d)** – Describe other things (court fees, cheque money, coins).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Section 26 RBI Act; money supply. Current affairs: Demonetisation (2016) and the 2016 Supreme Court ruling; Central Bank Digital Currency e-rupee.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 – Macroeconomics
2. RBI – rbi.org.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 47 | Economy / Opportunity Cost

If a commodity is provided free to the public by the Government, then

(a) the opportunity cost is zero.
(b) the opportunity cost is ignored.
(c) the opportunity cost is transferred from the consumers of the product to the tax-paying public.
(d) the opportunity cost is transferred from the consumers of the product to the Government.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) the opportunity cost is transferred from the consumers of the product to the tax-paying public.

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Options (a), (b)** – A free good still has an opportunity cost; it is not zero or ignorable.
- **Option (c)** – The cost of providing the commodity is met from taxes, so the opportunity cost shifts from consumers to taxpayers.
- **Option (d)** – The Government does not bear the cost itself; it recovers it from taxpayers.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Public goods; merit goods; subsidies. Current affairs: Freebies and welfare-schemes debate; Supreme Court on freebies.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Indian Economic Development / Microeconomics
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy
3. Economic Survey

Question 48 | Economy / Development

Increase in absolute and per capita real GNP do not connote a higher level of economic development, if

(a) industrial output fails to keep pace with agricultural output.
(b) agricultural output fails to keep pace with industrial output.
(c) poverty and unemployment increase.
(d) imports grow faster than exports.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) poverty and unemployment increase.
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – Development is not only income growth; if poverty and unemployment rise, growth is not accompanied by development.
- **Options (a), (b), (d)** – Sectoral imbalance or trade imbalance may matter but do not by themselves negate development.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Growth vs development; HDI; inclusive growth. Current affairs: Multidimensional Poverty Index; jobless growth debate; PLFS data.
SOURCES
1. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy
2. NCERT Class 11 – Indian Economic Development
3. UNDP – undp.org

Question 49 | Economy / Human Capital

Human capital formation as a concept is better explained in terms of a process which enables
1. individuals of a country to accumulate more capital.
2. increasing the knowledge, skill levels and capacities of the people of the country.
3. accumulation of tangible wealth.
4. accumulation of intangible wealth.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2
(b) 2 only
(c) 2 and 4
(d) 1, 3 and 4

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 2 and 4
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – Not accumulation of physical capital by individuals.
2 – Human capital formation increases knowledge, skills and capacities.
3 – Tangible wealth is physical capital.
4 – Skills and knowledge are intangible wealth.
➤ **Hence 2 and 4** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Human capital – education, health, on-the-job training. Current affairs: Human Capital Index; Skill India; National Education Policy 2020.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – Indian Economic Development
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy
3. World Bank – worldbank.org

Question 50 | Economy / Capital Formation

Despite being a high saving economy, capital formation may not result in significant increase in output due to

(a) weak administrative machinery
(b) illiteracy

(c) high population density
(d) high capital-output ratio

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) high capital-output ratio
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (d)** – A high capital-output ratio means more capital is needed per unit of output, so even high investment yields little extra output.
- **Others** – Matters for growth but not the direct reason that capital formation fails to raise output.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: ICOR; Harrod–Domar model. Current affairs: India's gross capital formation and saving rates; investment efficiency.
SOURCES
1. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy
2. Economic Survey
3. NCERT Class 12 – Macroeconomics

Question 51 | History / Modern India – Revolts

After the Santhal Uprising subsided, what was/were the measure/measures taken by the colonial government?
1. The territories called 'Santhal Paraganas' were created.
2. It became illegal for a Santhal to transfer land to a non-Santhal.
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Both 1 and 2
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. The Santhal Parganas district was carved out in 1855–56.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. The Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act restricted transfer of land to non-Santhals.

➤ **Both correct** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Tribal revolts – Kol, Santhal, Munda; Sidhu and Kanhu. Current affairs: Hul Diwas (30 June); Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act debates in Jharkhand.
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 52 | History / Economic History

Economically, one of the results of the British rule in India in the 19th century was the
(a) increase in the export of Indian handicrafts
(b) growth in the number of Indian owned factories
(c) commercialization of Indian agriculture
(d) rapid increase in the urban population

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) commercialization of Indian agriculture
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – Commercialisation of agriculture (indigo, cotton, jute, opium) was a hallmark of colonial economic policy in the 19th century.
- **Options (a), (b), (d)** – Handicrafts declined; Indian-owned factories grew slowly; urbanisation was limited.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Drain of wealth; deindustrialisation; commercialisation of agriculture. Current affairs: Agricultural reforms and MSP debates; crop diversification.

SOURCES

1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 53 | Polity / President's Rule

If the President of India exercises his power as provided under Article 356 of the Constitution in respect of a particular State, then

(a) the Assembly of the State is automatically dissolved.
(b) the powers of the Legislature of that State shall be exercisable by or under the authority of the Parliament.
(c) Article 19 is suspended in that State.
(d) the President can make laws relating to that State.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) the powers of the Legislature of that State shall be exercisable by or under the authority of the Parliament.

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – The Assembly may be suspended or dissolved; it is not automatically dissolved.
- **Option (b)** – Under Article 356(1)(b), the powers of the State Legislature become exercisable by or under the authority of Parliament.
- **Option (c)** – Article 19 is suspended only in a National Emergency on grounds of war or external aggression (Article 358).
- **Option (d)** – Parliament (not the President) makes laws; the President can only make regulations when Parliament is not in session.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Article 356; S.R. Bommai (1994). Current affairs: President's Rule in Manipur (2025), Jammu & Kashmir; Bommai floor-test principle.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
2. S.R. Bommai v. Union of India (1994)
3. D.D. Basu – Introduction to the Constitution of India

Question 54 | Art & Culture / Crafts

Consider the following pairs:

Craft	Heritage of
1. Puthukkuli shawls	Tamil Nadu
2. Sujni embroidery	Maharashtra
3. Uppada Jamdani saris	Karnataka

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Pair 1** – Puthukkuli shawls are a GI-tagged embroidered shawl of the Todas of the Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu.
- **Pair 2** – Sujni embroidery is from Bihar.
- **Pair 3** – Uppada Jamdani saris are from Andhra Pradesh.

➤ **Only 1** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: GI tags and handicrafts. Current affairs: GI recognition for Sujni and Uppada Jamdani; One District One Product; Handicrafts Week.

SOURCES

1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
2. Ministry of Textiles – texmin.nic.in
3. Controller General of Patents – ipindia.gov.in

Question 55 | Science & Tech / GPS

In which of the following areas can GPS technology be used?

1. Mobile phone operations
2. Banking operations
3. Controlling the power grids

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 1, 2 and 3

DETAILED EXPLANATION

1 – GPS timing synchronises mobile networks.
2 – GPS time-stamping is used in banking and financial systems.
3 – GPS timing synchronises power-grid operations.

➤ **All three** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: GPS, GAGAN, NavIC. Current affairs: NavIC adoption in smartphones; GAGAN for aviation; GPS spoofing concerns.

SOURCES

1. ISRO – isro.gov.in
2. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech
3. MeitY – meity.gov.in

Question 56 | Economy / Government Securities

Consider the following statements:

1. The Reserve Bank of India manages and services Government of India Securities but not any State Government Securities.
2. Treasury bills are issued by the Government of India and there are no treasury bills issued by the State Governments.
3. Treasury bills offer are issued at a discount from the par value.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 2 and 3 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. RBI manages and services both Central and State Government securities.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Treasury bills are issued by the Government of India only; State Governments issue State Development Loans.
- **Statement 3** – Correct. T-bills are zero-coupon, issued at a discount and redeemed at par.

➤ **Hence 2 and 3 only** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: G-Secs, SDLs, T-bills (91, 182, 364 days). Current affairs: Retail Direct scheme; inclusion of Indian G-Secs in JP Morgan bond index (2024).
SOURCES
1. RBI – rbi.org.in
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy
3. Economic Survey

Question 57 | Science / Earth & Atmosphere

Consider the following statements:
1. The Earth's magnetic field has reversed every few hundred thousand years.
2. When the Earth was created more than 4000 million years ago, there was 54% oxygen and no carbon dioxide.
3. When living organisms originated, they modified the early atmosphere of the Earth.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 1 and 3 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Statement 1 – Correct. The geomagnetic field has reversed many times, roughly every few hundred thousand years on average.
Statement 2 – Incorrect. The early atmosphere had little free oxygen and contained carbon dioxide.
Statement 3 – Correct. Photosynthetic organisms (cyanobacteria) added oxygen and changed the atmosphere.
➤ **Hence 1 and 3 only** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Evolution of atmosphere; Great Oxidation Event; palaeomagnetism. Current affairs: Magnetic North pole drift; studies of the South Atlantic Anomaly.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography
2. Savindra Singh – Physical Geography
3. NASA – nasa.gov

Question 58 | Science & Tech / Cyber Security

The terms 'WannaCry, Petya and EternalBlue' sometimes mentioned in the news recently are related to
(a) Exoplanets
(b) Cryptocurrency
(c) Cyber attacks
(d) Mini satellites

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Cyber attacks
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (c)** – WannaCry and Petya were ransomware attacks (2017) and EternalBlue was the exploit used.
- **Others** – Not related to exoplanets, cryptocurrency or satellites.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Malware, ransomware, DDoS; IT Act 2000. Current affairs: CERT-In rules; National Cyber Security Strategy; AIIMS ransomware (2022).
SOURCES
1. CERT-In – cert-in.org.in

2. MeitY – meity.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech

Question 59 | Environment / Agriculture

With reference to the circumstances in Indian agriculture, the concept of 'Conservation Agriculture' assumes significance. Which of the following fall under the Conservation Agriculture?
1. Avoiding the monoculture practices
2. Adopting minimum tillage
3. Avoiding the cultivation of plantation crops
4. Using crop residues to cover soil surface
5. Adopting spatial and temporal crop sequencing/crop rotations

Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) 1, 3 and 4
(b) 2, 3, 4 and 5
(c) 2, 4 and 5
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 5

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 2, 4 and 5
DETAILED EXPLANATION
2, 4, 5 – Conservation agriculture rests on minimum soil disturbance, permanent soil cover (crop residues) and crop rotations/diversification.
1 – Avoiding monoculture is related but the three core principles are minimum tillage, soil cover and rotation (key excludes 1).
3 – Avoiding plantation crops is not a principle.
➤ **Hence 2, 4 and 5** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: FAO's conservation agriculture; zero tillage; Happy Seeder. Current affairs: Residue management and stubble burning; PM-PRANAM; sustainable agriculture mission.
SOURCES
1. FAO – fao.org
2. ICAR – icar.org.in
3. Ministry of Agriculture – agricoop.nic.in

Question 60 | Environment / Biodiversity

The term 'sixth mass extinction/sixth extinction' is often mentioned in the news in the context of the discussion of
(a) Widespread monoculture practices in agriculture and large-scale commercial farming with indiscriminate use of chemicals in many parts of the world that may result in the loss of good native ecosystems.
(b) Fears of a possible collision of a meteorite with the Earth in the near future in the manner it happened 65 million years ago that caused the mass extinction of many species including those of dinosaurs.
(c) Large scale cultivation of genetically modified crops in many parts of the world and promoting their cultivation in other parts of the world which may cause the disappearance of good native crop plants and the loss of food biodiversity.
(d) Mankind's over-exploitation/misuse of natural resources, fragmentation/loss of natural habitats, destruction of ecosystems, pollution and global climate change.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Mankind's over-exploitation/misuse of natural resources, fragmentation/loss of natural habitats, destruction of ecosystems, pollution and global climate change.
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (d)** – The 'sixth extinction' refers to the current anthropogenic loss of species due to over-exploitation, habitat loss, pollution and climate change.
- **Options (a), (b), (c)** – Narrower or incorrect causes.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Five earlier mass extinctions; IUCN Red List. Current affairs: Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022); Living Planet Report; IPBES assessment.
SOURCES
1. IUCN – iucn.org
2. Shankar IAS – Environment
3. UNEP – unep.org

Question 61 | Science & Tech / Space – NavIC

With reference to the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), consider the following statements:
1. IRNSS has three satellites in geostationary and four satellites in geosynchronous orbits.
2. IRNSS covers entire India and about 5500 sq. km beyond its borders.
3. India will have its own satellite navigation system with full global coverage by the middle of 2019.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement 1** – Correct. The constellation has 3 GEO and 4 GSO (inclined geosynchronous) satellites.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. IRNSS covers India and about 1,500 km (not 5,500 sq. km) around it.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. IRNSS (NavIC) is a regional system; no global coverage was planned for mid-2019.

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: GPS, GLONASS, Galileo, BeiDou, NavIC. Current affairs: NavIC in smartphones; NVS-01 launch (2023); NavIC for fishermen safety.
SOURCES
1. ISRO – isro.gov.in
2. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech
3. PIB – pib.gov.in

Question 62 | Science & Tech / Physics

Consider the following phenomena:
1. Light is affected by gravity.
2. The Universe is constantly expanding.
3. Matter warps its surrounding space-time.

Which of the above is/are the prediction/predictions of Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity, often discussed in media?
(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 1, 2 and 3
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – General relativity predicts gravitational bending of light (confirmed in 1919).
2 – Einstein's field equations imply an expanding (or contracting) universe, later confirmed by Hubble.
3 – Matter and energy curve space-time.
➤ **All three** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Relativity; gravitational waves; black holes. Current affairs: First image of a black hole (2019); LIGO-India; Nobel Prize in Physics.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 Physics
2. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech
3. NASA – nasa.gov

Question 63 | Science & Tech / Biotechnology

With reference to the Genetically Modified mustard (GM mustard) developed in India, consider the following statements:

1. GM mustard has the genes of a soil bacterium that give the plant the property of pest-resistance to a wide variety of pests.
2. GM mustard has the genes that allow the plant cross-pollination and hybridization.
3. GM mustard has been developed jointly by the IARI and Punjab Agricultural University.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. The inserted genes (bar, barnase, barstar) from soil bacteria give herbicide tolerance and a male-sterility/fertility restorer system, not broad pest resistance.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. The barnase–barstar system enables cross-pollination and hybrid seed production.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. It was developed by Delhi University's Centre for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants (Dr Deepak Pental), not IARI–PAU.

➤ **Only statement 2** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: GM crops; Bt cotton; GEAC. Current affairs: GM mustard (DMH-11) approval debate and Supreme Court split verdict (2024).

SOURCES

1. GEAC / MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
2. DBT – dbtindia.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech

Question 64 | Science & Tech / Emerging Technologies

Consider the following pairs:

Terms sometimes seen in news	Context / Topic
1. Belle II experiment	Artificial Intelligence
2. Blockchain technology	Digital/Cryptocurrency
3. CRISPR-Cas9	Particle Physics

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

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Pair 1** – Belle II is a particle-physics experiment (KEK, Japan).

- **Pair 2** – Blockchain underlies cryptocurrencies and digital ledgers.
- **Pair 3** – CRISPR-Cas9 is a gene-editing tool, not particle physics.

➤ **Only 2** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Blockchain; CRISPR; B-factories. Current affairs: Blockchain in land records; Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020; Belle II results.

SOURCES

1. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech
2. KEK – kek.jp
3. MeitY – meity.gov.in

Question 65 | Environment / Climate Science

Which of the following statements best describes 'carbon fertilization'?

(a) Increased plant growth due to increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
(b) Increased temperature of Earth due to increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
(c) Increased acidity of oceans as a result of increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
(d) Adaptation of all living beings on Earth to the climate change brought about by the increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) Increased plant growth due to increased concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – Carbon (CO_2) fertilisation is the enhanced plant growth from higher atmospheric CO_2.
- **Option (b)** – Describes the greenhouse effect/global warming.
- **Option (c)** – Describes ocean acidification.
- **Option (d)** – Not what carbon fertilisation means.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Photosynthesis; carbon cycle; greening of Earth. Current affairs: NASA studies on global greening; limits of CO_2 fertilisation in IPCC AR6.

SOURCES

1. IPCC – ipcc.ch
2. NCERT Class 11/12 Biology
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 66 | Science & Tech / IoT

The scenario described – an alarm that switches on the geyser, a smart mirror showing weather and water level, a refrigerator that places orders, lights/AC switched off on locking the door, and a car suggesting alternative routes and messaging the office – In the context of emerging communication technologies, which one of the following terms best applies to the above scenario?

(a) Border Gateway Protocol
(b) Internet of Things
(c) Internet Protocol
(d) Virtual Private Network

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) Internet of Things

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Interconnected everyday objects that sense, communicate and act with minimal human input define the Internet of Things.
- **Options (a), (c), (d)** – BGP, IP and VPN are networking protocols/services, not the described scenario.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: IoT; smart homes; M2M. Current affairs: National IoT policy; smart city mission; 5G use-cases.

SOURCES

1. MeitY – meity.gov.in
2. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech

3. DoT – dot.gov.in

Question 67 | Economy / Energy – Solar

With reference to solar power production in India, consider the following statements:
1. India is the third largest in the world in the manufacture of silicon wafers used in photovoltaic units.
2. The solar power tariffs are determined by the Solar Energy Corporation of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Neither 1 nor 2
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. India is not the third-largest manufacturer of silicon wafers; China dominates.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. Tariffs are discovered through competitive reverse auctions (and regulated by the Central/State Electricity Regulatory Commissions); SECI conducts auctions but does not determine tariffs.

➤ **Neither** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Solar mission; International Solar Alliance. Current affairs: PLI scheme for solar modules; India's 500 GW non-fossil target; PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.
SOURCES
1. MNRE – mnre.gov.in
2. SECI – seci.co.in
3. Economic Survey – Energy

Question 68 | History / Modern India – Economic

The staple commodities of export by the English East India Company from Bengal in the middle of the 18th century were
(a) Raw cotton, oil-seeds and opium
(b) Sugar, salt, zinc and lead
(c) Copper, silver, gold, spices and tea
(d) Cotton, silk, saltpetre and opium

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Cotton, silk, saltpetre and opium
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (d)** – Cotton textiles, silk, saltpetre and opium were the staple exports from Bengal in the mid-18th century.
- **Others** – Do not match Bengal's trade at the time.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Battle of Plassey/Buxar; Diwani; drain of wealth. Current affairs: Colonial trade debates; 'Opium wars' history in China context.
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 69 | History / Freedom Struggle

Which one of the following is a very significant aspect of the Champaran Satyagraha?
(a) Active all-India participation of lawyers, students and women in the National Movement
(b) Active involvement of Dalit and Tribal communities of India in the National Movement

(c) Joining of peasant unrest to India's National Movement
(d) Drastic decrease in the cultivation of plantation crops and commercial crops

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Joining of peasant unrest to India's National Movement
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – Champaran (1917) linked peasant grievances (indigo, tinkathia) with the national movement.
- **Options (a), (b), (d)** – Not its distinctive aspects.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Champaran, Kheda, Ahmedabad (1917–18). Current affairs: Champaran Satyagraha centenary (2017); Swachhagraha.
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 70 | History / Labour Movement

Who among the following were the founders of the 'Hind Mazdoor Sabha' established in 1948?
(a) B. Krishna Pillai, E.M.S. Namboodiripad and K.C. George
(b) Jayaprakash Narayan, Deen Dayal Upadhyay and M.N. Roy
(c) C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, K. Kamaraj and Veeresalingam Pantulu
(d) Ashok Mehta, T.S. Ramanujam and G.G. Mehta

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Ashok Mehta, T.S. Ramanujam and G.G. Mehta
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (d)** – The Hind Mazdoor Sabha (1948) was founded by socialists including Ashok Mehta, T.S. Ramanujam and G.G. Mehta.
- **Others** – Combinations of unrelated personalities.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: AITUC (1920), INTUC (1947), HMS (1948), BMS (1955). Current affairs: Trade-union strikes against the labour codes; Bharat Bandh.
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – India After Independence
2. Ministry of Labour & Employment – labour.gov.in
3. Spectrum – Modern India

Question 71 | Art & Culture / Religion

With reference to the religious practices in India, the 'Sthanakvasi' sect belongs to
(a) Buddhism
(b) Jainism
(c) Vaishnavism
(d) Shaivism

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) Jainism
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Sthanakvasi is a sect of Svetambara Jainism that rejects idol worship.
- **Others** – Not Buddhism, Vaishnavism or Shaivism.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Svetambara and Digambara; Terapanthi. Current affairs: Jain festivals – Mahavir Jayanti; Jain Minority status.
SOURCES
1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
2. NCERT Class 6 – Our Pasts
3. Upinder Singh – Ancient and Early Medieval India

Question 72 | Art & Culture / Architecture

With reference to the cultural history of India, consider the following statements:

1. White marble was used in making Buland Darwaza and Khankah at Fatehpur Sikri.
2. Red sandstone and marble were used in making Bara Imambara and Rumi Darwaza at Lucknow.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) Neither 1 nor 2

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Buland Darwaza is built of red sandstone with white marble inlay; the use of white marble throughout is not correct.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. Bara Imambara and Rumi Darwaza at Lucknow were built of brick and lime plaster (Lakhauri bricks), not red sandstone and marble.

➤ **Neither** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Mughal and Awadh architecture. Current affairs: Heritage walks in Lucknow; Fatehpur Sikri conservation.

SOURCES

1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
2. ASI – asi.nic.in
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part II

Question 73 | History / Travellers

Which one of the following foreign travellers elaborately discussed about diamonds and diamond mines of India?

(a) Francois Bernier
(b) Jean-Baptiste Tavernier
(c) Jean de Thevenot
(d) Abbe Barthelemy Carre

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) Jean-Baptiste Tavernier

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, a French jeweller, wrote in detail about Indian diamonds and the mines at Golconda and Kollur.
- **Others** – Bernier wrote on Mughal society, Thevenot and Carré wrote general travelogues.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: European travellers to Mughal India. Current affairs: Kohinoor and Golconda diamond heritage; Panna diamond mines.

SOURCES

1. Satish Chandra – Medieval India
2. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part II
3. Spectrum – Medieval India

Question 74 | Art & Culture / Buddhism

With reference to Indian history, who among the following is a future Buddha, yet to come to save the world?

(a) Avalokiteshvara
(b) Lokesvara
(c) Maitreya

(d) Padmapani

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Maitreya
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – Maitreya is the future Buddha in Buddhist tradition.
- **Others** – Avalokiteshvara/Lokesvara/Padmapani are names of the Bodhisattva of compassion.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Mahayana Buddhism; Bodhisattvas. Current affairs: Buddhist heritage circuit; Maitreya statues in Ladakh/Bodh Gaya.
SOURCES
1. Upinder Singh – Ancient and Early Medieval India
2. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
3. NCERT Class 11 – An Introduction to Indian Art

Question 75 | History / British Expansion

Which one of the following statements does not apply to the system of Subsidiary Alliance introduced by Lord Wellesley?
(a) To maintain a large standing army at other's expense
(b) To keep India safe from Napoleonic danger
(c) To secure a fixed income for the Company
(d) To establish British paramountcy over the Indian States

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) To secure a fixed income for the Company
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- Option (c) is the one the official key marks as not applying – the system's main aims were a subsidised army, French containment and British paramountcy; a fixed income for the Company is not treated as a defining aim (flag: debatable).
- **Option (a)** – Applies: states paid for the subsidiary force.
- **Option (b)** – Applies: Wellesley aimed to counter French/Napoleonic influence.
- **Option (d)** – Applies: it established British paramountcy.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Subsidiary Alliance; Doctrine of Lapse. Current affairs: Hyderabad and Awadh annexation history; princely states integration.
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 76 | History / Education

Which of the following led to the introduction of English Education in India?
1. Charter Act of 1813
2. General Committee of Public Instruction, 1823
3. Orientalist and Anglicist Controversy

Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 1, 2 and 3
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – The Charter Act 1813 sanctioned ₹1 lakh for education.
2 – The General Committee of Public Instruction (1823) oversaw education policy.
3 – The Orientalist–Anglicist controversy ended with Macaulay's Minute (1835) favouring English education.

➤ **All three** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Macaulay's Minute; Wood's Dispatch; Hunter Commission. Current affairs: NEP 2020 and language of instruction.

SOURCES

1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 77 | Geography / Lakes

Which one of the following is an artificial lake?

(a) Kodaikanal (Tamil Nadu)
(b) Kolleru (Andhra Pradesh)
(c) Nainital (Uttarakhand)
(d) Renuka (Himachal Pradesh)

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) Kodaikanal (Tamil Nadu)

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – The Kodaikanal Lake was created artificially in 1863 by damming streams.
- **Kolleru** – natural freshwater lake; Nainital – tectonic natural lake; Renuka – natural lake in Sirmaur.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Types of lakes; Ramsar sites (Kolleru, Renuka). Current affairs: Kolleru encroachment issues; Nainital lake conservation.

SOURCES

1. Majid Husain – Geography of India
2. NCERT Class 11 – India: Physical Environment
3. Ramsar – ramsar.org

Question 78 | Governance / Skill Development

With reference to Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, consider the following statements:

1. It is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. It, among other things, will also impart training in soft skills, entrepreneurship, financial and digital literacy.
3. It aims to align the competencies of the unregulated workforce of the country to the National Skill Qualification Framework.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 2 and 3 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. PMKVY is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Training includes soft skills, entrepreneurship, financial and digital literacy.
- **Statement 3** – Correct. It aligns the unregulated workforce's competencies with the NSQF.

➤ **Hence 2 and 3 only** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Skill India Mission; NSQF; RPL. Current affairs: PMKVY 4.0; Skill India Digital Hub.

SOURCES

1. MSDE – msde.gov.in
2. Skill India – skillindia.gov.in
3. PIB – pib.gov.in

Question 79 | History / Freedom Struggle

In 1920, which of the following changed its name to 'Swarajya Sabha'?
(a) All India Home Rule League
(b) Hindu Mahasabha
(c) South Indian Liberal Federation
(d) The Servants of India Society

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) All India Home Rule League
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – In 1920 the All India Home Rule League (Gandhi became its president) was renamed Swarajya Sabha.
- **Others** – Did not change their names to Swarajya Sabha.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Home Rule Movement 1916 (Tilak, Besant). Current affairs: Swaraj and Gandhian legacy; Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 80 | History / Chronology

Which among the following events happened earliest?
(a) Swami Dayanand established Arya Samaj.
(b) Dinabandhu Mitra wrote Neeldarpan.
(c) Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay wrote Anandmath.
(d) Satyendranath Tagore became the first Indian to succeed in the Indian Civil Services Examination.

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) Dinabandhu Mitra wrote Neeldarpan.
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Neel Darpan was written in 1860.
- **Option (a)** – Arya Samaj founded in 1875.
- **Option (c)** – Anandmath published in 1882.
- **Option (d)** – Satyendranath Tagore joined the ICS in 1863.

➤ **Earliest**: Neel Darpan (1860) – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Indigo revolt 1859–60; 19th-century reform movements. Current affairs: 150 years of Vande Mataram (2025).
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 81 | Environment / Mining Impacts

Which of the following is/are the possible consequence/s of heavy sand mining in riverbeds?
1. Decreased salinity in the river
2. Pollution of groundwater
3. Lowering of the water-table
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 and 3 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – Incorrect. Sand mining can increase salinity intrusion near the coast, not decrease it.
2 – Correct. Removal of the natural filter layer exposes groundwater to pollution.
3 – Correct. Deepening of the riverbed lowers the water-table.
➤ **Hence 2 and 3 only** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Fluvial processes; MMDR Act. Current affairs: Sustainable Sand Mining Guidelines 2016; NGT orders on illegal sand mining; Enforcement and Monitoring Guidelines 2020.
SOURCES
1. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
2. NGT – greentribunal.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 82 | Environment / Soils

With reference to agricultural soils, consider the following statements:
1. A high content of organic matter in soil drastically reduces its water holding capacity.
2. Soil does not play any role in the sulphur cycle.
3. Irrigation over a period of time can contribute to the salinization of some agricultural lands.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 3 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Organic matter increases water-holding capacity.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. Soil is a major reservoir in the sulphur cycle.
- **Statement 3** – Correct. Long-term irrigation can cause waterlogging and salinisation.

➤ **Only statement 3** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Soil types; soil salinity; biogeochemical cycles. Current affairs: Soil Health Card scheme; Save Soil movement (2022); reclamation of saline lands.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – India: Physical Environment
2. ICAR – icar.org.in
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 83 | Environment / UN Initiatives

The Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), a UN mechanism to assist countries transition towards greener and more inclusive economies, emerged at
(a) The Earth Summit on Sustainable Development 2002, Johannesburg
(b) The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012, Rio de Janeiro
(c) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2015, Paris
(d) The World Sustainable Development Summit 2016, New Delhi

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012, Rio de Janeiro
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (b)** – PAGE was launched in 2013 as an outcome of the Rio+20 conference (2012).
- **Others** – Not the origin of PAGE.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Rio 1992; Johannesburg 2002; Rio+20 (2012) – SDGs and green economy. Current affairs: PAGE members; Sustainable Development Goals progress.

SOURCES

1. UNEP – unep.org
2. UN – un.org
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 84 | Science & Tech / 3D Printing

'3D printing' has applications in which of the following?

1. Preparation of confectionery items
2. Manufacture of bionic ears
3. Automotive industry
4. Reconstructive surgeries
5. Data processing technologies

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

DETAILED EXPLANATION

1 – 3D food printers make chocolates and confectionery.
2 – Bionic ears have been 3D printed.
3 – Automotive parts and prototypes.
4 – Implants and reconstructive surgery.
5 – Data-processing hardware (such as printed electronics) can be made.

➤ **All five** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Additive manufacturing. Current affairs: 3D-printed houses and rocket engines (Agnikul); India's National Strategy on Additive Manufacturing.

SOURCES

1. MeitY – meity.gov.in
2. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech
3. The Hindu – Science & Tech

Question 85 | Geography / Volcanoes

Consider the following statements:

1. The Barren Island volcano is an active volcano located in the Indian territory.
2. Barren Island lies about 140 km east of Great Nicobar.
3. The last time the Barren Island volcano erupted was in 1991 and it has remained inactive since then.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) **1 only**
(b) 2 and 3
(c) 3 only
(d) 1 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. Barren Island (Andaman Islands) is India's only active volcano.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. It lies about 140 km north-east of Port Blair (Andaman), not east of Great Nicobar.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. It has erupted repeatedly since 1991 (2005, 2017).

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Ring of Fire; volcanic island arcs. Current affairs: Barren Island eruption activity; Andaman earthquakes and tsunami preparedness.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography
2. GSI – gsi.gov.in
3. Khullar – India: A Comprehensive Geography

Question 86 | Environment / Invasive Species

Why is a plant called Prosopis juliflora often mentioned in news?
(a) Its extract is widely used in cosmetics.
(b) It tends to reduce the biodiversity in the area in which it grows.
(c) Its extract is used in the synthesis of pesticides.
(d) None of the above

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) It tends to reduce the biodiversity in the area in which it grows.
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (b)** – Prosopis juliflora (vilayati babul) is an invasive species that spreads aggressively and reduces native biodiversity (for example in Banni grasslands).
- **Options (a), (c)** – Not its widely noted uses.
- **Option (d)** – Incorrect since (b) applies.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Invasive alien species; IUCN. Current affairs: Prosopis removal in Banni (Kutch) and Keoladeo; National Biodiversity Authority's invasive species guidelines.
SOURCES
1. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
2. IUCN – iucn.org
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 87 | Environment / Coral Reefs

Consider the following statements:
1. Most of the world's coral reefs are in tropical waters.
2. More than one-third of the world's coral reefs are located in the territories of Australia, Indonesia and Philippines.
3. Coral reefs host far more number of animal phyla than those hosted by tropical rainforests.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 1, 2 and 3
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement 1** – Correct. Reefs need warm, clear tropical waters.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. These three countries hold over one-third of world reefs.
- **Statement 3** – Correct. Reefs support more animal phyla than rainforests.

➤ **All three** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Coral bleaching; reef types. Current affairs: Mass bleaching events (2023–24); India's coral reef sites – Lakshadweep, Gulf of Mannar; Great Barrier Reef.
SOURCES
1. NOAA – noaa.gov
2. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 88 | Environment / Climate Initiatives

'Momentum for Change: Climate Neutral Now' is an initiative launched by
(a) The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
(b) The UNEP Secretariat
(c) The UNFCCC Secretariat
(d) The World Meteorological Organization

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) The UNFCCC Secretariat
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – 'Climate Neutral Now' is a UNFCCC Secretariat initiative (2015) encouraging individuals and organisations to measure, reduce and offset emissions.
- **Others** – Not launched by IPCC, UNEP or WMO.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: UNFCCC, Paris Agreement; carbon offsetting. Current affairs: COP28 and COP29 outcomes; carbon markets.
SOURCES
1. UNFCCC – unfccc.int
2. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 89 | History / Colonial Education

With reference to educational institutions during colonial rule in India, consider the following pairs:

Institution	Founder
1. Sanskrit College at Benaras	William Jones
2. Calcutta Madarsa	Warren Hastings
3. Fort William College	Arthur Wellesley

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 and 2
(b) 2 only
(c) 1 and 3
(d) 3 only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Pair 1** – Sanskrit College at Benaras was founded by Jonathan Duncan (1791); William Jones founded the Asiatic Society.
- **Pair 2** – Calcutta Madrasa was founded by Warren Hastings (1781).
- **Pair 3** – Fort William College (1800) was founded by Lord (Richard) Wellesley, not Arthur Wellesley.

➤ **Only 2** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Orientalist institutions; Asiatic Society; Hindu College. Current affairs: Sanskrit universities; Asiatic Society of Kolkata heritage.
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – Modern India
2. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
3. NCERT Class 12 Themes in Indian History Part III

Question 90 | IR / World Regions

Consider the following pairs:

Regions sometimes mentioned in news	Country
1. Catalonia	Spain
2. Crimea	Hungary
3. Mindanao	Philippines
4. Oromia	Nigeria

Which of the pairs given above are correctly matched?
(a) 1, 2 and 3
(b) 3 and 4 only
(c) **1 and 3 only**
(d) 2 and 4 only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 1 and 3 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Pair 1** – Catalonia is in Spain.
- **Pair 2** – Crimea is in Ukraine (annexed by Russia in 2014), not Hungary.
- **Pair 3** – Mindanao is in the Philippines.
- **Pair 4** – Oromia is in Ethiopia, not Nigeria.

➤ **Hence 1 and 3 only** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Separatist and conflict regions. Current affairs: Catalan independence referendum; Russia–Ukraine war; Bangsamoro in Mindanao; Ethiopia's Oromia conflict.
SOURCES
1. Oxford School Atlas
2. MEA – mea.gov.in
3. Pushpesh Pant – International Relations

Question 91 | History / Post-Independence Chronology

Consider the following events:
1. The first democratically elected communist party government formed in a State in India. 2. India's then largest bank, 'Imperial Bank of India', was renamed 'State Bank of India'.
3. Air India was nationalised and became the national carrier.
4. Goa became a part of independent India.
Which of the following is the correct chronological sequence of the above events?
(a) 4-1-2-3
(b) **3-2-1-4**
(c) 4-2-1-3
(d) 3-1-2-4

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 3-2-1-4
DETAILED EXPLANATION
3 – Air India was nationalised in 1953.
2 – The Imperial Bank became the State Bank of India in 1955.
1 – The first communist government (E.M.S. Namboodiripad) was elected in Kerala in 1957.
4 – Goa was liberated and integrated in 1961.
➤ **Sequence 3-2-1-4** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Post-1947 integration and nationalisation. Current affairs: Goa Liberation Day (19 December); Air India's privatisation (2022).
SOURCES
1. Bipan Chandra – India After Independence
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy
3. NCERT Class 12 – Politics in India Since Independence

Question 92 | Polity / Right to Privacy

Right to Privacy is protected as an intrinsic part of Right to Life and Personal Liberty. Which of the following in the Constitution of India correctly and appropriately imply the above statement?

(a) Article 14 and the provisions under the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution
(b) Article 17 and the Directive Principles of State Policy in Part IV
(c) **Article 21 and the freedoms guaranteed in Part III**
(d) Article 24 and the provisions under the 44th Amendment to the Constitution

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) Article 21 and the freedoms guaranteed in Part III
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – In K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (2017) the Supreme Court held privacy to be a fundamental right under Article 21 and the freedoms of Part III.
- **Others** – Articles 14, 17, 24 and the amendments mentioned are unrelated.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Article 21; Puttaswamy. Current affairs: DPDP Act 2023; Aadhaar judgement 2018; surveillance and Pegasus debates.
SOURCES
1. Supreme Court – sci.gov.in
2. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity
3. D.D. Basu – Introduction to the Constitution of India

Question 93 | Economy / Agriculture – MSP

Consider the following:
1. Areca nut
2. Barley
3. Coffee
4. Finger millet
5. Groundnut
6. Sesamum
7. Turmeric

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has announced the Minimum Support Price for which of the above?

(a) 1, 2, 3 and 7 only
(b) **2, 4, 5 and 6 only**
(c) 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 only
(d) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2, 4, 5 and 6 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Barley, finger millet (ragi), groundnut and sesamum are among the 23 crops covered by MSP.
Areca nut, coffee and turmeric are not covered by MSP announcements.
➤ **Hence 2, 4, 5 and 6** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: CACP; MSP crops (7 cereals, 5 pulses, 7 oilseeds, 4 commercial). Current affairs: Legal guarantee for MSP demand; MSP for Kharif crops announcements.
SOURCES
1. CACP – cacp.dacnet.nic.in
2. Ministry of Agriculture – agricoop.nic.in
3. Economic Survey

Question 94 | Environment / Protected Areas

In which one of the following States is Pakhui Wildlife Sanctuary located?

(a) Arunachal Pradesh
(b) Manipur
(c) Meghalaya
(d) Nagaland

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) Arunachal Pradesh
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – Pakhui (Pakke) Wildlife Sanctuary / Tiger Reserve is in East Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Others** – Not located in Manipur, Meghalaya or Nagaland.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Protected areas of the North-East. Current affairs: Pakke Tiger Reserve and the Hornbill Festival; Pakke Paga Hornbill Nest Adoption Programme.
SOURCES
1. MoEFCC – moef.gov.in
2. WII – wii.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 95 | Science & Tech / Space

With reference to India's satellite launch vehicles, consider the following statements:
1. PSLVs launch the satellites useful for Earth resources monitoring whereas GSLVs are designed mainly to launch communication satellites.
2. Satellites launched by PSLV appear to remain permanently fixed in the same position in the sky, as viewed from a particular location on Earth.
3. GSLV Mk III is a four-staged launch vehicle with the first and third stages using solid rocket motors; and the second and fourth stages using liquid rocket engines.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3
(c) 1 and 2
(d) 3 only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. PSLV launches remote-sensing (polar sun-synchronous) satellites; GSLV launches communication (geostationary) satellites.
- **Statement 2** – Incorrect. Satellites that appear fixed in the sky are geostationary (GSLV), not PSLV's polar satellites.
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. GSLV Mk III is a three-stage vehicle (solid, liquid, cryogenic).

➤ **Only statement 1** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: PSLV, GSLV, SSLV; launch orbits. Current affairs: Chandrayaan-3 on LVM3; Gaganyaan; PSLV commercial launches.
SOURCES
1. ISRO – isro.gov.in
2. PIB – pib.gov.in
3. Shankar IAS – Science & Tech

Question 96 | Economy / Banking Reforms

With reference to the governance of public sector banking in India, consider the following statements:
1. Capital infusion into public sector banks by the Government of India has steadily increased in the last decade.
2. To put the public sector banks in order, the merger of associate banks with the parent State Bank of India has been effected.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. Capital infusion has fluctuated rather than steadily increased.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Five associate banks and Bharatiya Mahila Bank merged into SBI in April 2017.

➤ **Only statement 2** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Nationalisation 1969, 1980; PSB reforms – Indradhanush. Current affairs: Merger of 10 PSBs into 4 (2020); bank recapitalisation bonds; Bank privatisation.
SOURCES
1. Ministry of Finance – financialservices.gov.in
2. RBI – rbi.org.in
3. Economic Survey – Banking

Question 97 | Economy / GST

Consider the following items:
1. Cereal grains hulled
2. Chicken eggs cooked
3. Fish processed and canned
4. Newspapers containing advertising material

Which of the above items is/are exempted under GST (Goods and Services Tax)?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1, 2 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – Hulled cereal grains were in the nil-rated list.
2 – Eggs are exempt under GST (per the official key).
3 – Processed and canned fish is taxable.
4 – Newspapers are exempt under GST (per the official key).
➤ **Hence 1, 2 and 4 only** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: GST (101st Amendment); GST Council; slabs. Current affairs: GST rate rationalisation; 55th GST Council; GST collections.
SOURCES
1. CBIC – cbic.gov.in
2. GST Council – gstcouncil.gov.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 98 | Environment / Forest Rights

Consider the following statements:
1. The definition of 'Critical Wildlife Habitat' is incorporated in the Forest Rights Act, 2006.
2. For the first time in India, Baigas have been given Habitat Rights.
3. Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change officially decides and declares Habitat Rights for Primitive and Vulnerable Tribal Groups in any part of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (a) 1 and 2 only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Correct. FRA 2006 defines Critical Wildlife Habitat.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. Baigas of Madhya Pradesh were the first PVTG to be granted habitat rights (Dindori, 2016).
- **Statement 3** – Incorrect. Habitat rights are recognised by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs with State governments, not MoEFCC.

➤ **Hence 1 and 2 only** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: FRA 2006; PVTGs. Current affairs: PM-JANMAN; Habitat rights recognised for Bharia and Saharia PVTGs.
SOURCES
1. Ministry of Tribal Affairs – tribal.nic.in
2. FRA 2006 – tribal.nic.in
3. Shankar IAS – Environment

Question 99 | Environment / Agriculture – Plant Diseases

Consider the following:
1. Birds
2. Dust blowing
3. Rain
4. Wind blowing

Which of the above spread plant diseases?
(a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 3 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
DETAILED EXPLANATION
1 – Birds carry pathogens and spores.
2 – Blowing dust carries spores.
3 – Rain splash spreads fungal and bacterial spores.
4 – Wind disperses spores over long distances.
➤ **All four** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Plant pathology; disease dissemination agents. Current affairs: Wheat rust and locust threats; Fall armyworm; plant quarantine.
SOURCES
1. ICAR – icar.org.in
2. NCERT Class 12 Biology
3. Ministry of Agriculture – agricoop.nic.in

Question 100 | Economy / Organic Farming

With reference to organic farming in India, consider the following statements:
1. 'The National Programme for Organic Production' (NPOP) is operated under the guidelines and directions of the Union Ministry of Rural Development.
2. 'The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority' (APEDA) functions as the Secretariat for the implementation of NPOP.

3. Sikkim has become India's first fully organic State.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set A): (b) 2 and 3 only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement 1** – Incorrect. NPOP is under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Statement 2** – Correct. APEDA is the Secretariat for NPOP.
- **Statement 3** – Correct. Sikkim became the first fully organic State (2016).

➤ **Hence 2 and 3 only** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Organic farming; PKVY; MOVCDNER. Current affairs: Natural farming mission (2024); Sikkim organic model.

SOURCES

1. APEDA – apeda.gov.in
2. Ministry of Agriculture – agricoop.nic.in
3. Economic Survey – Agriculture